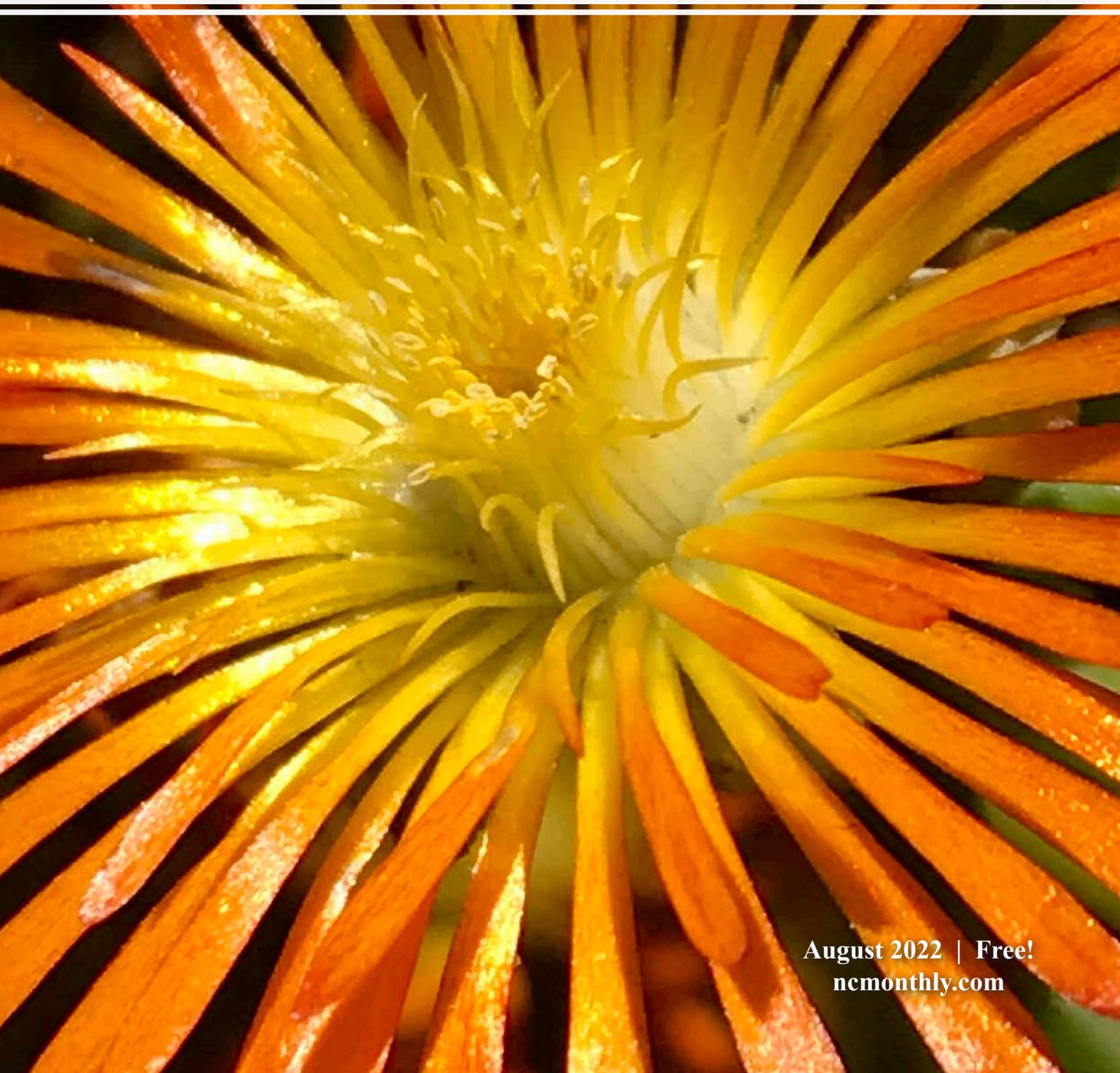




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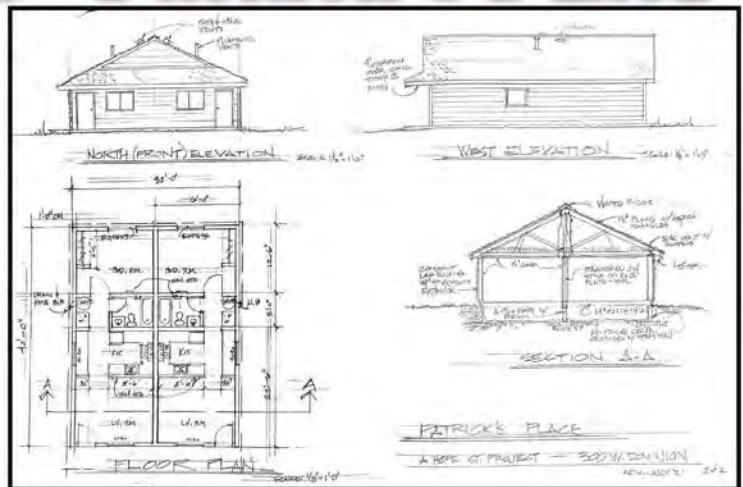
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What's Inside

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A few of our regular contributors are off on summer adventures and will be back in the magazine next edition, along with the Publisher's column, which was sacrificed in order to provide last-minute space for a special event this month.

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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 or 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 becomes 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



All The Thoughts IT hink U usually Determines Everything
- JOHN ODELL, WordsOfWords.com



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The Complexities of Grief

By Mayah LaSol

I am writing this in the early morning light. I have a lamp on because the light of the windows wouldn't be enough. Normally, I would still be in bed right now, but today I've just attended a Zoom funeral in a different time zone.

Grief is strange. It seems to me that it is a greatly feared emotion by many people, not simply because of the way that it feels and the way it sucks away your energy and the water in your eyes, but because it is usually caused by something outside of ourselves, and outside of our control. And you know, I think we humans love control. Control is safe.

And so I think many people try to control their grief, try to lock it away, numb themselves to the pain because it is too much, and that cannot be healthy. Neither can it be to be sucked into grief as though it were quicksand, to let it consume you, and not have the heart to reach for a hand when it is offered to help pull you out.

Grief is a heavy emotion. It sinks like a stone to the bottom of my stomach. Carrying that weight is sure to make me tired. That is why I think it can be so important that if you know someone who is grieving, you offer to help carry their weight a while if you can.

I don't think it's healthy to stay lost in the extremes — and neither do I think it is healthy to try to take on all of someone else's emotion. But the offering of the hand can mean a lot, even if no one ends up taking it. At least that is what I have to believe, because when others around me have

been grieving, I have always offered a hand. I cannot remember a time when someone properly took it, but I have to believe that I helped.

Seeing others grieve, someone you care about, is in some ways worse than grieving yourself. You do not feel the grief, but the knowledge that they do and if you can do nothing to ease it, well I suppose that's its own special brand of grief on its own.

In addition to the loss of someone important to you through death, grief can take so many forms: for your childhood, for example; for a child's childhood; for the end of an era of your life; for the person you were. I do not think that, when it comes to grief, I am very qualified. I am not a therapist. Why should I be talking to you now? Especially after I have the knowledge that I just attended a funeral and I did not cry.

I have usually been the one in the family to cry easily. I've cried when discussing the news, when doing a school lesson, when writing, when listening to a song, when watching television. But those are often simple griefs. They come and they go, they are impermanent. I mostly forget them the next day. Losing someone forever, that you do not forget the next day, or for many days.

And a part of me is scared that I am becoming that which I fear: someone who is numb and cannot feel things. Perhaps I have cried too easily for too long and my body, my brain, or the combination of both has made the executive decision to stop that train of

emotion before it can run away with me. But I hope this isn't the case, and I think that there is something to be said for the way logic serves me.

As a kid it was easier to cry when watching television, because I did not understand as fully as I do now that much of what I was seeing wasn't real. Now, I am having a similar problem because I was only at the funeral via Zoom. It does not feel real. It is also my logical belief that the person I've lost is better off; I am glad that he no longer has to suffer.

So, as you see, through logic I convince myself that I am not numb, that I am not unfeeling, that I have not become entirely Vulcan instead of human. Still, the fear remains. But that's okay. These feelings pass and in some ways I welcome that fear, because it is refuting itself — I am glad to be feeling at all.

As always, perhaps even more than always, my ramblings today may not necessarily mean something to someone else. But I hope that anyone reading this can feel connected, know that they are not alone in their grief, their fear, or whatever else they may be feeling now during their life. Feelings come and go, but I think the most important thing is trying to have people around you who will offer you a hand, and to whom you can offer yours. You are not alone in your emotion, even if it may sometimes feel that way.

bookstagrammer, and all-around arts enthusiast who geeks out over books and cats. She shares book reviews and poetry on her Instagram account @mayahlasol.

