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All The Thoughts I Think Usually Determines Everything

- JOHN ODELL, allthelandandsea.wixsite.com/wordsofwords

A Note from the Publisher

The *North Columbia Monthly* is a free monthly magazine distributed throughout northeastern Washington and is a vehicle for sharing stories that we can relate to, imagine, or feel. It is about *where and how we live*. In emphasizing these kinds of stories, it is my hope that the idea of connection, common ground, and community will be infused into our consciousness and become integral to what we choose to strive for, and what is considered the norm.

I believe that we can all have different perspectives, different viewpoints, different ways of being, and I believe that we can find connection and build community around the things we share in common. Thank you for reading. I hope you feel enriched for having done so.

~ Gabriel

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Mahjong

Life lessons found in a set of game tiles

By Christine Wilson

“Life is not a matter of holding good cards, but of playing a poor hand well.”

~ Robert Louis Stevenson

“Though the rules sound not very complicated, when you actually play [mahjong], you will find that every game is different. You need to calculate, evaluate the risk of every tile you discard, observe the facial expressions of your rivals, and remember their moves. ...I can't think of a more interesting game.”

~ Lai Chuntian, a 50-year-old teacher from Liaoning Province, China

“Set yourself up to be lucky.” ~ Tim Ma, owner of the Lucky Danger, a restaurant and mahjong parlor

I was still a runner in 2007 when I went to Beijing with a group of therapists. It was hot and humid and smoggy, but I loved running through those streets, watching the life of a city that was so very different from anything I'd ever seen before. I loved the bicycles laden with lumber or furniture or food. I watched a man on a sidewalk with a set of bike repair tools, fixing other people's bikes. My absolute favorites, however, were the sightings of older women playing mahjong. As I ran past their tables, they seemed not to even notice I was there.

Because I was so obviously not Chinese, tended to be at least a head taller than everyone else, and prone to saying their version of hello (“ni hao”) to people who made eye contact, I was used to people saying “ni hao” back, usually with shock as they looked up at me and repeated their hello multiple times in what I assumed was amazement at this foreigner.

The players of mahjong, however, were too focused on

their tiles to find me of any interest. They were living representatives of this ancient Chinese game.

I had played what I thought was mahjong on my computer, but I could tell this was a very different way of using the tiles. When the Communist Party tour bus stopped in front of a government store, I wandered around until I found boxes of the tiles. I didn't have a discerning eye at the time, unfortunately, so I bought my husband a wee collection that I now call “the bifocal set.” Those tiles collected dust for nearly 30 years, waiting for their moment.

That moment came this year when I discovered the Filipino way of playing from Sue Canto. In 1988, she had the sense to marry Ray Canto, a man whose family comes from the Philippines. (I'm sure he had the sense to marry her as well, but that is someone else's story to tell.) She adopted his version of mahjong and has been passing it on. Mahjong must be one of those things people didn't realize they were

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Random Acts of Community

longing for until they discover it is and wonder how they functioned beforehand.

Once she introduced Colville to that particular version, it took off and now Colville's Seekers Bookshop hosts a weekly mahjong crowd. It gets lively enough for the clerks to be grateful they can close the doors that separate their backroom from the bookstore proper.

Even a homebody like me has gotten addicted to those lovely afternoons. True confession, though. My addiction to metaphors is even greater than my addiction to the game. I can't stop myself from absorbing the meanings I find on those afternoons, as I do with most things. You should have heard me explain blind spots when our sons were learning to drive. And mahjong, wow, it's like a living, active version of the Serenity Prayer. There are things we can control. Things we cannot control. The actual Serenity Prayer includes the wisdom to know the difference, but in mahjong, as in life, I think it is really the emotional intelligence and patience to put up with the difference.

We all know people who were dealt a lucky hand at birth. Whether it is financial security or unconditional love or physical attributes, it looks from the outside that they just get to sail through life. And so it is in mahjong. Sometimes it becomes clear as you organize your tiles that they are already halfway toward giving you that glorious moment when you can shout "MAHJONG!" Sometimes it is other people who have gotten the lucky tiles. They win without much effort. "It's not fair," you might cry. "Accept the vagaries of life," the rules of mahjong say.

And then there are people with unlucky starts, in the tiles and/or the life they are dealt. You can look at your tiles and say: "There is no way." You might be right. The ancient Chinese Book of Changes, also called the I Ching, is fond of repeating "perseverance furthers." I've heard mahjong players say: "There's no way I can win," and then a round or two later, they are the ones that say "Mahjong!" There's a very long Chinese story I will save for another column, but the lesson is: "You never know." You could just give up in despair and say it is your fate. That would be what my parents would have called "a crying shame."

My dad wanted me to be an economist. He wanted me to use my lucky math DNA to be more financially set. It's true that I'd have been a lot richer, but I took a chance and followed my heart. If he were alive today, he'd be amazed to see that my risk paid off. I never got to be drenched in the money I might have made at Microsoft, but the emotional and life satisfaction wealth I have had are worth it. Some-

times the guesses and risks you take in mahjong are like that. You never know.

Master Po was the wise old teacher in the 1970s television series called "Kung Fu." Now that guy was a metaphor aficionado. One of my favorite episodes involved a monkey who was trying to get an orange out of a vase. He didn't want to let go of the orange so his hand was stuck in there, holding on to something he was keeping out of his own reach. Those are called "unforced errors." Grasshopper, as the master called his student, knew he would have to let go in order to get that orange. Master Po said: "I would hope you remain so and will know when to let go of those things which do not serve you but force you to serve them."

Mahjong requires flexibility as well as risk taking. You can think you have a plan, but there are various ways those plans can go sideways. As you strategize for your win, you try to collect groups of three identical tiles or a run of three in the same design of tile: sticks, characters, or balls. The person on your right might discard the tile you need to make a run, but you can only get such a thing from the person on your left. That tile sits there, taunting you in the center of the table. You can either be distracted by your misfortune or move on to a new plan.

Each round requires you to discard. You might have nothing you want to let go of, because each little group of tiles holds some potential you want to build on. People are waiting for you as your eyes run over the tiles in front of you. You can see what people have discarded and what they have laid out as exposed sets, but at some point, you have to make a decision. No action is inaction in real life. No action isn't even an option in mahjong.

We make choices based on what is available to us. My least favorite feeling is resentment, so personally, even though I am inclined to long for my lost chances, I don't want to be like that monkey. As a human, if I succumb to disappointment, I can take my grasping to a much greater level than keeping my hand around an orange in a vase.

I find comfort in knowing that we can set ourselves up to be lucky. We get dealt the mahjong tiles we get. We use the best strategy we can figure out. We are having fun playing with other people who are in the same situation as we are. Accepting the whimsy of fate comes more easily that way. I'm still a work in progress on translating that last part to the rest of life, but that's part of the lesson as well.

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

Healing the Mind

Sometimes, the best medicine of all, is love

By Dr. Barry Bacon

I'm listening to a book by Robert Sapolsky entitled "Behave," an incredible compilation about the mind, behavior and development. Full of genetic jargon and psychological discussion, it is both lighthearted and technically challenging. It is incredibly helpful in understanding human behavior and frustratingly difficult to navigate – in part because the brain is beyond our minds' ability to comprehend.

Synapses, axons, neurons, dendrons, genes and neurotransmitters, connections to the outside world and connections within. Releases of prohormones and hormones, feedback loops and epigenetics. And I'm just getting started.

Here are a few messages from the book in no particular order of significance:

There is a human gene which codes for risk taking and adventure and it is found in about 12% of Africans and Europeans, but about 40% of native North Americans and Samoans, 50% of South Americans, and 70% of those who live in the Amazon basin. Yet it is virtually absent among those of Chinese, Cambodian and Japanese

descent. It's called the adventure gene, because it is thought that this gene is what encouraged some people long ago to go out, leave home and explore the world.

There is an area within the brain called the amygdala, which governs stress response, fear and aggression. When this part of the brain predominates, the response of the person to an outside stimulus is to freeze, release stress hormones like cortisol and adrenalin, and to fight back or protect oneself from whatever threats are perceived.

And there is another area of the brain, the frontal and prefrontal cortex, which is all about calming the amygdala, keeping it from wiggling out. The frontal cortex activates just a bit more slowly, takes a few milliseconds to process the threat, and requires more energy to fire up. It serves the function of calming the brain reassuringly, "No we are safe, we don't need to be frightened, we can relax. It's not a grizzly bear. It's just the neighbor's cat."

But there are broken parts to the way this all works. A child's brain develops to a great degree in accordance

with the environment in which the child is raised. During the time a fetus is in its mother's womb, the brain is subject to whatever is happening with the mother. If the mother is relaxed, safe, fed, loved, the baby's exposure to stress hormones is minimized, and the amygdala (stress center) is smaller. The brain develops differently in a child whose mother is frequently afraid, abused and traumatized, and that brain's function and appearance on imaging studies is measurably different from a child's brain who is loved, accepted and experiences belonging. This carries on through the next two years of life in particular.

Further, a child who experiences traumatic events is likely to not learn as quickly; the brain shuts down and does not retain new information.

Fast forward 15 years, and the child whose brain was initially affected by multiple traumas (such as starvation, poverty, anger, neglect, abuse, family disintegration) has not learned as quickly and has likely struggled as a student. The more trauma early, the more struggle later. As a result, such children have been made to feel like



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they were unintelligent, creating additional anxiety. These children are more likely to experience mental health disorders and addiction.

The effects of love and nurturing change the number of connections within our brains, the numbers of axonal branches, the dopamine secreting connections within the brain and the number of new nerve cells created. (Yes, the brain is capable, even in adulthood, of creating new nerve cells. Exercise stimulates new neuron formation as well.)

That's a whole lot of stuff to digest. So let me use my dog as an illustration of how this works. Shelley picked up this poor little beast at a dog pound and, wouldn't you know it, the creature had an anxiety disorder. Quivering with fear whenever she was held or whenever someone looked at her, her default was to run and hide. Yet gradually she began to change her behavior. Instead of the "Whoa, that guy is scary, and also that person who feeds me every day, and why do they look at me, are they going to eat me?" we began to see a different response: "These are my people. They care about me. They love me. They don't intend harm to me. I am safe here." And she has turned out to be a lovely dog.

We can only surmise what her pre-

vious life was like. We can't know with certainty, but we think she was likely abused or neglected, and perhaps lived in a cage for most of her young life. Now she is a bit of a snuggler, loves my wife, curls up next to her and actually wags her tail – behavior never seen when we first met her. My favorite thing is that now, when I come close to my wife to give her a hug, the dog inserts herself between us, craving my attention. She knows she is loved.

It reminds me of a couple of little boys I used to know. They were minimally cared for by their parents who were in the throes of addiction, hiding out in a remote place in a run-down camper hoping not to be noticed, daily using methamphetamine which amplified neglect of the children. When I first saw the boys, they were 2½ and 1 year of age. They could not walk. Their legs were scrawny and underdeveloped. They could not talk. They had been left to forage for themselves and their brains were not developing normally.

The boys were taken in by their kind and loving auntie who was an experienced mom and loved these two children. The next time I was with the two they were running, jumping, talking and smiling. Brain potential is not merely gene-derived. Environment

is crucial in determining whether a young brain reaches its potential.

Then there is the fascinating new part of brain research. The brain has an incredible capacity to heal, even in adulthood. In our recovery work, we are seeing the ability of the mind to do exactly that. Men sometimes come in after years of addiction, painfully unable to remember a simple series of numbers, unable to put down new memory due to the damage caused by their substance abuse. Now they are scholars, honor students in college, amazed at the capacity which still remains and which they have developed through the exercise of their minds.

Which leads us to this conclusion: We must be careful about writing off a human being as gone, wasted, or burned out. Food, exercise and shelter make a measurable difference. More than these, community, love, belonging and purpose bring healing to the minds of the men and women in recovery. It's a beautiful thing. We have front-row seats to watch this incredible phenomenon unfold.

Dr. Barry Bacon has lived and practiced family medicine in Colville for nearly 30 years, working in small, rural hospitals in Washington state, teaching family medicine, and working on health disparities in the U.S. and Africa.

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Birds in Our Living Room

Story and Photo by Tina Wynecoop

Peeper Palace was an unusual store just down the road from where we live in Colbert. It was a rural family-run business that that's no longer there. The owner raised parakeets, love birds, parrots, cockatiels and several more exotic bird species. Upon entering Peeper Palace, one was surrounded with the cacophony of bird talk instead of quiet peeps. It was a great place to visit.

Our family harbored dogs, cats, and chickens. We couldn't afford an expensive bird. No cash was exchanged, yet we still brought home memorable feathered family members. The owner was a kind man who gave us birds he couldn't sell. Otherwise, the birds would be put down.

Guppy, our handicapped lovebird, was newly fledged when he came to live with us. Unfortunately, he had been left in the nest too long and his parent(s) had nibbled his toes off. The little green bird with the big beak had problems with his flight feathers as well.

In our home Guppy spent most of the time outside his little home, which some would call a cage. It was not. He loved taking rest breaks in his empty cereal box bedroom. The "roof" of the Cheerios box also served as a drum when he stood atop it and drummed his stumpy feet to woo the "other" lovebird reflected in his mirror. He may have been wishing for a mate.

He had plenty of companionship

with his young human brothers. He spent Saturday mornings sitting on their shoulders watching cartoons and helping them eat from their cereal bowls. He liked to run around on the carpet with his beak lowered to the floor scooping up tiny things. We called him our vacuum cleaner, and he did a good job. Lord knows his human mother didn't vacuum very often!

Wheeps the cockatiel was another gift from Peeper Palace. Unsaleable because of her "handicaps" but needing a home nevertheless, she was a wonderful family bird in many ways. Her ability to fly wasn't an issue, but perching was. One time she flew out the open screen door. We searched for several days to



“I like the sound of pictures.”

~ Annette Pimentel

locate her whereabouts. Fortunately, she knew her name and called out “wheeps, wheeps” in distress from the distant pasture. The boys found her and brought her home.

Over the years injured native birds stayed with us. It was/is illegal to harbor them even when compassion overruled at times. I wish I became a licensed bird rehabilitator. The injured robin, the magpie, the calliope hummingbird, the great horned owl ... that’s all I need to say. Since 2021 our Spokane Audubon chapter has been rescuing native birds and helping them receive professional assistance from local vets and the WSU Veterinary School. The need was there but that service didn’t exist in those earlier years. Hats off to Spokane Audubon!

There’s another bird in our living room. She has been with us since 1970. She has four legs. “What!?” you say, “birds don’t live that long, and – come on! Four legs? Who do you think we are? Dodos?” *NCM* readers can’t be fooled. Birds have two legs, maybe not all their toes, but that is human error, certainly not a design-flaw of the Creator.

First-grader Trina A. (pictured top, right) painted what she saw. I didn’t ask her for details back then, but I sure admired her artistry. When I first saw Trina’s painting (pictured left) I resisted launching into a bird anatomy lecture. I am glad I didn’t interfere with her vision. I framed her painting. Years later I found the explanation for those extra legs in the wonderful DK Eyewitness series of nature books. *Natural World: Escape from Danger* revealed that, while “most birds protect their nestlings by bluff or aggression when being threatened, some parents can pick up their young and carry them away. Depending on the species, they may use

either their beak, legs, or talons.”

I doubt many birdwatchers have witnessed what Trina saw. Her home ground was the pine forests and meadows on the Spokane Reservation. She had everyday opportunities to witness what most of us rarely see. The picture Trina painted must have been inspired by her awareness of the outdoors where she caught a glimpse of a hawk as it lifted from the nest carrying its baby, legs dangling, to safety.

Children’s art is wonderful. Because of it I was led to become a grade-school teacher. After high school graduation in 1964 I pursued a degree at the local university known for its excellence – and for the long distances between buildings on its vast campus. We needed wings to get between classes on time.

The UW was known, too, for its wild bird population. Crows and gulls dumped on scurrying students as much as the frequent rains did. Even on rainless days, umbrellas were carried as shields for overhead protection. We were vulnerable. We were targets.

How was I led to hang in there? Wandering through campus buildings one day, I visited the Arts Building where children’s paintings were being displayed. Their creativity knocked my socks off. Instantly I wished to become an elementary-level teacher so I could be among young artists. I added elementary education classes to my major.

I constantly give thanks for the privilege of teaching classes of first graders in a rural town where youngsters hadn’t yet held an artist’s paintbrush or dipped their brush in a jar of poster paint. Opportunities to let their creativity flow permeated their school day. I made sure.

All our birds have moved on. They enriched our family in countless ways.



Only Trina’s bird remains in our living room after all these years, except for the time her painting was displayed in an exhibit in the Museum of Arts and Culture (MAC) in Spokane titled, “Dabblers, Divers, Murderers, and Travelers: The Birds of the Inland Northwest,” which included over 100 carefully preserved and mounted birds from the museum’s permanent collection.

In that exhibit’s gallery was just one piece of framed art accompanying the many taxidermized birds on display. It was Trina’s.

The museum exhibit (2009), curated to appeal to all ages, was a hit with the many attendees. The Spokane tribe was honored, and dear Trina, despite her brief time on earth, touched, inspired and puzzled many. Her painting is back home in its customary perch on our living room wall.

Tina Wynecoop has said that western Washington, where she grew up, was the most interesting place in the world – until she moved 300 miles east in 1970 to teach on the Spokane Indian Reservation. She says the culture, geography, history, weather, people, and flora and fauna of this inland region have become her beloved “home ground.”

Never Waste a Day

By Tina Tolliver Matney

The reflection that stared back from my bathroom mirror recently actually startled me. “No wonder I’m single,” I muttered as I tried to muster up some dignity to go about my morning chores while looking like I’d lost my mind somewhere between my first and second cup of coffee.

I was preparing to clean raptor pens and that is very messy business. I was dressed in my rattiest shorts and shirt. And by ratty I mean my shorts were tied together with a string because the wringer washer had smashed the metal jean button thingy that held them together once upon a time. I don’t miss that wringer washer one bit.

I hung onto these shorts for this type of occasion when I didn’t want to wear pants ... I hate pants ... and didn’t care if I got them disgustingly dirty. The shirt was of the same fate – half the buttons gone and, after one of the sleeves ripped at the shoulder, I took the opportunity to create a “flannel tank top” for the grossest summer chores. This chore fit the bill.

My feet were stuffed into my knee-high winter muck boots, after I had evicted the frog, of course, on one of the hottest mornings of the summer. I was also wearing a pretty little apron for some unknown reason. Maybe it was just a little grasp for a shred of dignity in case the UPS man pulled into the driveway. I had rubber gloves covering my hands. My hair was pulled up in a very messy ponytail. Definitely not my finest attire. And in hindsight I suppose the apron only served to make me appear just a little bit unhinged.

What really made this outfit shine was the ill-fitting respirator I was trying to keep from falling off my face. I had folded squares of toilet paper and had placed them on the bridge of my nose and between the side straps and

my cheek bones. This was to protect my skin, as I also had taken the tiniest bungee cord I could find and hooked it to the respirator from the back so it went from ear to ear and held that sucker down so tight I thought my eyeballs might burst.

This was the smallest respirator that I could find and it fit horribly. The first time I attempted to use it was when I was sealing the cement floors in my new house late last fall. I had spent so much time attempting to adjust it that my paint roller dried up and stuck to the metal paint pan where what seemed like \$400 worth of sealer had gone cloudy and formed a skin before I’d even started the task of rolling it onto the floor.

I remember how much the dried sealer resembled a perfect creme brûlée which, of course, reminded me I had not eaten breakfast or lunch, so ... anyway, I never did completely finish the floor. That chore is waiting for the next spark of inspiration and a better-fitting respirator. But until I find one I am still tweaking the fit of this old one with toilet paper and a bungee and even little bits of bubble wrap that I can pop when I’m done with the task at hand.

Many of us who live rurally (in the boonies, the sticks, middle of nowhere) don’t take our circumstances for granted. We choose to live where the conveniences are of our own design, in my opinion. I live here because there really is nowhere else I would rather be. I have learned to “make do” until I can get to town, but I also know that pretty much anything I might need can be on my doorstep in a day or two. I will find a better respirator but I’m in no hurry because this one was not cheap and the bungee cord keeps it in place just fine. It works and keeps me safe

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and that's all I care about. I don't even really care that I look crazy when I wear it.

I find a great satisfaction these days in completing the hard tasks. There is just something about rising in the morning and knowing that by day's end I will have tackled one more chore that in the past might have been pushed aside just because it was hard or gross or seemingly not that important.

For me it's all important now because I chose to stay put after my fire. I am determined that staying put means I will keep this place as tip-top as I possibly can ... while I can. Because there are no guaranteed tomorrows. That was hammered home to me yet one more time very recently when my older sister passed away. Losing her was a blow I wasn't ready to face.

The circumstances of the past few years made it impossible to spend much time with her, so I feel like she's been gone far longer than the mere month that has passed. But I won't wallow in the past or question the choices that got in our way because it doesn't matter. It really is all just

water under the bridge now and I am confident that my sister knew how very much I loved her.

And just as it was when my brother died a few years ago, this has been a reminder to never waste a day. Of course, there is a balance that has to be struck between the tasks that truly need attention and the desires to simply be outside or in the art studio or talking on the phone with a friend while the cat settles into my lap or spending time with my beautiful family.

Truly living isn't as easy as some people make it seem. But I am more than determined to give it my best efforts, no matter how crazy the task or my attire. Behind every chore is more time to truly live this great big life. I can think of no better way to honor my sister's life than to live like every single day is a gift that she has given to me.

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

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October Random Thoughts

Embrace language and genealogy, you varlet!

By Bob Gregson

Varlet? Use It!

Somewhere in past readings, maybe *Treasure Island* or a similar book for young people, the word “varlet” was used to curse a villainous fellow. “Take that, you varlet!” says the young hero as he thrusts his sword into the chest of the bad guy. Love that word. But no one uses it anymore and probably haven’t for a few hundred years. That’s a pity.

I sort of recall Gabby Hayes in old Western movies using the word “varmint” a lot, also referring to a bad guy. Had Gabby been chasing cattle rustlers in the British Isles instead of Arizona or movie backlots in California, maybe he would have used “varlet” instead. I would hope so.

From now on I will look for ways to fit “varlet” into conversations and hope you do the same. We can start something linguistically new and interesting!

Why not?

After all, how did such strange expressions as “dude” and “groovy” and “hippie” get into common popular language? Someone, somewhere, had to start using such silliness in daily conversation.

You and I in this corner of the Pacific Northwest could start using that ancient word, which might then reach Hollywood and then on to the farthest outposts of groovy English-speaking hippie dudes and dudesses.

More Word Stuff ... ‘Stake’ versus ‘Steak’

Those two words are spelled differently and mean totally different things but sound exactly the same when spoken. They’re called homonyms. We have lots of words in the English language that are similarly confusing to people trying to learn the language or expand their vocabulary. Such as urn and earn and bread and bred, just to name a very few.

So how about this modest proposal as an answer to international communication problems: All nations begin teaching Esperanto as a second language from kindergarten on.

What is Esperanto? It’s a constructed language built mostly around Romance languages, created by a Polish eye doctor in 1887. Briefly, from online CoPilot Search, the essence is: “Esperanto’s grammar is simple and regular, with no irregular verbs, complex conjugations, or unnecessary words.” It is estimated that about 100,000 people in Europe and South America and Asia are fluent in Esperanto. In my observations, U.S. citizens typically don’t pay much attention to languages besides our own version of English. I think many of us in the U.S. assume everyone everywhere speaks and understands our language. That’s not true, of course.

A universal language is an interesting thought as an addition to a nation’s primary language. A primary language carries a cultural load just in itself. That’s important. And I think it would be nice to have most of the world able to communicate with each other directly via a common second language.

Actually ...

There was a newspaper headline about a nearby college football team, where the sportswriter described the intrasquad practice game: "The defense really shined."

Here's what he really meant: "The offense was pretty lousy."

Third-generation memories gap

Most of us know who our biological parents are, many currently know or knew their grandparents, but not many of us know much about our great-grandparents. Folks who enjoy tracing their genealogy DO know all about that sort of thing. For the rest of us, our "greats" are often pretty mysterious from what may seem to us the far distant past. Which, of course, is not all THAT far distant.

Nowadays with all the electronic and digital ways of recording, each of us will be well known via visual and audio media to future generations of our families ... forever, probably. They'll be able to tell what we looked like, what our voices sounded like, who we were within our culture, where and how we lived, and so on.

What about just three or four generations ago? For many of us now-older folks, there may be a few posed photographs in family albums, but little is really known about them, their lives, their accomplishments, their thoughts and dreams. Some families may have communicated well from generation to generation by re-telling family stories and keeping old letters. I suspect that tradition has largely died in our digital age.

Just three generations back, my own family's situation is little known. The four grandparents came to the Spokane area by themselves or with their families, drawn by the Great Northern Railroad's presence, either working for the railroad or working in a related profession. But their eight parents? I know little more than their names and prior nationalities.

One "great" on the paternal side was a horseshoer in the Prussian Army who brought his family to the United States to avoid another war after the Franco-Prussian War of 1875. His wife's story is totally unknown to us.

On the maternal side one of the "greats" was literally and solidly Irish – 6-foot-4 and reputedly a bare-fisted prize fighter. He was known by contemporaries and society in general as a hard-rock miner in the Wallace and Butte mining areas ... but by the family he was known as a congenial alcoholic who didn't support his wife and their daughter (my maternal grandmother). He came from a part of eastern Canada known as the Queen's Bush, then somehow to our part of the country. His wife was from Pennsylvania and of British/Dutch stock. She had a very hard life; this was a second marriage for her. That's most of what we know. The other four of my "greats" are barely discernible through the mists of time.

My sons and their children have shown no interest in all of this other than hoping there might be riches or royalty in the background.

Which leaves us with the big question: Does any of this family history stuff matter beyond a generation or two?

Whatever, everything about all of us from now on will be recorded in very lifelike forms from here to eternity given the plethora of smartphone cameras all around us. Smile!

Bob Gregson, a 1964 West Point graduate from Pasco who served two combat tours in Vietnam, left the corporate world to organically farm on Vashon Island. He now lives in Spokane, his "spiritual home," where his parents grew up.

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Silly Sally and the Golden Apple

Story by Steven Bird, Photo by Doris Loiseau

The great horse whisperer Monty Roberts asserted that, although deer are much more sensitive than horses, with time and patience they can be trained to “join up” in a bond with humans.

The great forester Pat Graham once said: “It’s best not to live anywhere you can’t pee off the porch.”

I was an avid hunter for a large portion of my life. I kept hounds for hunting lions, bear, bobcat and raccoons. Had an excellent English setter for hunting upland birds. Then it got to the point I’d killed so many animals I got over it. The hunts were fun, but after a kill came the arduous and bloody job of packing out and processing the game, which became a lot less fun for me as I grew older.

I still like to hunt grouse, a clean and gentlemanly pursuit holding all the excitement of the hunt without the intense physical labor. Takes about five minutes to dress out a grouse; they are delicious and provide good feathers for tying flies.

Nowadays hunting season generally finds me using my spare time hunting trout, salmon and steelhead. Just as much exercise, without the mess.

Less dangerous than I used to be, I’ve now made friends with the deer and turkeys. A healthy flock of turkeys and a small herd of deer share the homestead with us. I think of

them as the “emergency food bank.” Not wanting to upset the harmony of the meadow, I don’t say it out loud to their faces. Animals, in their own way, are as good as humans at communicating, so one must be guarded with one’s words. You look a deer straight in the eye and say, “You are my emergency food bank,” and you will never see that deer again.

There are a few bucks in the herd, though they mostly stay back on the

bunch, fearlessly grazing close to the house without much regard for the usual human commotion around the place.

Our friends and neighbors, Matt and Di, maintain a small orchard of mixed fruits which they generously share with friends. The earliest of their apple varieties is a beautiful, golden yellow summer apple. They gave us a box of these. Some of the apples had been damaged or had worm holes in them, so I decided to put these in a separate box and feed them to Silly Sally.

I’d been tossing her an apple now and then and that served to tame her quite a bit – to the point she’d come right up and take one from my hand. We were joining up. It didn’t take her long to learn her name, and she would come when called.

Silly Sally loved the golden apples so much that she started spending a lot of her time hanging out around the porch waiting for one. I’d stand on the edge of the porch and hold one out to her while averting

my eyes. Horses and deer feel threatened if you make extended eye contact with them. Most predators have eyes on the front of their faces and are in the habit of staring at their prey while stalking, so grazing animals possess an inborn fear of being stared at.

So, my eyes averted, Silly Sally –



mountain, only occasionally showing themselves. The regulars are the seven does and, lately, their babies. We’re pretty sure the does are all related and we call them “the aunties.”

The oldest of the aunties is Silly Sally, easily recognized by the dark stripe running down her face. Silly Sally is by far the boldest of the

with heartbreaking beggar's eyes expressive as any begging Labrador retriever – would stretch to take the apple from my hand.

Upon taking an apple Silly Sally effortlessly bites it in half, demonstrating jaw strength much greater than that of any human. Grazing rudiments are endowed with incredible jaw strength needed for their feeding habit. If you've ever been bitten by an angry horse, you know this. Though they lack the scary, pointed incisors lining the jaws of meat-eaters, grazer teeth function like pruning shears. Or bolt cutters.

Our cabin has only one bathroom, which, you might think, should be sufficient for two people, Doris and myself. But no. We seem to have synced into the same toilet schedule. And besides use of the toilet, she has quite a few other things she needs to be doing in the bathroom. Women will understand and relate, of course.

And I understand. I have no problem with that. She deserves top billing in the bathroom. Easy enough for me to just go outside and pee in the yard, or sometimes off the porch if I'm feeling lazy. (If your eyebrow just raised, then I suspect you might be new to living in the country, or, perish the thought, cultivating censorial proclivities that throw cold water on your sense of humor. In any case, forgive me.)