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Going Outside for What's Inside

By Christine Wilson

"Teach the children. We don't matter so much, but the children do. Show them daisies and the pale hepatica. Teach them the taste of sassafras and wintergreen. The lives of the blue sailors, mallow, sunbursts, the moccasin flowers. And the frisky ones – inkberry, lamb's-quarters, blueberries. And the aromatic ones – rosemary, oregano. Give them peppermint to put in their pockets as they go to school. Give them the fields and the woods and the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit. Stand them in the stream, head them upstream, rejoice as they learn to love this green space they live in, its sticks and leaves and then the silent, beautiful blossoms."

~ Mary Oliver, *Upstream*

"Come to your senses."

~ My mother, circa 1960, borrowed from various translations of the *Bible*

It's not that I disagree with Mary Oliver about us non-children. I can see her point about the children needing to be given the chance to rejoice as they learn to love the space outside of technology and their thoughts. It's just that I think we are all born with that capacity and we all need to soak up life in the green spaces. We seem to lose it so easily.

Maybe it is easier to lose it now, without a generation of many parents saying, "Go outside." Go outside, for you young ones, is not an idiom. It was a serious (and not to be disputed) order. There is more attention to attachment and bonding now, so hopefully

it is said with more kindness and less exasperation. But really, in case no one else is saying it to you, I strongly recommend it. Go outside. Soak up nature; it will soothe your soul.

Ultimately, I think we all need to have peppermint in our pockets. My mother used the phrase "come to your senses" primarily when I as a child was not behaving the way she wanted me to. I just took it as a "stop being an idiot" message. Years later, probably when I saw Jon Kabat-Zinn's book of that title, I got it. In the field of sensory disorders, there are considered to be eight prominent senses: sight, touch, taste, hearing, smell, balance, external

body awareness, and internal body awareness. The first five are the ones we can recite from school.

Balance comes from the vestibular system. If you have ever had an ear infection and found yourself feeling wobbly, that is because the vestibular system is in your inner ear. It's responsible for helping us navigate the space around us. Current research shows that people who can stand on one leg for ten seconds actually have a longer life expectancy. You can see the significance, then, of that sense.

External body awareness helps us connect with the world around us. It allows us to locate where we are in



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Random Acts of Community

space. When I shot up in height in my early teens, my legs and arms often wound up surprising me. There were just more inches of them. I tripped and bumped into things easily. As a trauma specialist, I can tell you that both abuse and neglect can trigger a strong disconnection of that sense. A person can only take so much awareness of the dangerous world out there beyond the mind. Eventually, people just need a break from all that input.

Internal body awareness helps us connect with the clues from our body. We can tell we are hungry or tired. When we get good at sinking into what is going on inside our body, we know when we feel mad, sad, scared, happy, ashamed, or any of the other bazillion feelings we might have.

The onslaught of input we have to deal with now is pushing us out of touch with these senses. Since it is true that when under stress we regress, our disconnect can be specific to our own past experiences. I have always been a foodie, so my tastebuds stay sharp, no matter how stressed out I might be. I can definitely revert to that difficulty with external body awareness, though.

"The onslaught of input we have to deal with now is pushing us out of touch with these senses."

It's the canary in the coal mine for me to take better care of myself. We each have our own canary.

One of my oft-repeated stories is from my youthful days as a preschool teacher. There was a grand storm, full of fury and drama. I took some of the children out onto the covered porch to watch it. We screamed and hooted, cheering on the thunder, celebrating the lightning. A more serious employee of the day care center marched out onto the porch, like a grumpy caricature from central casting. "Get back in here," she shouted. "It's terrible weather! You don't belong out there!"

I became one of the ducklings, following her mama duckness back inside. All our heads were hung in shame. I was young and still eas-

ily intimidated by strong opinions. Now I would be able to remember I could keep them safe. I would know that nature is awesome and that storms are glorious. I am not naïve. I wouldn't have let the children run around in an open field with giant metal poles in their hands. We were protected enough to be safe and exposed enough

to enjoy the grandeur. Those can be moments of communing with the wild part of nature.

Getting out in those green spaces is the best way I can think of to reconnect with whichever senses we have lost track of. I will never forget my high school experience when one of the adults brought back a watermelon to our campsite on the Wonderland Trail of Mt. Rainier from his foray out into civilization. He lifted it up above his head and dropped it on a rock, and we ate the bits and pieces scattered there. I had not even liked watermelon before that. The combination of the visuals, the sound, and, to be honest, the contrast between juicy loveliness and dehydrated food will forever be one of my childhood joys.

Alice Miller, a German psychiatrist who worked with highly traumatized people, wrote about the power of nature to get us back in touch with what she called our "liveliness." Wherever you live, there are no doubt trails to walk, grass to sit in, quiet to soothe your weary soul, and, if you are lucky, peppermint to smell.

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

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Dreams —

By Dr. Barry Bacon, MD

I found myself early one summer morning at my church wearing the worst possible combination of grubby overalls and a plaid shirt. I had also forgotten that I was to lead song service and teach the lesson. As I picked up my guitar, my wife glared at me as she sat at the piano waiting for whatever was going to come out of my mouth. I searched my mental repertoire for a set of songs with which I could bluff my way through, but I wasn't coming up with much. I looked out at the crowd and saw my younger brother with a very young child on his lap. Hundreds of people swarmed around me. My mouth went dry. I had also burned my hand and I couldn't play the guitar. Then I woke up. It was

a dream.

I've never been one to put any stock in my dreams. To me they seem completely useless, tangled webs of neurotransmitters trying to take stock of the day in their fumbling, chaotic fashion. Mostly, my dreams have never made sense.

Until now. For the past five years, some friends and I have dreamed big dreams, of transforming health outcomes for an entire region of the world, of creating a medical school that transcends borders, changes outcomes, is a means of peace between tribes. What if we could pull that off?

With this in mind, we traveled to western Ethiopia and South Sudan last month, looking for the chance to fulfill

this fantastical dream. What we found was beyond our wildest imaginings.

Our findings: Doctors being paid \$12 a month. Medical care outsourced to other countries to the tune of \$200 million per year. Nursing schools with one blood pressure cuff for the entire school. Nurses who have never had the chance to experience taking a blood pressure. Five hospitals in a region serving one million people with only one functioning operating room and one functioning X-ray machine — but not in the same hospital.

What we see is an incredible opportunity. So much more than we expected. We've been offered a 60-bed, newly built, fully furnished hospital as a base for a multi-specialty medical center and medical school. We've been asked to form three separate companies to bring medications, lab supplies and IT support. We've been asked to take on renal dialysis for the country. We've been offered a teaching hospital and campus large enough to accommodate a medical school.

We've created a not-for-profit public-private partnership to accomplish all that is being asked of us. We dream of inviting U.S.-based residencies and medical teams to come and work in our hospital to teach local physicians better skills and knowledge while giving their U.S. students the experience and opportunity of a lifetime.

This is the craziest opportunity we could ever have imagined. But that's not all. There are others who see our vision and want to join us. And Colville will be the hub for all of this.

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expertise. We just need to believe that this dream is real and worth pursuing.

What seems impossible is at the same time too good to pass up. Over the past five years, we have experienced failure, disappointment, denial, incompetency, disinterest and corruption. None of these have daunted us. I don't exactly know why. We had plenty of reasons to quit years ago. We all have other things to do with our lives. So why don't we give up?

I think it is the power of the dream. We can see the students coming from areas of the country where higher education has been unreachable. We can imagine medical therapies reaching people who currently have nothing. We can imagine young physicians and nurses whom we have trained providing high-quality care to people who otherwise would lie dying without hope and without medicine. So we do the absurd and we step into our dream.

In the future when you hear of an unruly group of misfits who dreamed impossibly of creating a medical school in the unlikeliest of places, that will be us. Some, beleaguered and displaced by violence and conflict, found their way across deserts and swamps through desolate refugee camps to the U.S., where they became competent health professionals, but remembered their homeland and dreamed of giving back in some way. Some are their American friends. Together, we are so much stronger than any of us imagined.

Picture this: We are sitting in the office of the second-most-powerful man in the regime. I stare around the room at carvings of leopards, glass-backed cabinets, lush white couches, high ceilings and red carpeting, marble-topped desks and tables. One of

our team members explains our purpose in being here. The man listens intently.

Our leader shows some pictures of the hospital we have been offered, but for which we need the man's approval. He asks if we are able to manage the hospital. We assure him that we are. Our team has health professionals in various categories of training. He simply says, "Then it will happen." That's it. The 60-bed, completely furnished, brand new hospital is ours. We thank him and wander out of the room, our heads swimming. Almost afraid that we will wake from a dream. Almost afraid that everything we have wished is coming true.

Next comes another difficult part. How do I unclutter my life to make this happen? How do I recruit medical

personnel to work with us? How do I enlist more Americans? We already have an interested IT organization to get us an electronic medical record. We've contacted a dialysis group in Africa to help us put that together. We've connected with a medication supply company. We've created a not-for-profit organization. We're on our way.