One night not long ago, nature called. Doris had the bathroom occupied so I went outside to the porch. It was a dark night. The porch light lit the immediate porch okay, yet its glare served to only deepen the shadows of the outer dark. I stood on the edge of the porch aiming toward the natty wild grass that serves as our lawn, and I didn't see Silly Sally standing silently in the dark shadow cast by one of the porch pillars.

It was almost too late when I looked down to see her beautiful liquid eyes gazing up at me, her lips curled back, bolt-cutter teeth exposed, going in and only a few inches away from taking a bite of whatever I was holding in my hand. I whirled away in the nick of time, watering the porch instead of the grass, and that action spooked Silly Sally, sending her hustling off toward the woods, her alarmed white

tail upright and flagging.

It was a close one. Could have been a painful and tragic loss. But my own fault. If there's a moral to the story then I'll leave that to you, dear reader. But I guess the simple message is: It's not the best idea to feed wild animals. They may turn dangerous.

Steven Bird is a freelance writer living beside the Columbia River. He is hopeful.

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

The Last Bird of Summer

Big love in a small package

Story and Photos by Juan Juan Moses

By the end of August, having witnessed the unimaginable pain of so many whose lives were upended so abruptly and completely by the infernos, cloaked and choked by the smoke that never ended, I was hoping, begging actually, for summer to end. Summer of 2026, chalk this one up to the summer that never was, that should never have been. I was, along with many, suffering from emotional fatigue.

Then, one evening, while brooding over one thing or another, I heard my husband's excited call: "Look! LOOK! Look what I found!"

In his palm was a hummingbird, a little mangled heap, still alive, its tiny body heaving with each labored breath. The feathers were all wet, lusterless and matted, its eyes closed, as if it were ready to depart this world. The body was crunched into a little ball, small even by hummingbird standards.

It was found under the walnut tree.

Throughout summer, it was a busy thoroughfare, the distance between the walnut tree and various locations of the feeders. We suspected there were nests on that tree. Perhaps this was a young one that fell out of a nest? Or one that was mauled and nearly became someone else's snack?

I grabbed one of the hummingbird feeders and guided its beak in. The bird took long drags in our hands, its left wing hanging useless on its side. Its right claw had no grip. This was one that would not make the migration. The last bird of summer fell into our hands.

We named it Chet.

Chet settled into an Amazon cardboard box. Every 10 minutes or so, I would pick it up and feed it. It drank and drank, its exquisite long tongue flickered and retracted, as if smacking its lips. From our first touch, it seemed to understand our intention and never fought us. It did not at all mind being picked up and was always

ready to feed. I have found fledgling robins before, and those feisty birds would literally bite the hand that fed them. But not Chet. It seemed to understand us.

After a few feedings, its body filled out. Amazing to see how fast a hummingbird's body size can change in response to food. Now we could see a beautiful bird, with iridescent, bejeweled green feathers on an elegantly slender elongated body. No jewels in the world can rival the beauty of their sheen. How fortunate we were to be given this last gift of summer! Our spirit soared with Chet's improvement.

For days, we settled into a routine: feeding every 20-30 minutes. First thing in the morning I would run to check, and it would be in a sorry state, balled up in a little heap again, seemingly in a coma. Maybe it was hunger. Maybe it was sleeping.

We would feed and feed. Then it would perk up and fill out its body. It was full of curiosity. Its little black eyes connected with our gaze and followed our movements, attentive and focused, its head bobbing while being stroked. I felt the bird's pleasure. Maybe it was my pleasure I was feeling. But it felt like we understood each other.

Chet surely could talk. It chirped; its sweet voice sounded like dew drops falling. We hear hummingbirds all summer long. But those are mainly fighting words over territory. Chet expressed contentment and pleasure. In the morning, it sighed. That sigh quickened my steps for its first feeding. We have heard that



hummingbirds make great companions. But who has this great fortune to have one sitting next to you? The last bird of summer was pure magic. However brief it would be, we were determined to make the magic itself happy.

I went out to the garden and pulled a whole Brussels sprout leaf full of aphids. Aphids we had! Soon, aphids were flying around my living room. They flew into my face, up my arm and hands. But Chet seemed uninterested. I plucked different flowers too. Scarlet sage was a hit.

We went for walks, the bird cozy in the nook of my folded palm. I hoped the swing of my hand made it think it was flying.

For seven days we raised each other in this pattern. On the eighth, I drove into Spokane with Chet. Because I knew the bird couldn't survive winter despite our efforts. Because we were leaving town and it needed constant care. Because my friend John was begging to babysit. Because John would make a better accidental new dad than we could.

On the drive to town, I held Chet on my right hand and rested it on the steering wheel. His head bobbed from side to side, utterly enjoying the drive by scenery. It especially liked Davis Lake, never taking its eyes off it. I was worried I was paying too much attention to the bird and not enough to the road. I wondered if it thought it was flying? Was this how the world looked to it? How often should I visit its new dig?

John had been waiting anxiously for the transfer. He brought two hand feeders and leaned into my car window before I came to a full stop. Without a word wasted, he scurried off with the box. It was the first time ever I have seen my friend not wanting to chat.

In less than 30 minutes, I had the first video update of Chet lustily



suckling on a pile of freshly plucked orange honeysuckle. Follow-up videos showed the bird filling out nicely almost in front of my eyes. We could now see its tail feathers smooth. "I had to cut fresh honeysuckle every 30 minutes!" John feigned annoyance like a new dad often does. "He wants fresh nectar every 30 minutes! You said to feed him every 30 minutes!"

Both Chet and John landed in heaven. His little grandson thought it was Christmas. I was jealous.

John called everybody he could think of: Spokane Audubon Society, WSU veterinarian school. He wanted Chet's wing repaired.

On the 12th day, Chet was euthanized in the WSU veterinarian school's microsurgery lab. No one could fix its wing.

On the last days of summer, we were given this gift to hold and behold for a brief moment. A beautiful spirit from another world stopped by, nodded, and left. It layered a time so full of terrible memories with one so

sweet and joyful. A last-minute gift. You may think this is utterly silly, to be this vested in a goner of an injured hummingbird. I can't think of a better thing to do. Blame it on the very human attempt to hold on to something beautiful, however futile, while the world around us feels like it is spinning out of control.

Now the first leaves of autumn are falling, the sky full of honking southbound geese. I think of the great Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore's opening lines of his great poem, "Stray Bird":

"Stray birds of summer come to my window to sing and fly away.

Yellow leaves of autumn, which have no songs, flutter and fall there with a sigh."

But Chet stays. Its song is one with the fallen leaves.

Juan Juan Moses wakes up every morning and pinches herself with gratitude that she was reborn into this great country and lives in a bountiful place called the Pend Oreille River.

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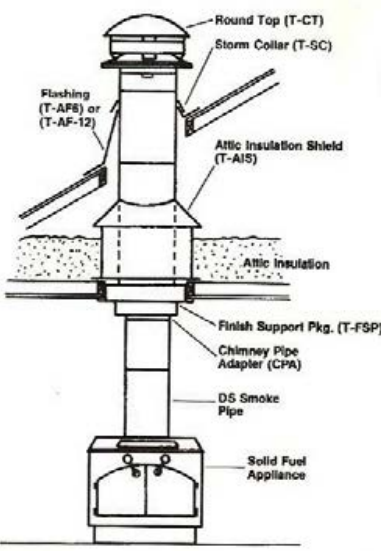
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Place Matters: Notes from My First Quarter

By Dr. Katie Kleinhesselink

Today marks my 75th day as Dean of Rural Education for Spokane Community College. In the grand scheme, that's not a long time, but in my world that's one academic quarter down!

You can pack a lot of learning into 10 weeks. If I'd just completed my first quarter in our Industrial Manufacturing Technology certificate program, for example, I'd have a foundational understanding of shop safety, blueprint reading, machining equipment, welding, hydraulics, pneumatics, electrical maintenance, and quality control. I wouldn't be an expert yet, but I'd have meaningful skills, a clearer sense of how things work, and a tangible starting point for contributing to industries that matter deeply to rural communities.

Here at the end of my own first quarter, I am far from an expert in every community, program, partnership, and opportunity across our rural service area. But I'm starting to pick up themes in conversations with local employers about where needs and education intersect, and I'm excited to keep learning.

My PhD research taught me that rural colleges can't simply be smaller versions of urban campuses. Rural colleges must be deeply embedded in the regions they serve: their industries, histories, relationships, hopes, and challenges. Place matters.

That has become even clearer in my first 10 weeks. Our campuses are more than places where students take classes. They give people room to broaden their horizons without giving up family, community, the splendor of this place, or our way of life.

We have a responsibility to create pathways that

reflect regional needs, through programs connected to local employers, schedules built for working adults, and services delivered by folks who understand local students and communities.

Our Industrial Manufacturing Technology (IMT) certificate in Colville shows what locally rooted education can do. Over three quarters, IMT prepares students with practical, transferable skills for work across regional industry, including fabrication, lumber and wood-products operations, utilities, equipment maintenance, and manufacturing. IMT graduates students ready for careers close to home, while helping employers build the workforce they need to grow.

A rural community college does more than prepare students for jobs. My greatest hope is that we become trusted local partners by collaborating on programs that expand opportunity, like LaunchNW's new Youth-Build Stevens County program; hosting community events, like the Disability Action Council Northwest's Disability Resource Fair coming up on October 15; and creating fun ways for people to learn, connect, and try something new. This fall, you can join us for hobby welding and yoga.

One quarter down, and many more to go. Our school year officially started on September 21. I can't wait to see where the next 10 weeks take us.



This page made possible by the Spokane Community College – Colville Center. Learn more about our programs and certificates at scc.spokane.edu/Colville or call 509-276-8040.

Movie Review by Sophia Mattice-Aldous

Now Playing: *Coyote vs. Acme*

Greed makes people cuckoo for cash, case in point Warner Bros. Studios' decision to shelve *Coyote vs. Acme* in 2023 for a tax write-off before public outcry prodded them to sell it to Ketchup Distributors for a theatrical release.

While I wish I could thumb my nose at said studio bigwigs by saying *Coyote vs. Acme* has become a financially successful mega hit, that just wouldn't be true. Box office-wise, it's done okay. Speaking for the entertainment factor though, it's a blast.

As the plot goes, Wile E. Coyote de-

cides to sue the Acme manufacturing company after decades of using its products in failed attempts to catch the Road Runner, hiring a beleaguered lawyer (Will Forte) to take the corporation to court. The human cast, including Forte, John Cena, Luis Guzman and Lana Condor, hold their own with the Looney Tunes, the majority of which are voiced by Eric Bauza.

In this time when it feels like wealthy

filmmakers and music producers are trying to force-feed us AI slop and hiding their avarice under the flimsy guise of creative rebellion, there is something fresh about the traditional animation and filming techniques used in *Coyote vs. Acme*. Funny, satirical, charming and even a bit heartwarming, it's a movie that deserves life off of the shelf.

***Rated PG. Runtime 1 hr., 43 min.**



Classics Corner: *Pan's Labyrinth*

It's wonderful when you've heard the same story hundreds of times and you can still cry anyway.

I realize that is not a selling point for some when it comes to movies, but if you're the kind of viewer who likes to pay for the ticket and take the ride not knowing where you will end up, Guillermo del Toro's *Pan's Labyrinth* has dazzling and heartbreaking places to take you. The movie celebrates its 20th anniversary with a re-release in theaters coming up October 8-15.

It's 1944 in fascist Spain, where a little girl, Ofelia (Ivana Baquero) and her pregnant and frail mother (Ariana Gil) arrive at the military post of her mother's new husband, the cruel captain Vidal (Sergi Lopez) who is trying

to suppress a guerrilla uprising.

While exploring an old maze nearby, Ofelia encounters a faun, Pan (Doug Jones), who tells her that she is a long-lost princess who can return to her father's enchanted kingdom and win immortality if she completes three perilous tasks. Meanwhile, one of the captain's house staff, Mercedes (Maribel Verdu), leads a dangerous double life as she makes friends with the wistful Ofelia.

Guillermo del Toro

blends the historic with the fantastic seamlessly, making you feel like legendary creatures such as fairies have always existed alongside the beauty and horror of humanity. He gets amazing performances from his

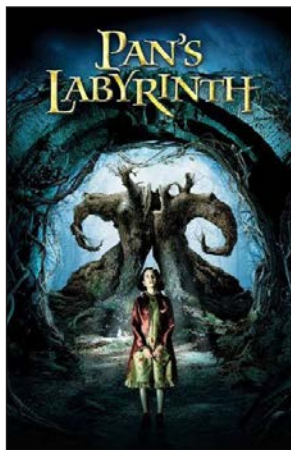
actors with Baquero shouldering the lead effortlessly, exhibiting a child's wonder while navigating a world that adults have made treacherous.

Javier Navarrete's score gorgeously travels between the film's dark fantasy elements and its post-civil war Spain setting, making it even easier to get swept up in this mature fairytale of bravery and kindness in the face of government-sanctioned sadism.

For tickets, check out Fathom Entertainment's website [fathomentertainment.com/releases/guillermo-del-toro-pans-labyrinth-20th-anniversary](https://www.fathomentertainment.com/releases/guillermo-del-toro-pans-labyrinth-20th-anniversary).

***Rated R. Runtime 1 hr., 58 min.**

Sophia Mattice-Aldous is a longtime movie buff and community newspaper reporter born in Colville and raised in the boonies. Please email questions, comments and suggestions for film reviews to sophiamatticealdous@gmail.com.





Help Us End Polio!

By Lynn O'Connor

Rotary International's primary goal for the last 45 years has been to eradicate polio. We know that diseases can be eradicated with enough dedication of resources, as was the case with smallpox.

Rotary has the ability to recognize what needs to happen to make the world better, and the ability to form partnerships to get those things done. Rotary took the success of a project to vaccinate children against polio in the Philippines in 1979 and became the founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which has brought the number of cases in the world down by 99.9%.

Poliomyelitis (polio) is an incurable but vaccine-preventable disease that can cause permanent paralysis. It's scary for a number of reasons. It primarily affects children under five; about 75% of people infected are asymptomatic; and it is highly infectious. Asymptomatic people may carry the disease for five to six weeks with the potential to spread the disease during that time. A plane ride from a place that still has polio (it is still endemic in two countries) can happen. It can (and has) returned to North America.

Populations with low vaccination rates are susceptible, but in North America we don't think of polio as a current disease. Vaccination programs eradicated it here in the 1950s. It is still a threat, however, and Rotarians recognize this. Some infections can result in severe paralysis and death.

Many Rotarians that I have met are Rotarians because

they suffered polio as children, and don't want to see that happen to anyone else. The suffering is very painful, and we now recognize that later in life symptoms can return as aging fatigues muscles that compensated for the weakness the disease created.

Rotarians all over the world hold annual End Polio Now awareness events and fundraisers – it takes money to eradicate a disease – and we have promised the world's children that we can free them of this threat. We have provided over 1 billion oral doses of the vaccines and have vaccinated over 270,000,000 children. A single dose of the vaccine costs only 15 cents.



If you are inspired by what you've read today, please support us. World Polio Day is October 24, and we are selling Pumpkins for Polio – pumpkins grown by Rotarians and also generously donated by our local friendly farmer Quayle Bateman – at the Farmers Market on Saturdays in October.

Also, a family-friendly bowling night hosted by the Rotary Club of Colville, Pins For Polio, is scheduled for October 23. Watch for future promotions of this event if you'd like to have fun helping us!

*This page made possible by the Rotary Club of Colville. Learn more at www.colvillerotary.org
View where all the Clubs in the district meet at www.colvillerotary.org/?p=whereclubsmeet*

LISTEN UP

Reviews by Michael Pickett

Angine de Poitrine's Bent Reality

Look, if you need more weird, micro-tonal music in your life (and you know you do), then Quebec has offered a mysterious duo to fill this need. Disguised in outlandish polka-dotted suits and masks, and applying auditory math equations to seriously deep grooves, Angine de Poitrine and their album, *Vol. II*, have blown up the internet in 2026.

With "Fabienk" winning the Polaris song prize, and garnering a bazillion YouTube views, Angine de Poitrine feels a lot like Primus at their most *South Park*, but the grooves here are the glue that holds this awesomely jarring music together. Check out

"Sarniezz" with its slightly off-kilter micro-tonal guitar insanity or ska-polka "Utzp" which feels like Arctic Monkeys in some twisted parallel universe.

The greatest thing about AdP isn't that it's weird, it's that it's clever, fun and well-executed progressive music. The deep grooves in much of the music give these sonic oddities weight and commitment as the guitar and bass insanity flies by at a hundred miles an hour.

How they breathe and play in those suits is beyond me, but I would love to see this live. It's encouraging that truly odd music is capturing the attention



of online listeners for all the right reasons. It's not just odd for the sake of oddity, it's a twisted artistic creation that is mostly unlike anything getting streamed today.

Hasegawa Experiments with Unpredictable Audio Honesty

When we say an album is experimental in 2026, that could mean anything from ambient side-chained keyboard and string sounds to enormous choirs of vacuum cleaners. With Hakushi Hasegawa's *Honest Feeling Album*, the sonic sky is truly the limit, with elements



of jazz, glitch-pop and inexplicable changes boiling into a sonic storm that will leave you wondering what just happened.

If you dare to cue up "Little Briar-Rose," just try to pin down whether you're experiencing Latin jazz, avant-pop or some combination of all that and a lot more. "Nausea" is far more unpredictably inviting than the title implies, with elements that almost feel like vintage '80s Zappa mixed with Peter Scherer's late '90s audio excursions thrown into a blender and served up fresh.

Having produced densely crazy tracks since middle school in Japan, Hakushi Hasegawa unapologetically squashes breakcore, fragmented glitch and su-

perbly melodic jazz-pop into a style that's utterly unique. Tracks like "The Owner of Sweetness" are like the soundtrack to some epic, cinematic cartoon gone absolutely awry, but with gorgeous melodies riding on top of layered grooves and fascinating digital glitches.

Honest Feeling Album is a unique rarity that grabs unexpected sounds from every corner of the universe to create a satisfying experience. Is it sometimes exhausting? Yes. But so are skiing, skydiving and trying to figure out how the Kardashians are still on TV. Grab some headphones, maybe a helmet, and buckle up for a truly unusual and honest audio adventure via Hakushi Hasegawa.

Check out Michael Pickett's audio and visual work at: mpcreator.com.

A Good Read

Living Aboard: The Ultimate Guide to Life on a Boat, by Scott Wilson

Reviewed by Terry Cunningham

For this October issue I thought I would offer a different winter getaway: living on board a boat. Immediately what might come to mind is sailing the seven seas on a yacht, which could be a possibility. Many people around the world live on small crafts for generations with jobs and schools, not much different from the landlubbers.

Here in the United States, most live-aboards are docked in marinas. Conditions are more convenient in the warmer climates, though it can be done in the north. There are just different situations to prepare for, like having things freeze, including the water around your home.

On the other hand, when the weather is nice, nature will seduce you into taking that home for a cruise and a break from the marina life, maybe staying out for a few days. Marinas are like small neighborhoods except everybody's home is floating and tied to the piers. Brings new meaning to pier groups.

This lifestyle takes very intentional actions to achieve, especially if you have never been on a boat or a large-enough body of water to accommodate a live-aboard community. This book, *Living Aboard*, will come in very handy.

Actually, this brilliantly and very thoughtfully written book applies to just about any living situation, especially any life in transition, including downsizing your home, a road

trip where you will be sharing a campground with others, moving into a small apartment with close neighbors, or assisted living.

Normally I would probably bypass a book like this, but it isn't your average "how to" book. Wilson's personality really comes through with his wit and sage advice. I won't be moving aboard a boat anytime soon, but I am using some of his ideas for organizing my lubber home.

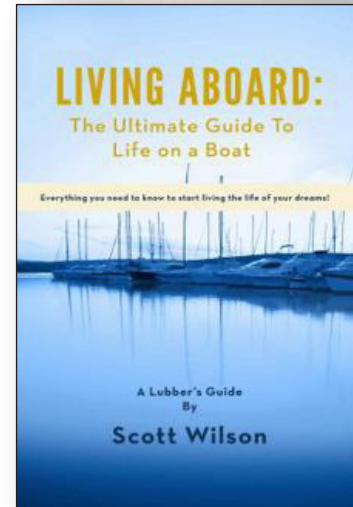
I have to admit, my time in the Navy and as a merchant marine left good memories of life onboard a ship, but not a small vessel. I did have many friends living aboard small vessels in the Seattle area and some on regular floating houses. I wasn't aware of what it took to have that lifestyle at that time. No matter small or big, they all had the same concerns, from where to moor to what to do after you've tired of the lifestyle. Wilson's common-sense approach to so many of life's circumstances drew me in.

He has lived aboard three boats, overcome many boat-home obstacles, and gained years of experience in marina life. At present he is living on a boat in Friday Harbor in Washington's San Juan Islands.

The book will walk you through everything involved in living aboard, from buying the right boat, finding a good marina for your boat and new lifestyle, how to be a good marina resident, and many tips on how to be comfortable and to flourish while living on the water. He also takes readers through what to do when you're done living aboard.

Beyond boats, I would recommend this book for anybody considering downsizing or minimizing a personal material load.

Terry Cunningham, who calls himself "a lifelong Earthling," has been a Stevens County resident for more than four decades. Now retired after 30 years as an arborist, he says he's constantly "stunned and amazed by our world," much of which comes to life in books.



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Belief in the Whole Person—

By Brenda St. John

“There is nothing new in the world. There are only the same old things happening to new people.” ~ Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

The Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was beatified September 24, 2026, in St. Louis, Missouri. Beatification is an important step on the path toward canonization. Archbishop Sheen had previously been declared “Venerable,” and with his beatification he received the title “Blessed.” If another miracle is attributed to his intercession and approved by the Catholic Church, he may one day be declared a saint.

To help prepare myself for this great event, I watched several YouTube videos of Archbishop Sheen’s television program, *Life Is Worth Living*. Each episode was about 25 minutes long. The program began in 1952 and aired

nationally during the 1950s, eventually reaching as many as 30 million viewers each week.

The topics Archbishop Sheen covered touched many aspects of the human condition – love, caring, loneliness, suffering, fear, and the search for meaning. His great gift was his ability to get to the heart of his topic in a friendly, conversational manner that could be received by people of many ages and religious backgrounds. What struck me as I watched these programs more than 70 years after they aired, was how relevant many of his observations still seem today. Human nature, it seems to me, has not changed nearly as much as

our technology has.

And as I listened to Archbishop Sheen speak about the whole person – body, mind, and spirit – I began to think about yoga. The feelings and emotions surrounding the topics of his programs are still pertinent today, and in one way or another they related to the *yamas* and *niyamas*. The *yamas* and *niyamas* are the first two of the eight limbs of yoga described in the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. Together, they are often described as ethical guidelines or observances for living a more disciplined and meaningful life.

The five *yamas* are restraints or principles governing how we relate to others:



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- *Ahimsa* (non-harming or non-violence in thought, word, and deed)
- *Satya* (truthfulness)
- *Asteya* (non-stealing)
- *Brahmacharya* (self-restraint, moderation, or right use of energy)
- *Aparigraha* (non-possessiveness or non-hoarding)

The five *niyamas* are personal observances:

- *Saucha* (cleanliness or purity)
- *Santosha* (contentment)
- *Tapas* (discipline or austerity)
- *Svadyaya* (self-study or the study of sacred texts)
- *Ishvara Pranidhana* (surrender to God or a higher power)

There is some overlap among these ten principles of yoga, the Ten Commandments of Christianity, and the Ten Perfections of Buddhism, which shows how broadly some of these virtues are valued across religious traditions.

I have just described each of the five *yamas* and the five *niyamas* with a simple word or phrase. However, scholars and practitioners of the sutras often devote an entire chapter to each one. Their meanings go much deeper than these abbreviated explanations I suggest. What it boils down to, however, is that living authentically, selflessly, respectfully, and with reverence for God can help us cultivate a life worth living.

The yoga *asana Vajrasana* exemplifies the idea that spiritual strength does not always look like movement or accomplishment. Sometimes strength is the ability to become still, to listen, and to discipline ourselves toward what we believe is true. *Vajrasana* is often translated as Thunderbolt Pose or Diamond Pose, which is the term I usually use.

To practice *Vajrasana*, begin on hands and knees. Let the big toes touch while the heels remain slightly apart. Walk the hands back and gently lower your hips

onto the heels. Keep the spine upright, with head, neck, and spine aligned comfortably. Place your palms on your thighs, with palms facing downward or upward as desired. Relax your shoulders and breathe naturally for 30 seconds or longer.

Vajrasana is generally beginner-friendly, although it can be uncomfortable for people with knee or ankle problems. It is traditionally practiced after meals and is often associated with supporting digestion, although such claims should not be taken as a medical guarantee. The pose encourages an upright posture and provides a stable quiet position for breath awareness and meditation. It can also serve as a useful base posture from which other *asana* can be explored.

If the posture is uncomfortable, it can be modified by placing a cushion between the thighs and calves or by placing a folded blanket under the ankles or knees. Always listen to your body and avoid the pose if you experience severe knee or ankle pain.

I feel that I have grown spiritually just from listening to a dozen episodes of *Life Is Worth Living* and I hope that

what I have learned will spill over into my daily life and my capacity as a yoga instructor. Perhaps this is the lesson both Archbishop Sheen and the *yamas* and *niyamas* offer us: Technology and circumstances may change but the fundamental questions of how we live, how we treat one another, and what gives our lives meaning remain remarkably constant.

Namaste.

Brenda St. John has taught yoga classes in Chewelah since 2010 and is also a Spokane Community College ACT 2 instructor.



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The Time of Unseen Danger

What you build now may determine how well you handle what comes next

By Rob Sumner

We are entering what I believe is one of the most dangerous times of the year. That probably sounds a little dramatic, but I'm not talking about icy roads, winter storms or even cold and flu season. I'm talking about something that happens much more quietly: We start doing less.

Think about what's beginning to happen right now. The days are getting shorter. Darkness arrives earlier. The temperature starts dropping. Pretty soon, instead of being outside at 7 in the evening, we're inside. The yard work slows down. The evening walks become less frequent. We aren't outside working on projects as much. As the weather gets colder, the recliner starts looking a little more inviting. Slowly, and almost without noticing it, our activity begins to decline.

A few weeks ago, I talked to our 4% Club members about something I believe becomes increasingly important as we get older: building reserves. Think about your body like a savings account. When you have plen-

ty of money in the bank, an unexpected expense may be frustrating, but you can handle it. When your account is nearly empty, that exact same expense can become a crisis. Your body isn't much different.

We have physical reserves, and three of the biggest ones I want people thinking about are strength, cardiovascular capacity and metabolic health. When those reserves are high, you have room to absorb what life throws at you. When they're low, there isn't much margin for error.

Unfortunately, I see the consequences of low reserves all the time. Someone comes into our clinic after months – or sometimes years – of gradually becoming less active. Their weight has increased. They've lost muscle. Their cardiovascular fitness has declined. Their energy isn't what it used to be. Eventually, normal tasks start becoming difficult. Getting off the floor is harder. Stairs become something to avoid. Carrying groceries takes more effort. Getting up from a low chair requires pushing with

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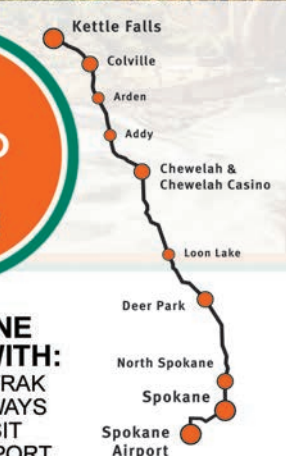
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both arms. Walking longer distances becomes exhausting. None of this happened overnight. Their reserves were slowly being depleted.

Now, I don't have anything against sitting in your recliner on a cold winter evening. I plan on doing some of it myself. The problem is what the recliner begins to replace. If you normally spend an hour outside after dinner but switch to spending that hour sitting, you've potentially lost seven hours of movement each week. Do that for a month. Then three months. Then five. Add Thanksgiving, Christmas, holiday meals, disrupted routines and less daylight, and suddenly you arrive in March feeling completely different than you did in September.

That's why right now matters. Don't wait until January to make a New Year's resolution. Don't wait until you've gained 15 pounds, your legs feel weak or you're exhausted walking up a flight of stairs. Build the routine while you still have the energy to build it.

You can focus on three things. First, build strength. Muscle is one of our most valuable physical reserves as we age. We need enough strength not only to accomplish today's activities but also to withstand periods when we can't exercise normally. Second, build your VO2 max and cardiovascular capacity. Walking is wonderful, and I want people to walk, but for many people, walking alone isn't enough to maximize cardiovascular fitness. We need intentional exercise that appropriately challenges the heart and lungs. Third, protect your metabolic health. Movement, resistance training, cardiovascular exercise, nutrition, sleep and maintaining a healthy body composition all contribute to how effectively our bodies produce and use energy.

The key is that we shouldn't wait until we're struggling to start building these things. Build them before we need them. At some point, life is probably going to interrupt your routine. You may get sick. You may need surgery. You may fall and sustain an injury. Something may leave you in bed or much less active for several weeks. Hopefully not, but eventually most of us will experience something that temporarily reduces our physical capacity.

Imagine two people experiencing the same illness or surgery. One enters it strong, active, metabolically healthy and cardiovascularly fit. The other enters it already weak, sedentary and functioning near the bottom of their physical capacity. Those two people may experience the exact same event, but they don't have the same starting point. One has reserves to lose. The other may

not.

That's what concerns me most as a physical therapist. For many older adults, the difference between independence and dependence may be much smaller than they realize. One illness. One surgery. One fall. If your reserves are already low, losing another portion of your capacity can suddenly make everyday activities require help from someone else.

This is also why I've changed the way I think about exercise. I'm not training only so I can function well today. I'm building enough reserve to survive the seasons when I can't train. Your strength isn't just for today's workout. Your cardiovascular fitness isn't just about today's heart rate. Your metabolic health isn't just about what the scale says this morning. You're putting something in the bank. Every workout is a deposit. Every walk is a deposit. Every good night's sleep is a deposit. Every time you choose movement instead of another hour in the chair, you're making a deposit. You may not need all of that reserve today, but someday you might.