Bite-sized pieces. Modest steps. Audacious plans. Don't give up. Keep on believing. Accomplish the impossible. Hold onto this dream.

Barry Bacon is a physician who has lived and practiced family medicine in Colville for 28 years. He now works in small rural hospitals in Washington state, teaches family medicine, and works on health disparities in the U.S. and Africa.



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Growing Up Connected

By Loren Cruden

Sixth in a series of personal accounts about northeastern Washington rivers.

Logan Worley was a teen, in the Haran Dancers (Deirdre Abeid's Irish step dancing troupe based in Kettle Falls), when I first knew him. Logan later married Deirdre's daughter Claire, who had taken over as teacher and choreographer after her mother's death. The Worleys and Abeids both lived – and live – along the Columbia River, south of Kettle Falls. When Logan sat down at my kitchen table late one July afternoon, still in his lawyerly suit and tie after a long workday, the first thing I asked was about how he'd fared in the Rickey Point Sail Club's July regatta.

"It was unfortunate – with the wind on the second day."

"You mean the lack of any?"

"Right. But it was still fun. We somehow managed to be in the right spot at the right time to catch a bunch of wind at the end of that race. But it was a tedious kind of sailing, having to work for every puff we could get."

Q: Do you sail in the regatta every year?

"I skipped two years. The first year I raced was in 2001."

Q: What got you started?

"Boats were a family thing. We had some small boats – didn't get a bigger one until the mid 1990s. As a kid I did a lot of sailing and raced with my dad. He's got a really awesome little wooden boat that he's had since way before I was born. We've always had monohulls, but also had a Hobie cat [catamaran] for a little while, probably because it was a ton of fun for us kids. I was in elementary school. I remember learning how to tack on it, and do downwind sailing. We'd go back and forth a few hundred yards then pull it back up on the beach."

Q: Did your dad teach you or did you just pick up sailing from messing around?

"My dad gave me information but kept it fun. At a certain point, when I started to get more into it, he gave me some of the books that he'd had for a long time. I think he was 19 when he got his first boat with a buddy down in southern California and went through the process of learning on his own."

Q: Did you read the books?

"I actually did! I still have them."

Q: Did you go sailboat camping?

"Not until 2001, when I got out of high school. My dad

would sail down to David King's property by Martin Creek with a bunch of river friends to have their Buccaneer's Breakfast every year. He hadn't been very far down the river on any excursions, though, so in 2001 we decided to sail down to the [Grand Coulee] dam. Only there was no wind – it was completely dead. And hot. I don't think he would've gone except for me. I motored the boat probably 90 percent of the way down to the dam.

"My dad had to get back for school then – he was the principal at that point – so I called Claire and said 'Hey, can you drive the car down, switch off with my dad and help me sail back?' We weren't together yet, but were close friends. So that was what started our yearly sail trips. Ironically, Claire and I had good wind most of the way back from Two Rivers."

Q: Do you go to the same place every year?

"No. I think Claire and I went to the dam maybe three times. Now that we have kids, we can't do the long excursions. We still go camping but the furthest we've gone since we had the kids was probably just down to Rice." [Laughter.]

Q: Do you sleep on the boat?

"Yeah – it's really nice. We've been doing yearly boat-camps for going on 22 years now. Though we could use a bigger boat at this point, with the kids."

Q: Are you ever scared, out on the water?

"No. I'm pretty comfortable. We've definitely had some crazy weather conditions, though. During one trip to the dam, with Claire and her brother Melad, we made it all the way down, then, coming back up, there was an insane storm. Melad and Claire were in the cabin – had everything closed down. All we had up was a reefed mainsail, going with the wind. That storm was nuts, probably the craziest wind I've ever been in, but I felt very comfortable with the boat – I think that was a big part of it. And I felt comfortable with what I needed to do. There weren't huge waves; it was safe in that regard, as long as I didn't run into anything!"

Q: What was it like, growing up on the river?

"It was really, really fun. We had an orchard. Being the youngest, I missed out on the earlier work. But in the summer we worked in the orchard every morning until it got too hot, then went down to the water. Like, every single day."

Q: What kind of orchard?

River Notes

"Apple, with a few peaches. South of my parents' orchard was my grandparents' orchard, which was peaches and cherries and apricots."

Q: Irrigated from the river?

"Yes, both orchards."

Q: Did the river have significance to you beyond its practical and recreational value?

"Definitely. There's a deep connection because of growing up there and still having my primary residence there."

Q: Have you ever lived anywhere else?

"No – other than at college and law school. I've done a fair amount of traveling, but that's different. I don't think I could live anywhere that wasn't something like where I am now. In all our travels Claire and I both came to appreciate why we are where we are and why we decided to stay here – even before we were together. What we have here, with the river and mountains; well, the river is a huge aspect of that appreciation for us."

Q: Are you doing anything special to connect your kids with this environment? Are you consciously passing on that heritage?

"Yes. We try to do a lot of things we did when growing up and we take them out sailing and on camping trips. We walk down to the river from my parents' place, things like that. Ray [Claire's aunt's partner] is super into biology stuff and Bron [Claire's aunt Bronwyn] was a biology major, so my kids are like little river scientists now. They're *into* it. Lawrence will spend hours at a cove just looking at bugs and whatever."

Q: Are the kids interested in boats?

"They're highly interested but it wears off quickly. [He laughs.] We'll sail for a little while and they have fun, especially Lawrence now – he did the regatta with us this year. He even

managed the whole 6-hour ordeal of the French Rocks race!"

Q: What about motorboats; are you into them?

"I've been out with friends and had a great time, but it's definitely a disconnect from the river. In a sailboat you're just more aware of everything. I don't think I'll ever own a motorboat."

Q: What wildlife do you encounter?

"There's a beaver that likes to make its home at the buoy field [where the Rickey Point boats are moored] at different times. There'll be years when they try their hardest to make a dam, but of course the spring drawdown leaves it high and dry. The beavers swim across from the other side of the river.

There used to be a few more trees on Rickey Point, but the beavers took those out. They even took our boat's speedometer wire that runs down into the water from the drain port. [More laughter.]

"A really cool thing we saw once, while camping on the boat, was a couple of river otters. I woke and there they were, playing right next to the

boat. About 20 feet away, perched on a snag, was an eagle, just watching them.

"A lot of animals just hang out when we sail by, maybe because we're not noisy or they're not concerned about the boat. Claire once saw a moose swim across the river while she was sailing off Rickey Point. We saw a bunch of mountain goats or big-horned sheep – I don't know which, I get them mixed up – on the shore down past Two Rivers, on the north side. I love the change in the terrain down there, where one side of the river is geologically different from the other."

"Another cool thing I've seen had to have been a sturgeon because it was a giant fish. It surfaced and rolled; what I saw

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River Notes

Continued from page 13...

was at least six feet long. That was right out in the middle of the river, between Bradbury Beach and the buoy field here. That was a while ago – probably early 2000s. I was in college.”

Q: What other memories stand out?

“There were a lot of social things as I grew up and got older that were centered around the river. Like when we did a high school prom, then a small group of us went down to the beach. Made a fire, hung out. It was where we went. The river has been a venue for a lot of things in my life.

“A group of us dancers were doing a lot of touring when I was just out of college, 22 or 23, and between tours we'd get together, stay at my house or whatever. We'd have practices and then we'd have little parties. One of the things we did was play baseball. Growing up, when I went to the beach I'd find a piece of driftwood and hit rocks into the water. We played at this big inlet at Rickey Point that fills up when the water level is high, but when it's down there's just this ginormous sand bowl. We'd go in there – my sister and brothers and their friends (I was the youngest) – and play baseball. Hitting it over the trees was a home run.

“We did that a lot. So, when the dancers were together

we'd go down to the beach and play wiffleball. That was when Claire suddenly realized she could imagine dating me – stopped thinking of me as just a friend.”

Q: Had you just hit a home run?

“Must have.”

Q: So, even when you were not touring, this pod of dancers hung out together?

“Yeah. The river is what kept a lot of those relationships together. We had the dancing, but we also had the sailing and the beach.”

Q: Do you think your kids will end up staying here?

“I don't know. There have been a lot of changes since Claire and I grew up, including from climate change and more wildfires, but in some ways we've been really lucky where we're at. For one thing, being on the river we're able to grow a ton of food.”

Loren: “I hope your kids' growing up can be still as much fun as yours sure was.”

Logan: “Me too.”

Loren Cruden writes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, available at www.LorenBooks.com.