So, over the next few weeks, pay attention to what happens as darkness starts arriving earlier. What time do you go inside? How much less are you moving? What activities have disappeared from your day? Most importantly, what is your plan to replace them?

Don't leave your winter health to chance. Decide when you're going to strength train. Decide how you're going to challenge your cardiovascular system. Decide what you're going to do to maintain your metabolic health. Put it on your calendar and establish the routine before winter establishes a routine for you.

Maintaining independence isn't just about being able to do things today. It's about building enough capacity today that when life eventually takes some of it away, you still have enough left.

The days are getting shorter. The weather is about to change. The recliner is waiting.

Build your reserves now.

If you're not sure how to create your winter plan and you'd like some help, email me at rob@sumnerpt.com and simply reply, "I want to build my reserves." Let's make sure you enter this winter building capacity – not slowly losing it.

Rob Sumner is a doctor of physical therapy, strength specialist, and owner of Specialized Strength Fitness and Sumner Specialized Physical Therapy in Colville. He can be reached at 509-684-5621 or Rob@SumnerPT.com.

The World and Wool

Story and Photo by Michelle Lancaster

Most people may not realize the extent of impact government policy has on farmers and the pricing of farm products. After I married a commercial dairy farmer, I was quickly exposed to terms like subsidy, federal milk marketing, foreign trade, Class 1 milk, hundredweight, and blended price. Then I moved into sheep and thought that here was a less regulated product ... was I wrong!

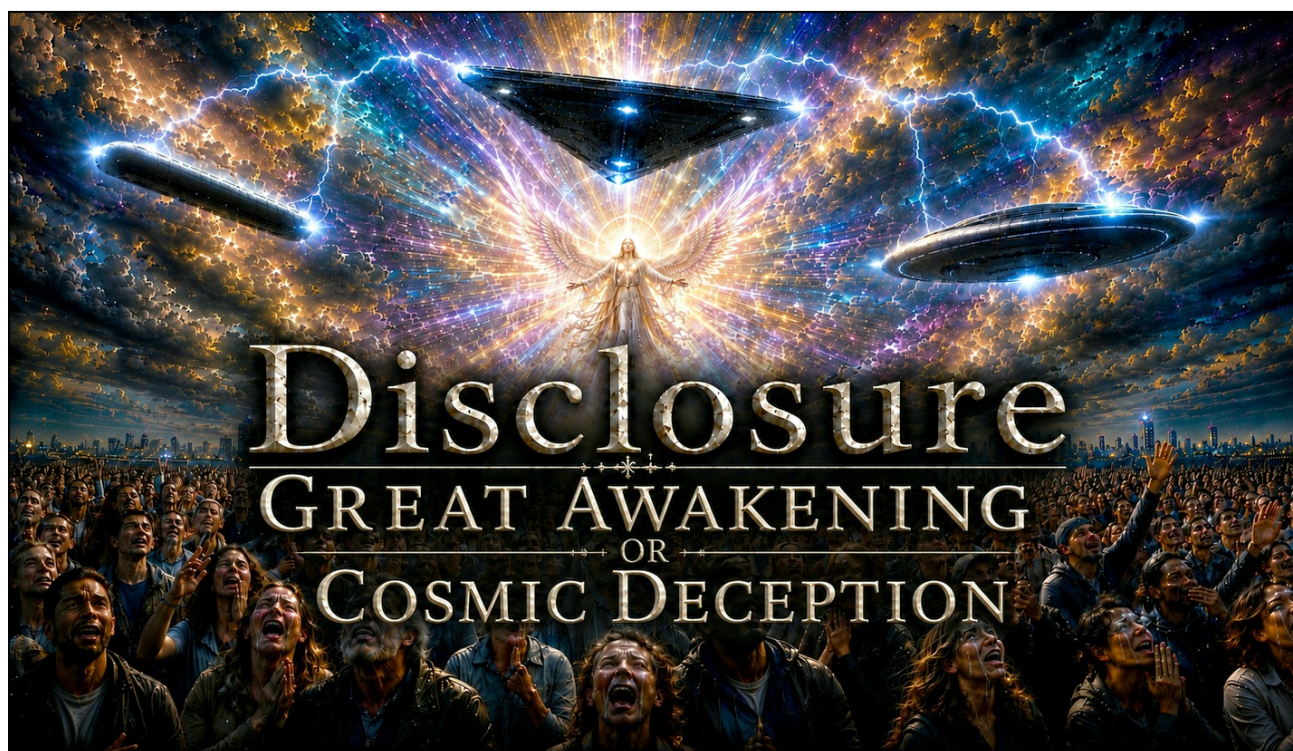
If I want to take sheep to the fair, they have to have a Scrapie ID tag linked to my farm location. American

Lamb Board manages the checkoff assessments when I sell sheep. My local sale price for lamb is greatly affected by countries that subsidize, such as Australia and New Zealand, and who at times flood the market with inexpensive meat. Sheep are a regulated farm product, just like dairy.

You also may not realize that the government has been influential in farm product pricing for longer than America has been a country! Wool is a prime example of the interaction between government and the people

and the resulting consequences (right or wrong) of such actions, beginning with the Wool Act of 1699. The law stated: *After the 1st Dec. 1699, no Wool or Woollen Manufactures, the Produce of the English Plantations in America, to be loaden on board any Ship in any Port or Place there; nor be loaden on any Horse or Carriage for Exportation.*

This meant American colonists could not export any wool products. England feared greatly that American production would capsize their own heretofore valuable wool market.



Ben Komorowski

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Courtney Shrock

A Year On The Farm

The colonists, who had no proper representation in government, instantly lost a major revenue stream. They responded by boycotting English wool products. They built up the local economy by cleaning, carding, spinning, and making finished products through methods like weaving and knitting. They also branched out into growing more flax for linen fiber and increasing domestic use of cotton and hemp. John Adams wrote: *Resolved, That it be recommended to the several Assemblies, Conventions, [etc.] that they use their utmost Endeavours, by all reasonable Means to promote the Culture of Flax, Hemp, and Cotton and the Growth of Wool in these united Colonies.*

These products, made locally, were called homespun. Families could grow, process, and wear their own clothing as a form of non-violent resistance but also out of necessity as British acts reduced their income potential, creating hard times in the colonies. Thomas Jefferson said: *Homespun is become the spirit of the times: I think it an useful one, & therefore that it is a duty to encourage it by example.*

While both men and women performed this work, the majority of fiber arts of the day were taken on by women. For instance, a newspaper of 1769 reported that *The good women ... true daughters of liberty and industry, stimulated by their fair sisters, met ... to the number of 55, with 34 wheels; and from five o'clock in the morning to seven in the evening, picked, carded and spun, of cotton, wool and tow [flax]. ... Among the matrons there was one,*

who did the morning work of a large family, made her cheese, etc., and then rode more than two miles, and carried her own wheel, and sat down to spin at nine in the morning, and by seven in the evening spun 53 knots, and went home to milking."

Notice how a full 70 years have gone by! The Wool Act was one in a long line of acts by the British government that led to the American Revolution. After the Revolution, the new American

subsidies as times changed and cheap synthetic fibers overwhelmed the fiber market. This move effectively ended the wool industry in America.

Government policy has impacted the sheep industry greatly, just as policy has affected milk and other farm products. Sheep numbers peaked in 1884 at 51 million head, whereas today there are only around 5 million sheep in the United States. The product that helped shape the American Revolution is now a moderately valued sideline industry.

Wool may not be worth fighting a war over anymore, but is still a valuable natural farm product. Understanding the limitations of profitability on sheep and wool today, how am I responding?

First, I avoid the commodity market as much as possible, because I am guaranteed rock bottom pricing for the lamb I produce and wool pricing is below cost to produce. As one farmer, there is not much I can do about federal pricing, etc. Second, I consider myself a modern Lady of Liberty, boycotting synthetic fibers. A newspaper article about me might just read: *Among the matrons there was one, who did the morning work of shearing sheep, etc., and then rode more than four miles, and carried her own wheel, and sat down to spin every Monday with friends, and then went home to milking and knitting her own homespun garments.*

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



government quickly stepped in with multiple tariffs to protect the U.S. wool industry from foreign influence.

Decades later, in 1954, the National Wool Act built on this by stating: *It is recognized that wool is an essential and strategic commodity which is not produced in quantities and grades in the United States to meet the domestic needs. ... It is declared to be the policy of Congress, as a measure of national security and in promotion of the general economic welfare, to encourage the annual domestic production ... of shorn wool. ... This legislation subsidized wool production, stabilizing the price of wool produced in America, which encouraged farmers to produce more wool.*

By 1995, Congress phased out wool

Lake Chewelah: Why We Can't Drain

A story of unusual circumstances, gravity and peat soil

Story & Photos by Cindy Talbott Roché

Lake Chewelah isn't a place name you can find on a map. People from Chewelah use it to describe the south end of the valley where it floods every winter. This surface water comes and goes with the seasons, arriving in December and disappearing in May. Migrating waterfowl, including swans, geese and a multitude of duck species, know when and where to find Lake Chewelah, as they journey north to their summer nesting sites. They do not stop there on their southbound journey because the entire area is dry at that time of year.

My father bought a farm in the valley south of Chewelah in October of 1965. I'm sure that he was surprised and dismayed when water covered a fairly large part of the farm that winter and didn't dry up until nearly June. I remember that he contacted the county about dredging the Colville River again because someone told him the problem was caused by conditions on the river near Addy. He was understandably frustrated when told that there would be no more dredging of the river.

The first dredging of the Colville River started in March 1910, with the objective of "draining the swamp" to create more farmland to produce grain and timothy hay for horses. A Foley-Gleason steam dredge, unloaded from the railroad at Valley, worked around the clock, never stopping for beaver dams, logs, stumps, willows or thorn bushes. It cleared everything in front of it, leaving a straight, clean-cut canal 22 feet wide and 5 feet deep. They finished on April 21, 1911. The *Colville Examiner* (April 25, 1911) reported that "the

Colville River from Valley to Meyers Falls is 20 miles shorter now than it was a year ago."

It was reported that land values jumped from \$15 and \$20 to \$100 or more per acre (notes from Walt Goodman, Stevens County Historical Society). In 1911, E.A. Tarble paid the state of Washington \$1,462.50 for 80 acres of newly drained land south of Chewelah in Section 36 (Sections 16 and 36 were set aside for schools). Three years later he purchased another 80 acres in that quarter section for the same price (\$30.78/acre). How much land actually sold for \$100 or more per acre isn't clear, or if that was just a speculated value.

It is clear that there continued to be problems for the farmers. With the water table lowered, the tules and native grasses and sedges dried out and farmers set fires to clear the area before plowing it. During the summer of 1921 the peat soil caught fire. Because no one knew how (or had the equipment) to extinguish these fires, they burned down to the water table before they went out. This lowered the level of the land so much that a road south of Chewelah had to be corduroyed with logs to be usable again (Stevens County Historical Society records).

By 1928, willows and hawthorns on the berms along both sides of the river were growing together across the river and catching debris that came downstream during runoff. These blockages caused minor flooding in some parts of the valley, so the county decided to remove this brush. The contractor started at the bridge on Steinmetz Road and

worked toward Bluecreek, winching the deep-rooted hawthorns into the river. Afterwards, a cat driver dragged the brush into piles about 75 feet from the river where they were burned (Walt Goodman memories, February 1997, Stevens County Historical Society).

1938 was a major flood year. By the fall of 1939, some farmers were calling for another dredging because the Colville River bed was "filling up fast and within a few years would be a menace to the entire valley" (*Colville Examiner*, Sept. 2, 1939). Not everyone agreed. Several farmers living in the Chewelah area objected to re-dredging the river, asserting that their farms were "all right just as they are" and further draining would "lower the water table to the extent that their lands would become as dry as the surrounding uplands" (*Colville Examiner*, Nov. 11, 1939). In the fall of 1941, farmers at Addy removed log jams and beaver dams from the river to prepare for spring-time high water (*Colville Examiner*, Nov. 15, 1941). By 1940 the Army Corps of Engineers was involved and the farmers did not have to pay for the next dredgings, which occurred in 1944 and 1948.

During the 1950s there were seven flood control associations that funded the work of re-dredging the river with cost-shares from the Soil Conservation Service, using a shovel and dragline operated by Robert Skidmore. The Valley Flood Control Association, comprising nine farmers near Valley, realigned four miles of river channel, deepening, widening and reshaping the bank. This was

supplemented by 2,640 feet of secondary drain ditches.

What was happening to Tarble's land during this time? He sold it in April 1931 on an owner contract to C.J. and Clara Hageman and got it back from Clara in 1941 (apparently after her husband died). Tarble sold it again in 1948 to a couple who added it to property lying south and east of section 36. This farm sold again in 1950, 1956, 1957, 1960, 1962, 1964 and 1965. This is not exactly a track record normally associated with a successful farm.

I speculate that annual winter flooding was a major factor. Timothy hay cannot be grown on land that is under water several months of the year; the plants "drown" during the winter. Oats can be grown only if the water dries up early enough in the year (the second half of

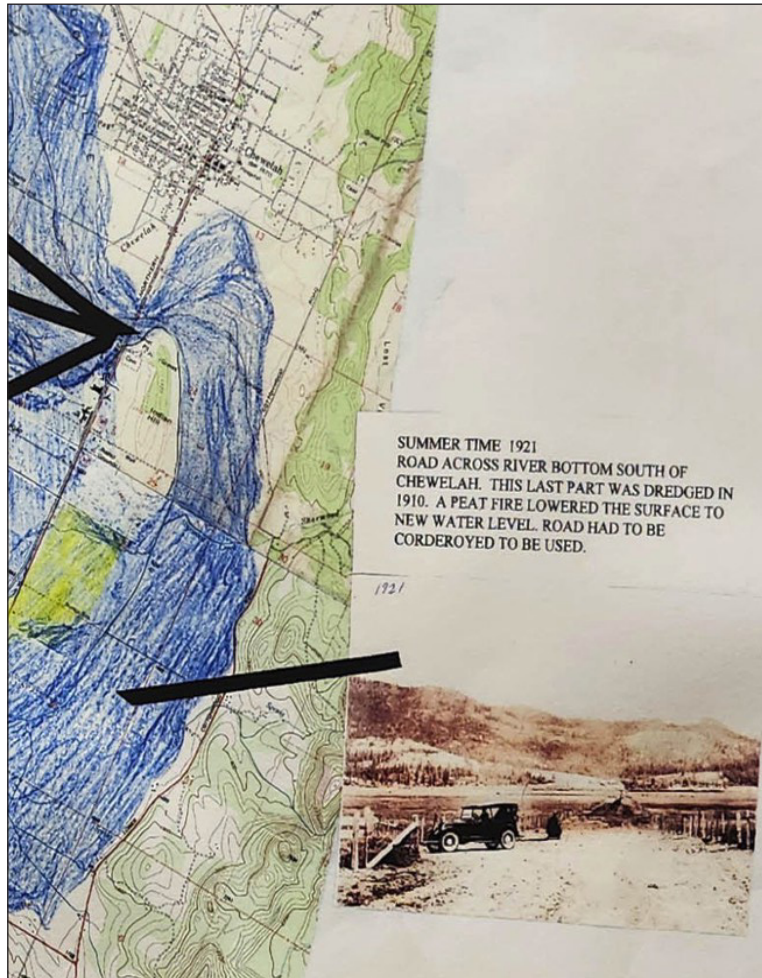
May) to till the soil and seed. Cattle often contracted the disease called blackleg in pastures over peat soils.