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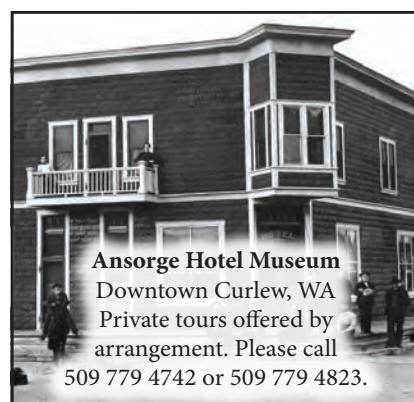
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The Multi-talented Hanging Cloud

By Tina Wynecoop

“The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper.”

~ W.B. Yeats

Last month clouds were the focus my NCM “Home Ground” column. The subject was going to be entirely different for this issue. I planned to tell about the breast I found in 1969 on the northwestern-most coast of Washington State. Recently though, I learned Ignace Camille’s (Spokane) Indian name was Hanging Cloud. The earlier cloud article gets a sequel. How about looking “at clouds from both sides now” with me.

(Next month’s subject is pretty exciting!)

I didn’t find mention of hanging clouds in my cloud handbooks. Wikipedia states, “Mammatus clouds form a cellular pattern of pouches hanging underneath the base of a cloud, typically a cumulonimbus raincloud parent. The name mammatus is derived from the Latin *mamma*.” Like Ignace Camille, once you encounter these phenomenal formations you never forget them.

Ignace Camille (1914-1959) a.k.a. Blackstar the Magician a.k.a. Hanging Cloud has lingered with me as a story where little embers have been burning in the mind quite a while, so I’ll linger in the clouds for a second month. I will insert a photo of Ignace in my field guide where he belongs. He is ever so worthy of appreciation. Ignace/Blackstar/Hanging Cloud was a lively, creative, generous, joyous Indigenous member of our North Columbia community. He was loved by many, including my husband.

Blackstar’s family lived at the mouth of Tshimakain Creek (Chamokane), a tributary of the Spokane River, flowing into it between Long Lake Dam and Little Falls Dam on the Reservation side. The nearest towns were Ford and Wellpinit. His father was a Chewelah Indian named Isaac (born 1892); his mother was Lucy Abel Camille (born 1878). Ignace had two siblings; the older was born in 1913 and died three years later. Inexplicably he was also named “Ignace” though he was one year older than Ignace/Blackstar. The Indian census rolls indicate there was a younger brother named Alexander.

Everybody called Ignace Camille “Blackstar.” He was well-known and often featured in regional newspapers. He was a regular columnist for the Chewelah *Independent*, and he published his own newspaper – *Smoke Signals*. I found mention of his Indian name in a 1956 article in the *Spokane Chronicle*.

Blackstar led a rich, friend-filled life. His abracadabra magic was first rate ... everyone was drawn to his performances, as well as to his unique expressiveness and his knowledge of tribal ways going back millennia and distilled within him. He made dolls, painted oil portraits of tribal chiefs, translated for his people who spoke only Salish. He was a singer, an author, a traditional dancer, a Boy Scout (and Cub Scout) troop leader on the Reservation, and he led the tribe’s 4-H program. He was what scientists

who study plants and their cultural uses call an ethnobotanist. He was a forest ranger, fire lookout attendant, photographer and entertainer. His world was a magical place for sure. And he shared his world generously.

Judge, my husband of 50 years, fondly described his youthful encounters with “Blackstar the Magician” in his book, *The Shooting Star: Growing Up on the Spokane Indian Reservation* (2010) (excerpt reprinted with permission):

*“When we got a day off from haying in the summer we used to head for the woods or Tshimakain/Chamokane Creek or Benjamin Lake or Turtle Lake. Sometimes we would go up to Spokane Butte to the fire lookout. At the lookout we would find our friend Blackstar the magician. He was a great character. He had been crippled somehow, maybe by polio which was one of the feared diseases at the time along with diphtheria and smallpox. **

“Blackstar (Ignace Camille) could do magic tricks and tell great stories. He was kind of reserved in his magic tricks since he feared giving away the tricks of the trade. At times he would put on a magic show at some event around our area. He had an interesting way of speaking. I remember a classmate imitating the way he talked. The classmate would pretend to be Blackstar reporting a fire and would squint along an imaginary fire spotting table and call in, ‘Ther’s a big smick by

Continued on page 16...

Continued from page 15...

the racetrack!

"We had some fun rainy days listening to Blackstar's stories. [This is] another case of my wishing I had taken him more seriously because he and other of the older tribal members knew a lot about the old days."

[Newspaper accounts said it was an injury he suffered as a child]

Blackstar's name appeared in an advertisement in the *Deer Park Union*, June 27, 1940, as "Chief Blackstar." The promo was for an upcoming event sponsored by the Deer Park Townsend Club. Included in the ad: "Featuring the Hollywood Star Magician who 'played in Northwest Passages.' Admission: Adults 30 cents, Children 15 cents. Children under five, free."

I wonder if anyone remembers seeing Blackstar perform?

A 1955 Chewelah newspaper article reported, "Mr. Camille has also been much in demand for lectures on In-

dian life and history. He has appeared on several television programs in Spokane, where he has lectured and shown his fine collection."

During the 1950s the Spokane Parks Department offered classes at the Finch Arboretum garden center. A popular lecturer was Ignace Camille, a

more than once in his major work on the tribe: "Magic was a prevalent and necessary behavior in a Spokane person's daily life, expressed in rituals that afforded some sense of control over uncertainties, and undoubtedly ameliorated certain anxieties..." (*The Spokane Indians*, 2011)

There are many layers of magic, and the public was let in on Blackstar's sleight of hand/abracadabra kind where he revealed a hint of his innate knowledge of his deep cultural and spiritual understanding of reality.

The newspapers announced Blackstar's death at the age of 44 on April 9, 1959, from an automobile accident on the Tum-Tum road between Ford and Spokane. With his severe injuries he was taken to the Chewelah hospital and then transferred

to Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane where he died the following day.

His obituary said: "For the last eight years he had an exhibit and answered



1954 Press Photo Indian artist Ignace Camille his paintings at Chronicle PTA. Image reprinted with permission, courtesy Cowles Publishing/The Spokesman-Review.

Spokane Indian artist and naturalist."

John Ross, the ethnographer who had a 40-year friendship with the tribal citizens, addresses "magic"

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Home Ground

questions on Indian history at the Spokane Chronicle/Parent Teacher Association's annual hobby show. He was a favorite with youngsters and adults; his exhibit included his paintings, native Indian implements, food, beadwork, clothing and a collection of Indian stories and songs. He had completed his book of Indian legends titled *Iskoknin*. He had been working on manuscripts for *The Coyote Legends* and *The Last Medicine Man* with plans to publish them. He had lived most of his life with his parents at their home at the mouth of Chamokane Creek."

His grieving Friends of Northwest History group gathered a month later and bid on various artifacts and possessions belonging to Ignace. \$50 was raised to give to his blind and bedridden mother and aging father. The *Spokesman Review* noted, "Except for one thing, the gathering was much like previous times when Ignace had provided them

with stories of the accomplishments of his people ... one month earlier, one of the accomplishments of the white man – an automobile – had cost Ignace his life." (*Spokesman Review*,

cultural office of the Spokane Tribe. I would love to read it. I received research help from the city and county libraries for which I give my gratitude. So far, I've accessed only a small portion of material that describes the life of Blackstar. With more time I'd like to visit the Chewelah *Independent*'s newspaper archive to collect Blackstar's columns. I'd track down copies of his own newspaper, *Smoke Signals*. For now, I am satisfied that our community knows something about this special man who was once in our midst. And, had I my own magic, I would say ABRACADABRA and it would be done!

Tina says: *Growing up in western Washington, I thought it was the most interesting place in the world until I moved in 1970 to teach school on the Spokane Indian Reservation.*

The culture, geography, history, and flora and fauna of the eastern part of the state is now my beloved "home ground."



Indians Plateau Spokane. Tom Mack (L) with baby, Ignace Camille (center) Louie Bazil (R) at Wellpinit. Photo courtesy Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society Spokane, Washington

May 26, 1959)

There is plenty more material about Ignace Camille, some of it held in the

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Finding Meaning in Serving

By Lynn O'Connor

Have you ever considered becoming a *member of something?* A church, a group of artists, an activity group? Let me introduce you to the Colville Rotary club's membership chair, Sarah Groves. She has a story for you about why she joined Rotary, why she has stayed (even through the pandemic!) and why she's an active board member:

"Hi, I'm Sarah Groves and I own Re-Imagined Home in Colville. I joined Rotary in 2017 after my husband and I moved to the area - mostly to meet people and start feeling like a part of my new community. I quickly realized that my connection to Rotary was going to be so much more than making friends!

"Turns out I was the kid who needed Rotary's help growing up. Our family needed the Christmas box with toys and food, I just didn't know where it came from then. Now I get to give back and have a Tree of Sharing in my shop and make sure that kids like me get to have a good Christmas.

"Rotary International is a wonderful community service organization that does so much good in the world and I am proud to have come full circle in my Rotary journey and be a part of this awesome group of people!"

Here are some of the positives to joining:

- **GIVING BACK:** Rotary is a service organization, and the passion of members for *service* becomes apparent as you become more familiar with Rotary.
- **FELLOWSHIP:** You will find friendships in Rotary where you least expect them. What a hoot.
- **ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING:** Rotary is chock-full of training opportunities. Much of the

time you're having too much fun to be aware that you are developing leadership skills!

- **NETWORKING:** You can create professional and personal relationships in Rotary.
- **MENTAL HEALTH:** Yes, that too. There is much value to taking action on things you believe in. What could be happier?

There are 46,000 Rotary clubs around the world. In our region there are Rotary clubs in Colville, Kettle Falls, Deer Park, Trail, Waneta, Rossland, Grand Forks,



Colville Rotary Warming Center Supply Drive

and many beyond. You are welcome to come and check us out! You can find meeting places and times online (Colville's is Wednesdays at noon at The Hub).

I haven't even gotten into all the cool things Rotary is doing, here and around the world. As you start to discover this about Rotary, you just keep getting more and more excited about the possibilities. One person can toss a pebble and not even begin to comprehend the wonderful ripple effects of one good act.

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

Envy of None Lays On the Layers

We now live in a post-Rush world, sad to say. With the iconic power trio fully retired, our best hopes lie in the surviving members creating new music, which guitar god Alex Lifeson is absolutely doing.

Having formed Envy of None with bassist Andy Curran of Coney Hatch, Lifeson rounds out the lineup with ethereal vocalist Maiah Wynne, guitarist Alfio Annibalini and drummers David Quinton Steinberg and Tim Oxford. The self-titled *EON* debut album opens with an atmospheric, gorgeous pop-rock masterpiece, "Never Said I Love," in which Lifeson makes massive use of his legendary textural approaches to

guitar layers to grand effect.

While *EON* is a band project with expansive, electronica-tinged vocal pieces like the moving "Shadow" and the moody, whisper-driven "Dog's Life," Lifeson also finds his space to stretch out on the soulful, emotional "Western Sunset," which is a nod to the late Rush drummer Neil Peart.

No, this isn't a Rush album. This is Alex Lifeson at his best, contributing

incredible compositions like the headphone-perfect "Kabul Blues" or the sinister-fun "Enemy" to a brand new, vital band.

For Rush fans looking for more Rush, this isn't for you. For Rush fans who really understood what Rush was all about, and how we never knew where its members were

headed next, this might be an album you have on high rotation for months to come.



Starset: The Line Beneath the Sky

There's a sudden burst of unburdened creativity in rock music just now. While current generations look to the massive melodies of the '80s and the unapologetic prog adventures bands took in the '70s, there is a refreshing rise of creative music by people who can actually play and sing about things other than angst and schadenfreude.

Ahead of this burst, Starset has spent almost a decade bringing their

inventive, intergalactic vision to listeners, with hard rock melodies and future-now sensibilities filling albums that are exciting, original and dynamic.

Horizons carries that tradition forward, as the dramatic quasi-metal edges of "Icarus" feel like the opening of a sci-fi epic and the slow-burn of "Disappear" cascades into the pile-driv-



ing "Devolution" and "This Endless Endeavor," standing up to any heavy

rock from the last 20 years.

This is high-energy hard rock with a mission: It seeks to inspire. Seems crazy, right? Most hits are all about everything that goes wrong, how to escape it or how to get revenge. So, in a world where gatekeepers and taste-makers are flooding markets with everything wrong with the world, Starset sets its sights higher.

While this brand of modern rock feels slammed with bone-jarring kick-drums and guitar riffs, the real vision behind it all is unique, fun and inventive. Check out Starset's *Horizons* for a breath of fresh upper atmosphere.

Check out Michael Pickett's music, free at pickettmusic.com.

A Good Read

Reviews by Loren Cruden

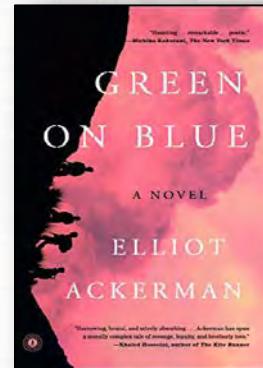
Green on Blue, by Elliot Ackerman

Hard to believe that Elliot Ackerman's remarkably sure-footed novel, *Green on Blue*, is a debut. But as a veteran of five tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, and time spent as a journalist, his fine, spare writing about generational warfare's toll is grounded on far more than imagination. Though, certainly, a marked degree of empathetic imagination as well as experiential authority plays a necessary part in his portrayal of main character Aziz, a Pashtun orphan who ends up soldiering in a U.S.-funded Afghan militia.

Young Aziz's vantage is not a facile "us vs. them" blinderedness but, instead, is acutely observant, revealing a complex kaleidoscope of amorphous allegiances, obligatory vengeance, and moral ambiguity in what, in Afghanistan, became a "war for advantage, war for profit, not for a future." Aziz has to make absurd choices having brutally senseless consequences. "The militants fought to protect us

from the Americans and the Americans fought to protect us from the militants, and being so protected, life was very dangerous."

The book's title, *Green on Blue*, refers to Afghan attacks on American soldiers but, despite the ubiquity of U.S. presence behind the scenes, there is only one American character in this story – the rest are Afghans. Throughout, Ackerman somehow creates opportunity for compassion for every character in each of the transmogrifying factions involved, a rare achievement for any novelist, let alone one who seems to be writing about ultimate oppositions. Or are they?

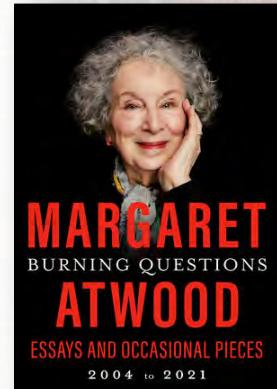


Burning Questions, by Margaret Atwood

Canada's Margaret Atwood – creator of numerous novels, poems, short fiction, nonfiction, and children's books, and winner of many awards for them – now in her 80s and still scimitar sharp, has produced another collection of essays and "occasional pieces," this time covering the years 2004 to 2021. The essays are classic Atwood: rigorously intelligent, dryly witty, and stoutly unsentimental. *Burning Questions* indeed addresses inflammatory issues, but also offers tributes and book reviews and, most of all, entry into the Atwood brain, teeming with well-thought-out speculation and ongoing pondering.

My mother held that essays are fun to write because you can say anything you want, and Atwood does so, skillfully and unapologetically. She says things like, "The aim of ideology is to eliminate ambiguity." And her digressions can be very funny. When she finds that the l key on a borrowed typewriter sticks every time it's hit, "...it leads to an avoidance of words with l in them.... Possibly I could give my sexy male lead a distinguished lisp. 'I wuve you,' he said wustfully...."

If not swept off your feet by one essay, you can skip to another: there are 450 pages of them in this collection. She writes about human nature, translators, science, science fiction, Rachel Carson, Alice Munro, Scrooge, wetlands, Kafka, murder, tarot, quarantine, Barry Lopez, Ursula Le Guin, government surveillance, climate change, language, and all manner of other things. My favorite essay, "Greetings, Earthlings," was written from the POV of an alien.



Burning Questions is a collection kindled from a life over-brimming with curiosity, imagination, and unflinching logic: well worth dipping into.

Loren Cruden writes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, available at www.LorenBooks.com.



Searching for the Light

By Brenda St. John

I am a fairly practical person. The other day I needed to buy a birthday gift, and the practical side of me wanted to get something functional, something useful in an emergency, something that the giftee would not buy for herself. And yet, it being a birthday gift, I wanted the item to be kind of fun too.

So, what did I end up buying? An oil lamp and a bottle of oil. It covered many bases – pretty, fun and functional. There is something about light that touches on my primal instincts. In the midst of darkness, it is natural to me to crave the light. And just thinking about the topic of light made me turn to a particular book in my yoga library, *Light on Yoga* by B. K. S. Iyengar, to see what pearls of wisdom might fall out.

Mr. Iyengar never fails to enlighten me. He is a true guru. In fact, he points out that the word guru comes from the syllable gu, which means darkness, and the syllable ru, which means light. Therefore, one interpretation is that a guru is someone who removes darkness and brings enlightenment. He gives many definitions of the meaning of Yoga and claims, “It is the true union of our will with the will of God.” From there, he goes on to quote a few lines from the *Bhagavad Gita*, saying “A lamp does not flicker in a place where no winds blow; so it is with a yogi, who controls his mind, intellect and self, being absorbed in the spirit within him. When the restlessness of the mind, intellect and self is stilled through the practice of Yoga, the yogi by the grace of the Spirit within himself finds fulfillment.”

Yoga themes constantly make references to all kinds of light. The occasions of the summer solstice and the winter solstice (times when the light of the sun is increasing/decreasing) call for special practices. There are vinyasa for Sun Salutations and Moon Salutations. There are various mudras (hand gestures), mantras (words or phrases), and pranayama (breathing practices) which are said to awaken the light within us. Likewise for certain meditations. Visualization, too, plays an important role in our ability to recognize the light within us.