Why didn't 50 years of dredging create as much productive farmland as was promised? The primary reason is that if you want to drain a swamp, you need somewhere to drain the water to. This means you need a gradient for gravity to do its job because water (obviously) flows

downhill. (One exception is capillary action, like water going up in a tree. Capillary action is relevant here, but I'll get back to that.) The Colville River near Chewelah is about 20 feet lower than at Valley, a distance of

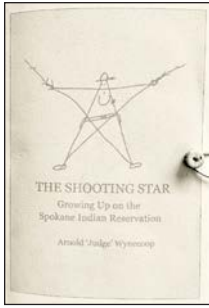
without significantly changing the gradient, so Lake Chewelah returns every winter.

Much of Lake Chewelah is underlain by peat soil, which has an exceptionally high capacity for holding water (27 inches of water per 60 inches of soil depth). During winter snowmelt and runoff, the peat acts like an enormous sponge as the water fills the pores. Sponges and peat soil hold water in their pores by capillary action. This attraction of water to surfaces can be overcome by "squeezing the sponge" but there isn't any practical way to do that under Lake Chewelah. When the sponge is full, the excess water stands over the surface instead of draining downstream. Until it evaporates into the air, this water provides a shallow lake for swans, ducks, and geese to rest and refuel before heading on north.



about 8.5 river miles, with a gradient of 0.00045. The mouth of Cottonwood Creek (3.4 river miles south of Chewelah) is closer to where the water accumulates for Lake Chewelah. The difference in elevation between there and Chewelah Creek is just 5 feet, a gradient of 0.027%, which, rounded to the nearest whole percent, is zero. The repeated dredging lowered the water table a few feet

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The Shooting Star: Growing Up on the Spokane Indian Reservation

By Judge Wynecoop

Excerpts from Judge Wynecoop's 2010 book The Shooting Star: Growing Up on the Spokane Indian Reservation, reprinted with permission.

MORE FISHING STORIES

Brother Dick and I worked for our Uncle Merritt Galbraith felling timber. This was in the late spring, and we would go out early in the morning and work until 11 a.m. We were getting a good head start on the skidding because by lunchtime Dick had to go back to his full-time ranch work. Merritt and I would then skid the timber we had felled.

After work one day, we decided to go ride around the hills northwest of where we logged above Merritt's ranch. We wound up in the upper Sand Creek area. We pulled into a place where there were some beaver ponds and stopped for a break. Dick was standing at the head of a beaver pond

The thing about fishing lures on poles with fixed-length fishing lines is that you may be able to cast out, but when you try to retrieve the lure and recast to a new spot, usually the lure, since it is fairly heavy, will come straight back at you – fast. That happened to Ted, who was about six years old at the time. The lure came whizzing back and stuck just between his nose and upper lip. I was off a ways fishing when the commotion started; I ran back to see what was going on and was met on the trail by Ted.

He was crying some but was actually quite brave as he came right up to me for help. After I took a quick look at his face he looked up at me and asked, “Uncle Judge, am I going to die?”



I told him no but found out very quickly that I would not be able to remove the hook on the lure, so off to the Wellpinit Clinic we went and were very lucky that the doctor was home that weekend. Ted's dad, Dick, had been informed and came up to the clinic to help, thank God, because Ted refused to take a Novocain shot. The doctor explained that he had to cut off the eye end of the hook and then push the hook on through Ted's lip, but Ted was not about to take the shot unless his dad took one first! So, Dick got a shot, and the operation was a success.

BEEP IN THE DAY!

Uncle Glenn was an interesting and entertaining guy to be around. He was full of stories and had a few oddities about

and said, “Hey, there are fish in here!”

That set off a whole bunch of fishing trips to those ponds. On one of these trips, Tina and I had taken a bunch of nephews and nieces along and I had rigged up fishing poles for some of them. Nephew Ted Wynecoop was one of the fishermen. I cautioned all of them to just use a single hook, a sinker, and worms or flies for bait. Well, Ted found a big, beautiful Gypsy King fishing lure in my tackle box, and that had to be the one to use.

him, one of which was how he drove an automobile. He had a habit of leaning on the steering wheel, maybe more like wrestling the steering wheel, and when a person leans on the steering wheel while driving, now and then the horn goes off.

When that would happen Glenn would quickly look around, wave boldly, and ask: “Hi, how are you doing?” And then he would turn to Chick and me and say, “I bet you guys never even saw him, did you?”

Reflections on Life's Journey

Time Flies

Shorter days and an early harvest

By Karen Giebel

Every year when September arrives, I am certain the fast pace of summer will come to a screeching halt and autumn will arrive slowly and gracefully. And every year I am proven wrong. You'd think I would have learned by now that September comes galloping in yelling, "Yee ha, girl, saddle up 'cause we're riding hard this month!" I believe things should slow down. Darkness comes earlier and dawn arrives later every morning.

Now, it is so quiet with the birds having migrated, boat noise from the lake has fallen off and tourist traffic on the highway has all but ceased, so my brain tells me life is moving slower. But then I looked at the calendar and realized it was already September 19th and I hadn't written my next *Monthly* article and where had this month gone?

September is prime harvest season and even though our garden was considerably smaller this year there was still a ton of work to do. I vowed not to can another pickle, but I still ended up making a batch of Italian giardiniera using cauliflower, onions, garlic, carrots and peppers because I can't stand wasting food.

I went from having no dill because the ground squirrels ate it to having volunteer dill pop up everywhere, so I picked it and donated it to a few places/people because I can't waste food. (There's a theme here.)

Cucumbers, yellow squash, lettuce, carrots, radishes, they all need to be harvested and processed – either canning or freezing or just eating – and

once they start producing, they just keep coming.

I canned apple butter and blueberry jam because I know our little grandsons will enjoy both. I got all that done and then it was time for the tomatoes and peppers to ripen. Dan planted just six plants of each but boy howdy they are loaded with tomatoes (but thankfully not so many peppers!). So far, I have made and frozen a batch of pasta sauce, canned two batches of salsa, and frozen tomato jam and chili on my way to canning stewed tomatoes.

It didn't help my schedule that hubby drove to Colorado to hunt elk with his son and was gone for two weeks and his chores became mine. No elk were taken this trip, so it ended up just being very expensive camping, but they had a good time and made memories.

Three days ago, Dan came in from the garden and excitedly announced that the Italian plums were ready to pick. What? The plums and pears are never ready before the middle of October but yes, both were ready. It seems both the drought and the heat this year sped their growing season. We have four plum trees and, of course, they are absolutely loaded with fruit. I may never put my canners away this year.

Oh, by the way, the four apple trees are also ready. Right now, I wish I knew how to clone myself and sleep is vastly overrated.

Once the garden and orchard are finished producing, there is still more work to be done. Plants need

to be pulled. Weeding and mowing need doing. Soil requires enriching and mulching. My flower and herb beds need the same attention. I want to bring both the thyme and rosemary plants indoors and hope they will over-winter. Shrubs need to be pruned, and the junipers need to be tied so they will grow up and not out.

Outdoor furniture will go into the sheds for the winter, and the grass will need one last mowing before putting the lawn mower away until next spring. The hummingbird feeders are cleaned and put away, and I need to get the winter bird seed feeders cleaned and set out. Speaking of cleaning, I must make time to clean my car and get it winter-ready too.

Is it too much to hope that things will slow down as October unfolds? Well, as they say, "Hope springs eternal," so I will hope, because right now, time just flies.

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



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Is our society cascading toward collapse?

Story & Photo by Joe Barreca

I have started collecting seeds. I have bok choy seeds from plants started this year and carrot seeds from a carrot left in the ground over winter. There are thousands of them, enough to plant a whole field. We found out last year that seeds grown locally have adapted and do much better than commercial seeds. The abundance surprised me. Then I started looking at everything we eat. In many cases the seed itself is the food and with fruit, there is always a seed inside.

We had a warm, wet winter with little snow. Apple trees have responded with huge crops everywhere I look, though where there is no irrigation, the apples can be small. The heat and dry weather did more than spark huge wildfires. Many crops are stressed and animals are stressed too. Bears, turkeys, birds and bees have devoured fruit and berries that my neighbors and I grew. You can't blame them. Climate change is affecting us all.

Feeling a little stressed myself, a new book caught my attention, *I Eat the Stars: How to Live Fully and Beautifully in a Collapsing World* by Sarah Wilson. The title is strange, but she explains that it is a line from a poem by Rebecca Elson that starts, "Sometimes as an antidote to fear and death, I eat the stars." The collapsing world part of the title hit home. I don't see the climate getting better

despite new techniques and technologies.

Neither does Wilson. I liked that she is considered a philosopher and has interviewed hundreds of experts and done research in fields related to collapse. As a result, she includes great quotes. She invites us to read the first three chapters and decide if we want to read the rest. Chapter 1, Hope, has a quote from Liam Neeson: "The growth-based comfortable existence is over." Chapter 2, Relief, includes a story from James Stockdale, who survived being held prisoner by the North Vietnamese. He relates that the other prisoners who relied on hope of release "died of a broken heart." Chapter 3, Truth, concludes that making sense is more important than turning out like we wanted. Wilson advises that giving up hope of maintaining the status quo leads to relief. Count me in.

Then she bears down on collapse with a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson: "The end of the human race is that it will eventually die of civilization." We are getting more of that end-of-the-human-race part with dire predictions about artificial intelligence lately. Wilson sees no way out of climate change and says AI will fail because it tries to consume all of our water and energy. "The Titanic is going down and we're debating the right way to fold the deck chairs." Part of the problem, she says, is "our collective inability to pay attention."

This year my attention has become attuned to centralization. Noting that, despite all the hype about seeds from big companies, they are not necessarily better, and I am doubting that any information from big companies is the unvarnished truth. They often offer solutions to problems we are familiar with such as diseases, poverty or poor crops. That is the situation where Wilson introduced me to a new word, moloch.

Moloch is an ancient Canaanite deity associated with child sacrifice in the Bible. The term later evolved into a metaphor for any brutal force or system that demands terrible human costs. Wilson associates it with a cascade of events with outcomes the opposite of the intended one.

A simple example would be people in the front row of a concert standing up, forcing everyone behind them who wants to see the stage to do the same. A more dev-

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astating one is the nuclear arms race, where nuclear weapons developed by one country induce others to do the same or worse. Innumerable other examples follow the same trajectory such as more powerful AI or research into bioweapons or pesticides that insects inevitably evolve resistance to.

A common moloch thread is the rise of authorities promising solutions to problems but demanding the loss of freedom or representation in return. When the situation gets bad, she writes: “There are of course god-awful

opportunists out there doing the work of vultures – investment firms, Big Tech, Big Pharma, Big Ag, Big Oil, the brologarchy...” Wilson cites Clay Shirky: “Institutions will try to preserve the problems to which they are the solution. That’s what they do.” (For instance, I see money going into cancer research for a cure but very little going into prevention.)

The crises Wilson addresses reinforce each other. Climate change makes financial insecurity and inequality worse. Inequality fosters war. War makes diesel fuel more expensive. Transportation costs make food and everything else more expensive. Etc. We have seen the “hockey stick” picture of the increased effects of global warming. Wilson paints all of these as having their own hockey stick graphs. Anything that seems to be slipping will only get worse and do so much faster as time goes on.

I agree with Wilson that this is not necessarily a picture of unavoidable doom but a picture of unsustainable growth in the face of natural laws. She quotes Kenneth Boulding: “Anyone who believes in indefinite growth in anything physical in a physically finite planet is either mad or an economist.” Then Wilson quotes Gaya Herrington on why economists are so keen on growth: “Growth is the only way poverty can be eliminated with-



out the rich having to give up something.”

What everyone has to give up on is complexity. Her studies show that complexity causes civilizations to collapse. Any disruption in the supply chain, people’s health, or a million other things can trigger a tipping point to collapse. She advocates that we start making our lives simpler right now by working with nature. Nature will force us to live more simply one way or another. People I have interviewed who lived through the Great Depression recount moving to cities to find work but returning because the countryside has steady work and healthy food. We have a head start on simplicity.

I believe there is more to this than living simply. I believe that no one person has all the answers, but we all want to survive and have something to contribute. Wilson says we can start to find those ideas using the 3 C’s – collaboration, cooperation and communication. There are more ideas in this book than will fit in one article. Much like the abundant seeds that nature gives us. As David Fleming wrote, Wilson asks us to “draw inspiration that has lain dormant, like the seed beneath the snow.”

Joe Barreca makes maps, grows grapes, makes wine and posts blogs on BarrecaVineyards.com. Vineyard apprentices are welcome!

The Practical Cook Book

Intriguing genealogy with a side of calf's brain fritters

By Maureen Dobson

My family has been blessed with many strong women. I'm thinking of one today as I look through a well-used 1910 cookbook. It belonged to my great-grandmother, Zora Magee. This charming little book contains such interesting recipes. Such as Oat Meal Lemonade, Fried Frogs' Legs and Calf's Brain Fritters, Coffee Jelly and Turban of Fish.

She wrote her name in it. Made little notes. Glued in recipes cut from the newspaper. Even jotted down a few recipes of her own, such as one for Eggless Cookies, which contained these ingredients: 1½ cups sugar, a little salt, 1 level teaspoon soda, 1 cup lard or butter & lard, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 1 cup sour buttermilk, and flour to make a soft dough.

The Practical Cook Book was compiled and arranged by Elizabeth O. Hiller, formerly principal of the Chicago Domestic Science Training School and lecturer on household science. It includes not only recipes but also advice on how to use a gas range and explanations of different methods of cooking such as fricasseeing and larding. It seems to me like a book for beginners or maybe people new to using a gas range, which had just recently become common in American homes.

So, for example, to make Dry Toast:

Cut stale bread in one-third-inch slices; remove the crust. Lay slices on the broiler some distance from the gas flame and toast the bread, turning often until it is evenly browned. If you stack the toast, one slice on top of the

other, toast will soon become moist and tough. Toast may or may not be buttered before sending to the table.

In 1910, great-grandma Zora was in her mid-40s, mother of nine. I can't imagine she didn't already have a pretty good grasp on cooking. So, I wonder



Zora Needham family at the 1906 Spokane Fair.

if this book was a gift. Perhaps from a loving child. Or maybe after many years of cooking over an open fire, she had a limited number of recipes and wanted to step things up a bit. Or maybe they just bought a new gas range.