A personal relationship with light, in any of its senses and meanings, can be significant with or without yoga, in the life of an atheist, Christian, intellectual, infant, devout skeptic, and so on. Finding this light within me is my communion with God, and when I connect with this light, I find peace.

From my understanding, any of the 15 basic asana of



Trikonasana

Hatha Yoga can help facilitate this connection with our inner light. In Eastern rites, chakras and kundalini energy are some of the tools which bring about union with God. Philip St. Romain, author of *Kundalini Energy and Christian Spirituality*, describes kundalini as the energy of the higher spiritual bodies breaking through into the lower levels. It is considered to be a divine energy. In Western rites, certain mystics, including St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, are documented to have achieved the same results as consequences of prayer. The Christian counterpart to the kundalini experience is the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The 15 basic asana of Hatha Yoga are considered to be Mountain, Tree, Uttanasana, Downward Facing Dog, Locust, Cobra, Bow, Child’s Pose, Warrior II, Reverse Warrior, Dandasana, Buddha Konasana, Hero, Bridge and Triangle, and are all practiced with breath awareness. Ha means sun and Tha means moon. Therefore, the poses are symbolic of the union between the solar and lunar or masculine and feminine energies which are within all of us. Since any of these asana will suffice for an example, let’s just pick one to focus on for this month, and my choice is Triangle.

To begin, stand on a mat in a wide straddle with feet parallel and about four feet apart. Raise arms so they are parallel to the floor, shoulder height, with the palms facing down. Turn the left foot in slightly and turn the right foot out to 90 degrees. Align the right heel with the arch of the left foot.

Firm the thighs and rotate the right thigh outward, so the center of the right kneecap is in line with the center of the right ankle. Exhale and extend the torso to the right, bending from the hip joint (not the waist). Reach out directly over the plane of the right leg. When the reach is maximized, hinge at the hip and lower the torso to the right, aiming for the torso to be parallel to the floor. The right hand then rests on the shin or ankle, or on a block. The left arm reaches toward the ceiling.

Keep the left and right sides of the torso equally long. Hold the position for several breath cycles, at least 30-60 seconds. Inhale to come up. Recenter, then reverse the feet and repeat for the same length of time on the other side.

Let us all live in the light! Namaste.

Brenda St. John has taught yoga classes in Chewelah since 2010.

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A Year On the Farm

Reflections on Ways of Being

By Michelle Lancaster

We were blessed with a number of visitors this summer. They came to visit us, but as each visit progressed, I almost felt as if they just as much came to visit our homestead. That's okay. We love where we live, too! The visitors all expressed similar descriptive words of where we live: calm, peaceful, relaxing. A place where they could be content hanging out on the back porch all day long, sipping tea and swaying back and forth in the rocking chairs observing wildlife.

What our visitors came here from were large and changing populations, political structures, and society. Watching the reaction of these people to our country lifestyle reminded me of what we take for granted some days. A location with little wind and plenty of trees to escape the summer sun as needed, lounging in the hammock as time allows. Peace and tranquility of a low-population area. Clear night skies with abundant stars. Casual wildlife encounters like seeing quarter-sized quail chicks run across the road or turkey hens daily grazing with their babies, nipping the seed heads off grass

in the pasture, interacting with the barnyard hens.

My husband and I lived in the city for a few years. Being around people from cities brought back a lot of memories of how our lives are different now. As they diligently locked their car doors, regularly expected to eat out and didn't finish their meals, used credit cards instead of cash, and consumed a lot more sweets than we're used to, we realized how different our country life is.

I know the city life is a great fit for the greater portion of world population, but I've never been that person. I like to create my own meals from food we raised, to the sweetness level we're adapted to. Because of that, I cringe to see a plate of food go uneaten – do you know how much work goes into making all that food!? And I love our barter system – trading labor for berries and firewood. Things that keep me in touch with the nature and community around us.

Visitors see our summers and know nothing of our winters, so for visitors it's as if we live in a magical place. (I'm convinced this is what attracts people to

our area, and many do not survive a full winter ... they head back to their warmer climates or sheltered conveniences. Visitors, be warned!) I remind myself that the balance of having our distinct seasons with glorious spring and fall weather is the payment of surviving another harsh winter.

I would love to see our area continue to stay as it is now. A refuge. A place of natural beauty. A place so different that it is surprising and even overwhelming to our visitors.

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

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The Primordial Heron

Article & Photos by J. Foster Fanning

One of the most iconic birds of North America is the primordial-looking great blue heron. Adults of this species, *Ardea herodias*, can reach up to 4.5 feet in height and have a wingspan exceeding six feet. If you've seen a great blue heron in flight, with that big wingspan, those long trailing legs, long body, curved neck and pointed bill you know this bird looks enormous and rather primeval.

Shortly after my arrival to the Pacific Northwest from Texas in 1969 my first view of a great blue heron left me fascinated and wanting to know more. At the time I was employed as part of a crew building the annex on the Lake Quinault Lodge and when I asked about the heron, I was told its local name was "shitsaquart." The crew were having a good time pulling the leg of an outsider with a southern accent. Or were they?

Have you ever been walking quietly along a waterway or maybe silently paddling a kayak in still twilight waters and unexpectedly startled a great blue heron? If so, you will most likely remember the experience. I certainly do. Such was one of my early encounters. These magnificent birds have a very sharp, loud croaking call they blast out when startled. More than once in these many years since my first GBH encounter they have managed to jolt me into awareness of my intrusion upon their hunting or resting areas.

That primal look of the great blue heron fits the species lineage quite well considering the genus *Ardea* dates back 14 million years. The fossil record of the GBH itself dates from the Pleistocene Epoch, about 1.8 million years ago.

To some Native American tribes, herons are symbols of good luck and patience. Especially on our Pacific Northwest

Coast, where some First Nations fishermen see a heron as a good sign for a successful fishing trip. Herons are also used as clan animals in some Native American cultures.

Contrary to popular belief, great blue herons are not strictly fish eaters, although that is a primary portion of their diet. They also stalk and consume everything from insects to small mammals and even other birds. In the winter the solitary heron will forage for mice and voles and other lesser mammals. They are determined hunters, spending about 90 percent of waking time stalking prey. The technique is to grab their quarry in their strong beaks or occasionally using dagger-like bills to impale their target.

Great blue herons hunt both night and day thanks to a high percentage of rod-type photoreceptors in their eyes which give them heightened night vision. Patience and speed are the keys to this bird's hunting success. I've photographed a heron standing motionless on a floating mass of kelp and then in one lightning-quick move striking into the water several feet from its perch and snagging a small crab.

Great blue herons, like so many other species, have benefited with the return of the beaver populations across the northern reaches

of the U.S. and southern Canada, which have created a patchwork of ponds, swamps and meadows well-suited to foraging and nesting. There are a number of interesting facts about great blue herons:

- While solitary most of the year, these herons gather in large colonies called "rookeries" or "heronries" to socialize, mate and brood nests of young. These col-



onies, including in our highlands area, can consist of a dozen to several hundred nests scattered in treetops adjacent to wetlands.

- Within these heron societies the male chooses the nest site and then engages in an elaborate courtship dance stretching neck forward with head and neck feathers erected and then clacking the bill shut, flying in circles above the colony with neck extended, and presenting potential female mates with sticks to begin the nest construction. The female will build the nest and lay the eggs and then both parents will take part in the brooding process lasting about 2 months until the juveniles fledge.
- Great blue herons have specialized “bib” feathers to keep themselves clean. These feathers continuously grow on their chest and, when combed by a clawed middle toe, fray into a fine cleaning powder. The resulting powder helps groom their entire body and clean off fish slime.
- Heron chicks are born with grey eyes that become bright yellow when they are adults. Adult male eyes are larger and generally brighter orange than female. During breeding season, the area between the eye and

bill will turn a bright blue, the iris will turn reddish, and the yellow bill will take on an orange hue.

- Although large, the GBH weighs only five to six pounds and can reach 30 m.p.h. in flight.
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology tells us that the oldest record of a great blue heron lifespan exceeds 25 years, with an average of 15 to 20 years.

Generally great blue herons are migratory birds, although the Pacific Northwest coastal herons are year-round residents. Commonly the GBH is found throughout most of North America in the summer. The winter migration range extends south through both east and west coastal U.S. waters to Mexico, the Caribbean and on to South America. Nonetheless, this bird's hardiness is such that individuals are often found in cold northern winters like those of our highlands, so long as fish-bearing waters remain unfrozen.

I hope you are enjoying this great hiking, biking, boating, touring, gardening summer weather.

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



Smarty Pants —

By Tina Tolliver Matney

Sometimes I forget to take my smarts with me when I walk out the door. A little “bear incident” recently brought this particular realization to mind. It was a dark night as I heard the dogs and I raced out across the yard to the old garden. The mosquitoes swarmed my bare legs and arms and a few flew up my nostrils and into my ears as I stood there with nothing between me and the bear crouched under the plum tree but an old fence and my flashlight.

And then it hit me ... there was absolutely nothing between me and the bear but an old rickety fence and my flashlight.

My flashlight grew two shades dimmer the moment that thought grew into fear. I started to feel like I was about to die because the bear I was looking at was

a mere cub. Probably feeling trapped because his mama had run off when the dogs gave chase. So, mama bear was around ... somewhere.

Suddenly my life flashed before my eyes and I felt the hair stand up on the back of my neck when I heard the crackle of a branch. But it was just me. I was standing under a pine tree and had rolled my snake boot over a branch on the ground. Close call.

Everything about this entire scenario screamed poor judgment and bad decisions. My worst decision had been running to the far corner of the yard in the dark because I knew the dogs had a bear cornered. I could tell by the sounds that were frantic and vicious and even sad with the unmistakable sound of the cub. I was wearing shorts and a

sleeveless shirt and the night was still muggy and warm.

One thing I had done right that night was to slip my bare feet into my trusty muck boots because I didn’t want to step on a snake in the dark. Apparently I gave no thought to the overdose of mosquito venom I was about to endure. I didn’t even consider a mode of self-defense as I went out the door. None. And I don’t think there’s a stick big enough to fend off an angry mama bear. And so there I was in a bit of a predicament.

Oh, one other thing in my favor, I realized, was that my phone was in my back pocket. I recently discovered that my cell phone actually has some decent micro pockets of reception out there in that big back yard. I learned this one day when my phone vibrated in my back pocket while I was in a full throttle pass through my lawn of weeds. So out in the dark in the yard I called my kid. I explained that I was looking at a bear and didn’t know if it might be tangled and that I was a little concerned that things could get really tricky if the mom came back and her baby was tangled up in the fence.

But as it turned out he wasn’t tangled. Just too little to maneuver back over the fence quickly like his mama did. So we left him alone. The kids went home and I went to bed after bringing the dogs inside. I lay awake feeling grateful that I didn’t have to worry about my kids fighting over an inheritance of my collections of old buttons and mismatched dishes.

When I finally drifted off to sleep the commotion in the back yard started all over again. The cub was crying as I heard the fence wire creak and groan and then all was quiet. Mama had come back for her baby.

I think I managed a mere four hours of sleep that night and was tired the next

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The image shows the exterior of Northern Ales brewery in Kettle Falls, Washington. In the foreground, a large oval sign reads "NORTHERN ALES" with "KETTLE FALLS, WASHINGTON" underneath. To the left of the sign, a smaller sign on a post reads "FAMILY FRIENDS FOOD BEER CRAFTED FROM SCRATCH". Below these signs is a QR code. At the bottom of the image, there is a photograph of a pizza topped with mushrooms and onions, and a glass of beer with a "Northern Ales" logo on it. The background features a scenic view of a lake and mountains under a blue sky with clouds.

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This Great Big Life

day. And while this might make a decent campfire tale I can tell my grandkids, I couldn't shake the feeling over the next several days that I need to have better judgment and make better decisions during events like that. There was nothing brave about one piece of that night and, in all honesty, I seldom feel brave when things like that happen. I tend to just react without thinking much and that's probably – okay, that's definitely – where I get into trouble.

That was not the first bear incident I have had here. I believe I've mentioned the night a bear killed my daughter's Ag Science lamb ... ate her homework, so to speak. When I went to check on the noise and the barking of my old lab I found myself standing face-to-face with a very angry bear when I mistook him for one of my dark brown llamas in the dark. Pretty sure that bear could smell my fear as I did everything wrong according to the experts.

And who are these experts anyway? What kind of training do they have? How do they know to stay still and curl up in a ball? Has anyone ever tried that and lived to say, "Hey! That worked!" My survival style of dropping everything in my hands, screaming and then running and throwing my entire body over the fence worked too, but nobody asked me if that was a better tactic.

So, I guess my point was this. I need to smarten up if I want to grow old naturally. I probably need to sharpen up my target skills. And here is where I should tell you I can't hit the broad side of a barn no matter how much I practice so that's really not a mode of defense I want to rely on. I'd rather just be a little more level-headed in the face of "what was that!?" when I'm by myself.

Not reacting has been a new part of my daily routine because there will

probably always be something around the next corner in this great big life that will make me jump. And there has been a little progress, I think. I tend not to panic so much about the snakes. Just a few days ago I saw a big snake out by where I have to step into the tall grasses and weeds to turn on the hydrant for the sprinklers. Sure, I jumped a little. I always do and I always will. But I didn't yell or scream OR cuss ... okay that's a lie. I cussed like a sailor, but I didn't throw my phone at it. Progress. It was a bull snake, not a rattler, so it had that going in its favor. But still, it was a big snake.

So, I went to the hardware store and I bought a six-foot hose extender, a shut-off valve attachment and a new 100-foot hose. I came home and put on my boots,

then attached it all to that frost-free hydrant. I flipped the hydrant lever up, came through the gate and reached down to the new end of the extender I had fed through the fence and shut off the valve until the next time I move the sprinkler, when I'll turn the valve back on. Now I never have to go to that side of the fence until I shut the hydrant down in the fall.

That certainly was not brave, and it was a little expensive. But I think I'm getting smarter.

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

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Growing Up On The Spokane Indian Reservation

By Robert Wynecoop

Excerpt from Robert "Chick" Wynecoop's book, printed in 2003 by Tornado Creek Publications, reprinted here, with permission.

Chapter 49: The Electric Club and the B-29 Crash

Continued from last month...

Behind the airplane, we saw small white puffs that were not clouds. They were parachutes!

We just stood there, mouths open, wide-eyed and all ears. Each parachute had a small black dot swinging underneath it. We watched them until they disappeared in the trees about five miles away.

The airplane was still flying, but all of a sudden, an engine fell off one side and the plane tipped to the other side. After the motor fell off, the plane went into a steep dive towards the Spokane River, south of town. While in its final dive, one more parachute appeared behind it. Not too long after the airplane went behind the ridge, a big cloud of black smoke rose up. The crash was too far away for us to hear it. We counted a total of eleven parachutes either in the air or already on the ground. Man, what a day! A burning B-29, parachutes everywhere, and a big cloud of smoke! That was the most exciting Electric Club meeting we ever had.

Since late August is right in the middle of forest fire season, and the firefighters were already on the alert, all the available men gathered and went to see where the plane had crashed.

While this was happening to us and the firefighters up near the Agency, Wig was back at our house. Soon as he saw the parachutes, he jumped into our Jeep and went looking for

the men who had bailed out.

So many things were going on at once. All us kids were watching the adults load up the bulldozers, shovels and other firefighting tools and head for the fire that was billowing black smoke. Within about an hour, brother Wig arrived at the Agency with a bunch of airmen and parachutes. No one had been injured, except for scratches and bruises. Then Wig went back for more.

In the meantime, the rolling cloud of smoke was getting bigger and really boiling. Since we were all too young to help, we just stood there and took in all the excitement and tried to stay out of the way. More and more people were coming in and signing up to fight the fire, because it

was still growing, not weakening.

A line of airplane fuel had spread from the motor impact site to where the airplane had crashed about a mile and a half mile away. Scattered fires burned between the two sites, and since the wind was blowing, the fires quickly spread together and on up the cheatgrass hillside.

By now, all eleven of the parachuting airmen had been recovered. But we later found out that one person who had not bailed out was lost in the crash. He had been going out the door when the engine fell off the plane, and as the plane tipped, he was probably knocked back into the doomed aircraft. That was terrible news. In our quiet little world, this was enough excitement to last us

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The Way It Was, According to Chick

quite a while.

Early the next morning, the fire was finally brought under control. Wig took us down to the airplane crash site, which was close to the road and easy to see. The military personnel had cordoned off the area until the airman's body was recovered. Weeks later the area was partially covered with soil, and we were allowed to walk around the impact site.

Like everyone else, we picked up a few souvenirs. There wasn't much left because the military investigators had taken all the large, important pieces. Wig had a big piece of the propeller, but like many other family souvenirs, it has disappeared over the years.

Next, Wig took us up to see where the motor had landed. Parts of it

were scattered around there for a long time. We picked up a lot of small cable. Wig made our biggest find – a parachute, complete with parachute cords made of strong nylon. We tried to use the parachute for a tent and a few other things, but that didn't work out very well. Eventually, some of the local women took it and made clothing out of it.

I probably don't need to say that when the burning airplane came over and crashed, we didn't get around to playing Kick-The-Can that night.

When I got home, everyone had a story to tell about the day the B-29 came down. The events of that afternoon gave us enough excitement to last a long, long time. Yes, I did grow up a bit more than usual that day – befitting my new blue shirt, belt, and

hair style.