It's a fun book. The style and word use (I had to look up a few) is a step back in time to post-industrial, pre-World War I America. Taft was president. Women couldn't vote yet. They still wore

floor-length skirts. For some reason, the image I get is of Barbra Streisand in *Hello, Dolly!* Of course, Zora's life wasn't quite like Dolly's.

Zora Magee was born in Illinois in 1864, the third year of the Civil War. Raised on a farm in the "Mississippi River Bottoms," her life was harsh. The family was poor. Zora remembered one Christmas when the kids each received just a "shin plaster" – a paper 5¢ piece in their stockings. When she was 12, her father, Andrew, and brother Isaiah died from "chills and fever" – leaving mother Sara to go on alone with Zora and her younger siblings, Charley and Lilly.

Sara couldn't support the children on her own so Zora and Charley had to go out to work. Zora found employment as a live-in maid. Her bed was in the attic, a scary place during a thunderstorm, she recalled. Nine-year-old Charley also found domestic work, as did mother Sara. All in different households. (I'm assuming seven-year-old Lilly stayed with her mother.)

Fast forward seven years. Now 19, Zora received a telegram from her mother asking her to go quickly to Chillicothe, Missouri, and care for her recently married 14-year-old sister, Lilly, who was ill. Lilly did not survive and what happened next caused a scandal in the neighborhood and was reported in several local papers. Zora eloped with her now widowed brother-in-law, Jimmie Martindale! *The Fayette Advertiser* reported "The parents of Martindale reside here and are good

people, and of course condemn the course of their wayward son.”

Well, eventually all was forgiven and the young couple moved to “Indian Territory” (Oklahoma). They had five children; two died as infants. The family lived in two wagons and had a kind of medicine show, traveling from town to town selling their wares, camping out wherever there was fresh water and grass for the horses.

One item they sold was a salve Zora made all her life. It contained beeswax rolled into a stick and wrapped in paper. It sold for 25¢ and was used for cuts and scratches. Another feature of their show was some wild animals they’d caught, raccoons, a coyote. It was a big loss to them when the unfortunate coyote hung itself trying to escape from their wagon. Jimmie brought in additional cash by playing his fiddle at dances and doing some horse trading.

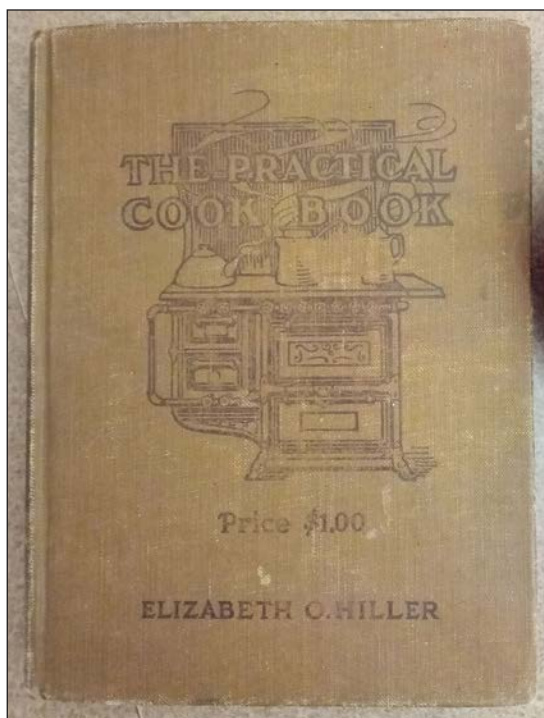
Fast forward another 11 or 12 years and suddenly Jimmie is out of the picture. Now, there are two family stories about this. One says that Jimmie died of an unnamed illness. The other says that he unknowingly bought stolen horses and when the family crossed the Kansas-Missouri state line, he was stopped and accused of theft. According to one family historian: “Not having proof of purchase, he was sentenced to life in prison. The judge granted Zora a decree of divorce.”

In those days, the Kansas-Missouri border was a prime area for horse theft and other unlawful activities. Organizations like the Anti-Horse Thief Association sprouted up to deal with the problem. Some of these groups acted within the law and others didn’t. I’ve wondered if it was possible poor Jimmie was lynched.

Whatever happened, Zora, now in her early 30s and with three small

children to support, moved to Dayton, Washington, to be near her brother Charley, who was among the first settlers on Lake Pend Oreille in Idaho. Magee Ranger Station near Pritchard is named after him.

In Dayton, Zora supported herself and the kids by taking in washing, done on a board in a washtub, and by mending grain sacks for the local farmers. Soon, though, her luck changed. Charley introduced his sister to his friend and fellow Idaho homesteader Jack Needham and the two were married in 1897.



Zora and Jack were married 25 years and had four children together (the youngest daughter, Bertha was my grandmother, born in 1907). The family enjoyed a prosperous and active life near the community of Cedar Creek on Lake Pend Oreille. Their farm at one time boasted 500 fruit trees.

Dances, picnics and the once-a-month visit of an area preacher were favorite events. Travel from Cedar Creek at the time was all on the water. Passenger boats for a 25¢ fare or sometimes the mail boat taxied folks around.

According to Zora’s son Gordon, “A person could go to town (Bayview or Sandpoint) and have about three hours for shopping and business and return the same day.” To get to Spokane required a boat trip, then horse-drawn stage to Athol, then the train to the city.

Homesteading was hard work but I can’t help thinking these years were mostly happy ones for Zora. She had a real home to live in for one thing. Security. Well earned. She was near her brother and their mother joined them in later years. And she had Jack, who, by all accounts, was a pretty good guy, a strong and adventurous soul himself. Born in Illinois in 1853, he had struck out on his own at age 18, working his way west. He traveled up and down the coast from Vancouver, B.C., to San Francisco freighting for the Army and trapping.

Great-grandmother passed away in 1941 having outlived Jack and four of her nine children. I don’t know how much she used her practical cookbook, but I enjoy imagining her whipping up a meal of broiled chicken, carrots in cream sauce, boiled sweet potatoes and butter buns for her big family. Maybe some Tutti Frutti Ice Cream for dessert:

Make a syrup by cooking three-fourths cup sugar and one-half cup water together three minutes; cool and add one quart cream and 1½ tablespoons vanilla. Freeze. ... Add one cup of candied cherries, pineapple, apricots, pears, etc., cut in small pieces, softened in hot syrup or soaked in brandy or rum, then drained and cooled before adding to the frozen mixture.

Maureen Dobson is retired from the corporate world and enjoys researching family history, writing short stories, taking care of her defenseless potted plants and planning more walking adventures with her daughter.

The Four Five of Us

A rafting trip summons special memories

By Rod Brauner

The Columbia River is in my blood. I was raised alongside it at a small spot between the mouths of the Kettle River and Nancy Creek. My family fished, boated, and swam in the cool water. I inadvertently drank gallons of it. Shelly and I were married at the Sharpening Stone which overlooks what once was a special fishing and gathering place for Indigenous tribes.

Then there is the Colorado, especially the part that runs through the spectacular national park that is the Grand Canyon. The sense of awe is with me to this day. Last year, my son, Aaron, my two grandsons, Ethan and Aden, and I spent three exciting days on this ageless river.

I am unsure of how our trip idea began. Maybe the idea of a rafting trip there may have been planted when my wife and I visited the park in 2022. That time, we descended to the river in a helicopter, diving into the abyss. I think I yelled louder than she did! With G forces at work, our stomachs and brains tried to absorb the shock and sense of the immensity and depth of the canyon. It was pretty exhilarating! One of many great trips Shelly and I went on in our 40 years together.

In any case, the day us guys set out for our camping and rafting trip last year started out at Greenwood Cemetery near Hunters. It was clean-up

day. Greenwood is where many family members are buried, including Shelly, who had passed away just eight months

went clad in long-sleeve shirts, big floppy hats and loads of sunscreen. Rafting can be an uneasy foray into

the unknown – or a blast. We had a blast!

Three days of tremendous waves, eddies, whirlpools, and calm flows too as our gigantic raft flew down the river. As we dove into deep gullies large waves splashed all of us, drenching a few who were on

the bow – thrilling! My younger companions took turns up front. I stayed in the middle, sitting on very large containers of camp gear. I still got plenty wet, though! We dried out in the sunshine as we went. The weather was on our side. Hot during the day but nice and cool when the sun set.

One day, we were reminded how dangerous the river can be. On one series of massive waves there was an upside-down dory smashed against a huge boulder, with several overboard passengers being rescued. Our guide spun around in an eddy and asked if all were okay. Kayakers were with this group and they fished the overboard boaters out of the water. They were shocked but no one was seriously hurt.

At one spot along the river was a large eddy bordered by a 20-foot rock ledge rising in a magnificent array of 100 hues. Black, red, orange, yellow, purple. Off this high ledge some rafters jumped into the 60-degree water.



before. We worked hard, mowing, weed whipping, and trimming the perfume-laden lilacs. Our plane was to leave for Las Vegas at 3:30 p.m. Early afternoon had us driving to the Spokane airport in a rush to catch our flight. We made it, somehow. Arriving in Vegas, we located our hotel, feasted on a steak dinner, and went to bed early as we were exhausted.

The next day we headed to the roaring Colorado. First, an airplane ride. Our pilot gracefully landed the Twin Otter on a narrow dirt runway near the river. We applauded her skill. The Twin Otter is a dependable and sturdy aircraft; I've flown in one four or five times.

Next, we helicoptered to the raft launch site. Any ride in one of those contraptions is a bit nerve-wracking, but we made it. Our group consisted of two rafts with a dozen people on each. Our personal gear was stowed in waterproof rucksacks and off we

Yikes! I did not jump but observed those brave souls plunging into the churning waters.

Our river guides, quite a rambunctious bunch, treated us well, fed us delicious grub that we devoured, and explained and educated us on the complexities of riverine ecosystems, ancient rock strata, wildlife and indigenous peoples who have lived in this area for millennia.

We saw numerous bird species – long-legged great blue herons (my brother Dan's totem), lots of geese, hummingbirds, and ducks – plus mountaineering bighorn sheep, so adept at scaling the rock walls, and bats. Nocturnal, mosquito-devouring bats. At dusk, while we were setting up camp on an undulating beach, the tiny winged mammals flitted around us.

The crows were wild. As soon as we broke camp and were back on the water, the murder swooped in looking for camp morsels.

As mentioned, the guides cooked us up some good meals. Teriyaki chicken, potatoes and carrots, broccoli, bacon and eggs, cheese omelets, fruit, cookies. A meal of hotdogs and hamburgers was especially tasty while relaxing on a Colorado River beach.

Camping was rustic. The aluminum folding cots were ingenious but a puzzle to put together and I'm not that good with puzzles. When we landed, all gear was heaved onto the beach. We scrambled to locate ours and it was first come, first served as everyone rushed to find the best spot to camp for the night.

In case you were wondering, our bathroom was a toilet seat on a bucket ... ahhh, such is the river camping life. Each had a little privacy screen.

My boys kept me as comfortable as possible – assisting with my tent, chairs, spirit. Thank you, guys! Aaron, Ethan and Aden slept out under the magnificent starry sky. The roar

of the river, a gibbous moon, zillions of stars of the Milky Way were in the background. A stunning vista of light in the universe.

When we came to our last moments on the river, we had a leisurely float alongside a series of docks, Zodiacs and helicopter pads. Copters transporting tourists to and fro. This was the exact spot Shelly and I had coptered down to. After getting to the river, we had taken a quick half-hour Zodiac trip, then returned to our copter for the struggling ascent back to the rim. This time I sensed her presence all around us. Perhaps there had been five instead of four of us on that trip.

Rod Brauner graduated from Kettle Falls in 1974 and Spokane Community College and Eastern Washington University. He is a very proud father of three, grandfather of three and great-grandfather of three. He resides in Spokane.



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A New Family Member

Story by Bob McGregor, Photo by Fred Woods

As I approach my final hour, if I have a choice between having my children present or my dog, I would like to choose my dog. My kids would probably cry and that would make me feel sad, because I love them both very much (even though I don't tell them often enough). But my dog will just lie beside me, licking my hand and letting me know that everything is going to be alright.

Not that I'm expecting my demise anytime soon. I'm in good health, for my age, but what's new is I now have a dog. My puppy, pictured (right) with a friend's dog, Watson (left), has been with me for almost four weeks.

I don't know if he will shorten or lengthen the time to my eventual demise. I'm probably in the best hiking condition I've been in for several years, thanks to the puppy, but I'm also sleep-deprived.

The puppy goes by two names: Scoodles, named by the grandchildren because they thought he was a "silly scoodle doodle poodle," and Tracker, which I have put on his official records.

Before he came to me, Tracker was originally conditioned to rise and shine at 4 a.m. (Some people think running at 4 a.m. is healthy!)

I am not a morning person. So, as Tracker whines/squeaks between 4 and 4:30 a.m. signaling it's time to be released from his kennel, I reach for the toys that I stuffed with treats the previous night – an octopus with five legs and three storage places in each leg for a total of fifteen treats. Unfortunately, Tracker will always believe an octopus has only five legs.

Other items in the "intellectual stimulation" arsenal are a collapsible ball that makes treats disappear like they are being sucked into a black hole, and a Kong that can hold a chewy stick and expensive cheese. Speaking of chewy sticks and treats, some cost \$8 or more for a six-ounce bag. That's over \$20 a pound, which makes steak look reasonably priced.

Also, I purchased several chewy sticks before reading the instructions: "Meant for adult dogs only or only one stick a day for smaller dogs." One stick is barely



10 minutes of respite. I wanted hours!

Somewhere around 5 to 6 a.m., depending on how long the treats last, I am forced to get up, eat breakfast and wait for the sun to rise and provide enough light to start hiking.

We hike most mornings that conditions permit, usually for a total of two to five miles, depending on how much coffee I drank earlier. Then, back home, we play tug of war and fetch – not real fetch. I throw the tug of war object, which he fetches so he can play more tug of war.

Soon he is ready for a nap, and I am sooooo ready for mine. But there are two issues. One is that he was misnamed; Shadow would have been

more appropriate because everywhere I go, there he is.

The second issue is the flooring. Tracker's first home had hardwood floors. Okay, but there seems to be something about carpets. They have a certain feel or a certain smell that just screams out, "Come pee on me," or "I double dare you to pee on me." Whichever it is, it has created a problem in our household because all the beds and recliners happen to be in carpeted rooms.

So now I try to nap in an uncomfortable chair or on our anti-gravity recliner on the deck or pantry, all the while repeating my mantra, "Rest is as good as sleep. Rest is as good as sleep." Hence my sleep-deprived condition.

(To be fair to Tracker, he is getting much better at communicating his need to go outside, or maybe I am becoming more aware of his signals.)

Our evening walk is always much shorter, because I frequently forget about it until it starts getting dark, but evenings are often more exciting – skunks, bears, turkeys, deer, and his favorite, quail. Tracker would have loved to chase the bear but this guy at the end of the leash had some common sense. The puppy thought he was so brave getting that bear to run up the hill.

Tracker has his initial vet check appointment next week and I'm preparing myself to listen to a lecture about my puppy feeding habits.

Bob McGregor, originally from North Dakota, taught science and math in North Dakota, Alaska, and for the Community Colleges of Spokane in Colville. He is happily retired.

Changing of the Colors

By Becky Dubell

Northeast Washington is in the process of changing outfits. Seems that every day I get in the car to drive the 10 miles to town every corner looks a little different than it did during the last trip. Lots of bushes out there are changing into their fall clothing with those pop-out shades of red and yellow. Then noticed the other day that the trees are dropping leaves all over the place. They must have heard that winter is on its way.

I'm going to have to take time to check out the hill on the other side of the valley. The tamarack trees should be putting on their winter dress here shortly. That is one gorgeous sight!

I have to say that I am really looking forward to this new season. We have a snowplow that was able to get out and play a couple of times with son-in-law Dan last winter. This season I'm hoping to get out and play with it.

I'm sure you have heard that I most likely have the time to play since I AM RETIRED. And, of course, the cousins to the snowplow cannot be left out of the fun – the big blue shovel and the leaf blower. I found a hack on clearing snow off the car: Use the battery-powered leaf blower. Never heard of doing that before I started going down those rabbit holes on Facebook. That is another thing I have time for in retirement. It turns out there are way too many of them.

My plan is to get away from all those online rabbit holes and find real gopher hills, in the small fields that we jokingly call our lawn and mow them down. That sounds like more fun – getting bounced around a bunch on the machine and work on my core muscles while making the lawn (weeds) look a bit more groomed.

There is a rumor going around that this season is a really weird fall. I'm thinking that may be true. My thermometer told me it was 80° at 6:30 today and it was 59° when the sun went down, as I write this. Is this the time of the grow-

ing season that I need to make sure my car is locked when I park downtown cuz I might end up with an offering of zucchini?

It's too close to the Fall Equinox for it to be this warm in northeast Washington. I was at a soccer game and hoping the spectators had their sunscreen on. Lucky there were trees to shade the smart people sitting under them – that would be me, of course, with my daughter and her grand-daughter. (Side note: It freaked me out when I realized I have a daughter that answers to Nana when called! How did we both get this old? We did it gracefully!)

Here's hoping that your Christmas project list is receiving more attention than mine is. I look at it about twice a week and the fairies have not been up to getting anything crossed off. Here I go *thinking* again but I believe I am going to get to keep my Queen of Procrastination crown this year again. Not sharing! Sorry about that. Better luck next year.

I picked up a couple of things I'd like to share and work on getting into my life, such as football player Aaron McDonald's dad's advice on how to be a winner: Expect nothing. Appreciate everything.

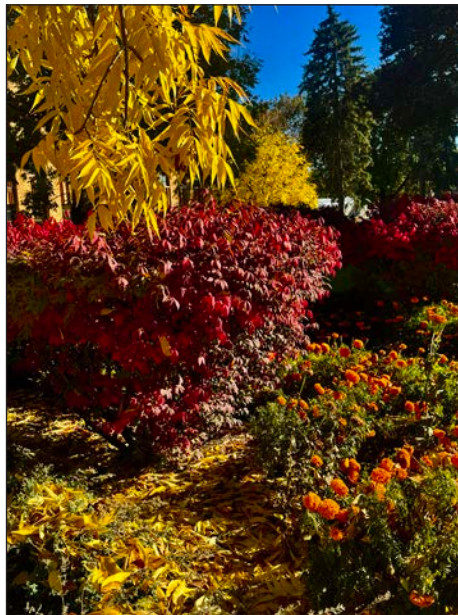
I had an epiphany. Becky. You live in a tiny house. Put stuff away when done with it and you won't have all these piles to deal with. Duh! (I'm still working on the original piles. No new ones.)

Note to all of yourselves out there that are looking to steal my crown: Christmas really is coming. All we have to do is just get out there and do it. Take that first step ... almost have myself convinced ... maybe!

Happy Halloween

Be Safe

Becky Dubell is a mother, grandma, and great-grandma who is all about family and friends, loves northeast Washington, and follows the mantra: "It is what it is and it will become what I make it."



They Rest Here

By Donna Potter Phillips

The *Pullman Herald*, Pullman, Washington, on December 23, 1899, told the tale:

“Lewiston, Idaho. Dec 18 – Piled up at the bottom of Kendrick Hill, on the branch line of the Northern Pacific, were two engines and 15 cars loaded with steel rails.” The wreck killed two engineers, two firemen and one brakeman. One of the firemen was John E. Peterman of Spokane.

The news article continued: “The train was an extra freight with a load of steel rails for the extension the Northern Pacific is building in western Idaho. Snow has been falling, the temperature is below the freezing point and the rails of the tracks are covered with ice. The train was

pulled by two engines, No. 364, with Engineer Bain and Fireman Peterman, and engine 700 with Engineer Ogden and Fireman Bradshaw.

“Last Friday night the freight began to go up the grade. The summit of the mountains is six or seven miles east of Kendrick and from that point on to the river the descent is steep for railroading. Before the train had proceeded any distance it was seen that the brakes would not hold it, although the sand was applied.

“The cars literally slid at a terrific rate of speed. The two engines and the 19 or 20 cars of steel rails flew down the grade. A mile and a half east of Kendrick, four cars were ditched and the track torn up for a distance of a quarter of a mile. There were then 15 cars and the two engines running at increased speed toward Kendrick.

“When the flying train struck the east switch of the Kendrick mill track the entire train was ditched. Every car and both engines were completely wrecked and are at the edge of the river. ...

“So far as could be learned locally last evening, Fireman Peterman was not married, but is the main support of his widow mother.”

The story continued ...

A headline in the *Spokane Chronicle* of April 16, 1901, said: “Run-away Train Suit Is On, Fighting for \$125,000 in Damages.” The article said: “The trial of the first of a se-

ries of five damage cases against the Northern Pacific railway for \$25,000 each was begun in the federal court yesterday. ...

“The plaintiff in the case now on trial is Mrs. Anna Peterman, mother of the dead fireman, John Peterman. It is claimed in the complaint that the conductor of the train became

frightened and cut off the caboose, thus leaving the engine crews and one brakeman to a horrible fate. It is further claimed that when the engineers realized that the heavy train was becoming uncontrollable, they whistled for brakes but that no response was made by the train

crew except by one brakeman who subsequently went to his death.”

Three days later came the headline “Anna Peterman Case Against the N.P. Railway Soon Goes to Jury.” Subsequently there were a couple more articles, the last with the verdict: Anna Peterman lost her suit against the Northern Pacific.

Anna (Miller) Peterman, born in 1859 in Germany, was a widow who died on August 16, 1901, of cancer. She rests near her son. Rest in peace, dear Anna and John.

Donna Potter Phillips has been active with the Eastern Washington Genealogical Society for nearly 50 years. Her passion is searching out ancestors, learning family histories and helping others find their family's stories. She lives in Colbert.



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In the tumult of life's changes and transitions, I have found the greatest moments of peace and transcendence around art. When navigating the internal chaos of being a child of first-generation immigrants in rural Kentucky as an angst-ridden teenager, creative writing was a godsend. When I needed to release angry or excited energy, good music, drumming, and dancing were the perfect remedies. Later in life, after years of post-partum depression and anxiety, it was pottery classes that soothed my soul and relieved my frenetic brain.

I see my son retreat into a manga or good book when he needs to make space or find calm in turmoil. My partner goes to his happy place when he is in the design and assembly phases of building a perfect bicycle.

Other times I find transcendence while getting swept away watching a great film, staying up late because of a captivating book, or feeling the butterflies that flutter in my stomach when I am awestruck by another artist's work. When Jami Rose plein air paints along the shore of the river, or when Red throws alluringly shaped vases that are then bedecked in crystalline blooms of glaze alchemy, they are each finding their own way to bliss. Ray loves playing the guitar and singing. Irene makes quilts. My parents love making good food.

We humans are a creative species; innovation and creativity are part of our DNA. But only recently did I hear an interview that connected



Creative Being in Stevens County

quantifiable data on how art affects our well-being.

On the August 24th episode of “Hidden Brain” (one of my all-time favorite podcasts), host Shankar Vedantam interviewed Daisy Fancourt, a PhD in psychobiology and epidemiology at University College London. Her studies and subsequent new book, *Art Cure: The Science of How the Arts Saves Lives*, describes research that homes in on how art and creative engagement affect human physiology and mental health.

Through that lens, I have a better understanding of how and why creating and appreciating art has helped improve my own well-being. According to Fancourt, engaging in the arts activates prolonged dopamine in the brain’s pleasure centers, which increases feelings of happiness. When I am creating art, I am learning and potentially mastering new skills, and this increases my sense of empowerment, meaning, and self-esteem. I am also lowering my cortisol levels.

Personally, I love a good sing-along and feel a wonderful kinship to my friends or family who share the room and the songs with me. Fancourt found that mothers who sang to their babies in the NICU reduced their levels of cortisol and their infants also showed increased levels of calm. Families who sang together were connecting emotionally and socially even in the hospital’s challenging settings.

And the practice of doing art is, in itself, I have found, a practice in mindfulness. When I give myself a break from daily stresses by focusing on creating art, I am giving my brain space to investigate other perspectives and creative solutions to problems.

Admiring art and making art on a regular basis can give



the brain a great workout on multiple levels. Art can decrease feelings of anxiety and depression. Making art can build neural connections that make brains more resilient to cognitive decline, and even makes brains younger as compared to the body’s chronological age.

Art is more than entertainment. I believe it’s a way to keep ourselves healthy, happy, and engaged in our community. I believe it brings us all together and collectively calms us. May art be the future of medicine!

Marci Bravo is a multi-media artist, wife, mother, teacher, friend and yogi residing in Colville. Follow her on Instagram @marci_bravo_makes.



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Absolutely stunning barndominium completely updated on 5 acres with private well and patio. Beautiful lake and mountain views add to the charm of this property. Incredible views from the primary bedroom that leads to an amazing ensuite bathroom with soaking tub and sauna. Large "Rebath" shower and bath area for the main bathroom. Top-of-the-line kitchen with quartz counter tops, large island, and lots of cupboards. Beautiful views from the expansive windows and slider from the kitchen, living room and dining area. Radiant floor heat will keep you warm all winter. Shop has additional living area and upper loft for entertaining and guests. Completely insulated for your comfort. Deluxe covered RV set up with deck and water, Power and septic hook ups. Easy access from public roads Only 10 minutes away from the Hunters boat launch with year-round boating, fishing and kayaking. This property has a small open covered cabin for hunting on the lower part of the property.



MLS# 46441 \$475,000



Waterfront Oasis: Listen to the sounds of the Kettle River from this stunning, custom built home situated on 6.52 acres bordering the Kettle River. Large open floor plan with views from the kitchen, dining and living room. Plenty of windows to bring the beauty of outside inside. Main floor living with radiant heat, laundry and primary bed and bath. A beautifully finished basement includes wet bar, stone floors, a wood stove, bed and bath, lots of windows and an outside entrance. Two decks for your entertaining enjoyment & oversized 2 car garage. Secondary house for family and friends, that includes a kitchen, bath and huge bonus room with pool table and room for several sleeping areas and includes 2 car garage. In-ground sprinkler, huge woodshed with storage, Screened gazebo and shed. Custom wood working throughout this home, radiant heat, wood stove and a mini split is included and the pad is in it just needs to be installed. Generator stays, 220 on the outside of the garage and STAR Link service stays - you just have to sign up.



MLS# 45526 \$799,000



MLS# 46346 \$69,000

Come see this beautifully updated mobile home. Step inside and see why this home is worth a visit. Remodeled and ready to move in! Everything has been updated, new paint throughout, kitchen cabinets have been painted, new flooring, window and interior trim, plenty of windows for the natural light to shine in. Extra room off the living room adds to the spaciousness of this home. Front porch for relaxing, plenty of parking on the large lot located in the mobile home park behind Sandy's restaurant in Kettle Falls, lot rent is \$550 per month, and this 1986 home can be financed. Priced to sell!

Comfortable updated 2-bed 2 bath on the main floor and 2 rooms upstairs, in the heart of Kettle Falls. New flooring and paint, updated kitchen and bathrooms, large dining area with a coffee bar and appliance counter. Large corner lot with fenced in front and side yard. Detached garage with carport just needs a little TLC. Close to all amenities.

MLS# 46434 \$299,000



MLS# 44881 \$579,000

Peaceful setting in a very private location. Crafted log sided home with covered deck, large carport, workshop with loft, separate dry cabin, garden shed and a 14-ft door RV shop. Beautiful double fenced garden with 2 sets of grape vines. Local rock landscaping around the house. Open kitchen, dining, and living area on the main floor with easy access to the deck. Wood cabinets and built-in pantry. The woodstove will keep you warm all winter. Upper level hosts a very spacious bedroom with full bath, easy access closet with built-in amenities, there is a total of 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Daylight basement with patio and a propane stove to heat the home if you have to leave. There is even 220 amp in the carport for an electric car hook up. You have to see this home to appreciate the beauty!

Over 3,000 Sq. ft. 4 bed/3.5bath on a large corner lot - within an hour of Spokane, with golf course & ski hill as a part of your new community. This home highlights custom craftsman build including a theater stage and full screen wired for sound, lights and projector for all your family and entertaining possibilities. Chewelah's Peys Creek babbling through the front yard, under your very own bridge, lighted pathway and established native and elaborate landscaped yard. Fully fenced back and side yard in addition to a 2-car attached garage with workshop. This home has it all and the room and design to accommodate a multitude of living enjoyment and options! Come see it today.



MLS# 44403 \$535,000



MLS# 45774 \$629,000

Mission Lake Waterfront at its best. This custom-built home has everything you need. Beautiful gourmet kitchen with open dining that lets the views of the lake inside to enjoy while you're cooking or dining. Huge primary ensuite with screened in porch for your outdoor pleasure. Large laundry room, covered deck with access to the lake, daylight basement has 3 bedrooms and full bath plus additional storage area. Walk out and fish from your private dock. Extra-large 2-car attached garage. The house sits down from the road for extra privacy.

Kettle River waterfront paradise - it's like buying your own park! Elegantly built home with an open floor plan, vaulted ceilings with lots of windows to let the sunlight and views. Floor-to-ceiling tiled wood stove in the living room with a spacious redwood deck to watch the river flow. Special crafted kitchen with Acacia wood counter tops from Africa, hickory cabinets with an abundance of counter space and storage, large dining room with a private viewing deck. Primary bedroom with jacuzzi tub, walk in shower and closet plus electric fireplace. Plenty of bathrooms for entertaining and sleep overs. Separate cabin with running water, electricity and private outhouse. Plenty of water with a private well and 2 car carport with storage room, plus a RV carport and the well house has an additional storage room. Level and private acres for your recreational needs.



MLS# 44847 \$789,000

Small town living at its finest. This 3 bed 2 bath 1,680 sq ft home sits on almost a 3rd of an acre with a fenced yard and a 30x40 shop split in 2 with half man-cave/she-shop with pellet stove and cold room for food storage, and half for 2-car/toy parking. Covered front and back patios, plus hot tub for relaxation. This home is just minutes away from the beautiful Lake Roosevelt and Marcus Campground and boat launch.



MLS# 45910 \$334,900

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