I had worn a new blue shirt to the Electric Club meeting that fateful day. I thought I looked pretty good in that shirt, and I had hardly been able to wait 'til I could wear it. Wearing that blue shirt made me feel great – not because I wanted to impress the girls, because there weren't any in the Electric Club – but I thought it just looked good on me. By now, I was almost thirteen, and I had grown a little, especially in the hips. When school started, I was going to wear pants with a belt. A new blue shirt and pants *with a belt* – man, I was growing up! To top it off, I had started to comb my hair like the older boys, with a little raised flip in front. In more ways than one, I was coming of age.


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We'll Be In Clover

Article and Photo Montage by Joe Barreca

"It's a jungle out there." That's what I was thinking as I prepared to cut down the vegetation between the last two rows of my vineyard. Purple vetch was draped from one side to another. Yellow sweet clover grew taller than my head. My feet were tangled in everything underneath. This very wet spring has spurred the vegetation into overdrive. Sure, the grass was tall and green, but then I began to notice the clovers.

If you are looking at the picture, you might be thinking "Whoa, those are not all clovers." Technically you are right. They are all part of the bean family *Fabaceae* whose name goes back to *faba*, the name of an old bean variety (wiktionary.org). (I imagine that my father's fa-

vorite, fava beans, goes back to the same word.)

Although they look different from each other, this family has a lot in common. Above ground they are all very popular with bees. At some point they are all good forage. Most but not all of the "beans" are edible. Underground they all host nodules of nitrogen-fixing bacteria. As a green manure or mulch, they all bring nitrogen into the soil from above. In concert with grass and other forbs, they very much contribute to the "jungle" effect. Each, however, has its own personality.

Most noticeable in my area was purple or hairy vetch, a.k.a. American vetch (*Vicia americana*). It is a perennial that thrives in both dry

and wet conditions. Obviously, it really likes the wet ones since it was climbing all over everything this year. That makes it very useful in reclaiming burned or disturbed land. Especially when mixed with grasses and grains, it provides good erosion control. The seed pods are edible when they are young, but the seeds themselves are poisonous when dry (sciencedirect.com). When the pods dry enough, they burst open, throwing a pair of seeds far from the original plant. I tried to figure out where the "hairy" part of the name came from and almost gave up until I noticed that as the flowers are fading, they are covered in a white fuzz. This is a useful and beautiful plant when it is in its purple haze phase, but as it dries out it's a brown tangled mess.

Although it was climbing over most things, the vetch seemed to leave the yellow and the white sweet clovers alone. Not being able to resist tasting sweet clover, also known as honey clover, I found out that it is not really that sweet. After further reading I learned that the sweet part is the smell. Wikipedia says it grows to be six feet tall. Many of those in the vineyard are well over seven feet. With up to 350,000 flowers per plant, the nectar and pollen is very attractive to bees. Beekeepers love it. Wildland ecologists don't. Evidently it is too prolific. It shades and out-competes native plants. Also, the amount of nitrogen that it fixes into the soil changes the ecology of prairies and forests. Actually, as a farmer, I like the nitrogen and have already drastically altered the ecology. So, my only complaint is that sweet clover is too tough to mow

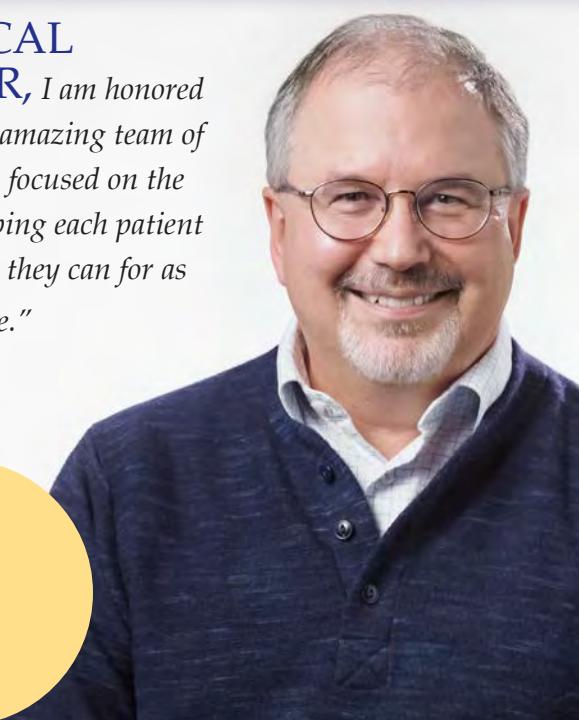
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Under all the other plants is a ground cover of what I can now identify as hop clover or more technically black medick or burr clover. I knew it was very hardy when I found it growing at a high elevation near Chesaw. I brought home some of the small black seeds. I'm not sure that is why it is everywhere now but feel that is a good thing. Wikipedia suggests that those small black seeds are edible and can be made into flour or roasted whole. (No, I have not tried that yet.) The vetch and sweet clover dry up in midsummer. But this species keeps on coming back if there is water. It doesn't get mowed out when the regular clovers and grasses do. I love it.

Speaking of regular clover, I have two kinds, red (*Trifolium pratense*) and white (*Trifolium repens*). Try Googling red clover and you will be swamped with ads for food, extracts, perfumes and tinctures of the stuff. Obviously very edible and commercial, both species were imported from Europe and are now found all over the world, though it does have

a hard time competing with the taller plants. Virtually every browsing animal from rabbits to elk eat it, making it ideal for building "wildlife bridges" to connect fragmented habitats (Wikipedia). Ironically though, boiling is suggested before humans eat it. For an added twist, "dried white clover flowers may also be smoked as an herbal alternative to tobacco" (more Wikipedia). Bees love it too. It grows commercially in open fields.

When it comes to open fields, nothing outdoes alfalfa (a.k.a. Lucerne). This is an ancient forage crop grown around the world. "Pliny and Palladius called alfalfa in Latin *medica*, a name that referred to the Medes, a people who lived in ancient Iran." It is a perennial crop that is sure to bring great prices per ton after this very wet spring. There are a few patches here and there on our farm, probably from hay used as mulch over the years. Although generally a good crop, too much alfalfa can be bad for horses and cause bloat in cows (horseracingsense.com). In humans, it's often eaten as a garnish, and seems to prevent

cholesterol absorption in the stomach (webmd.com). Weirdly, alfalfa exhibits autotoxicity, which means that it is difficult for alfalfa seed to grow in existing stands of alfalfa. But we seem to be getting pretty far afield here (pun intended).

The final species in this octet of *Fabaceae* is sweet peas, *Lathyrus odoratus*. A native of Sicily (love that!), the seeds of sweet pea can be toxic if eaten in quantity. I did eat a young pod. It didn't taste either good or bad and I didn't get sick. Despite the "odoratus" part, it doesn't smell particularly strong either. I gathered seed from the roadside years ago and now it seems to spring up wherever it wants. Maybe I was following in the footsteps of Gregor Mendel, the "Father of Modern Genetics," who used it to pioneer crossbreeding. But more likely I was imitating generations of other isn't-that-pretty wild seed gatherers who inadvertently spread invasive species around the world. It really is a jungle out there.

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

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Welcome Summer 2022

By Becky Dubell

But really?!? One hundred degrees by the end of the month? I thought I had left those temperatures behind in Arizona when I moved to Northeast Washington in '83. I guess it has taken a few years to catch up with me. I didn't run fast enough. I did get to miss the high temps last year while I spent time with mom in Skagway looking down the inlet from her dining table. Mother Nature is showing what she can do for me, or rather us, this summer.

With all the rain, which washed out quite a few gardens that had to be replanted, the grass has gotten out of hand in my yard and orchard. It looks like most of you out there were able to keep up with mowing that dumb green stuff between rain showers. I'm one of those weird people that would rather push/plow/shovel snow than mow that green stuff. I can't even come up with a nasty four-letter word ... oh ... wait ... lawn! That works.

I now have that green stuff about three feet high that needs be whacked down. With a lawn mower that is now working and no rain it will get taken care of. It will take many passes of the mower in many different directions and a bunch of gas, as my daughter and son-in-law have discovered.

A benefit of all this rain has made for some gorgeous views which I'm hoping you have taken a moment to discover and appreciate. The fields got green pretty quickly. Fast running creeks. Lakes with lots of water. A view of the valley from a Colville parking lot that kinda took my breath away (I showed a picture to the gals that work inside the building and they didn't recognize it and they see it every day). Please take some time out of your busy day to take a look around cuz the view you see at this moment will change every time you look at it, just like this one has done with me.

I followed an antique car – Model A or Model T – from my driveway all the way into town. Did not have any choice but to slow down and take a look around. I guess I could have gotten in a hurry and passed him but it was so cool following that car traveling along about 25-30 m.p.h. and thinking on what it was like back almost 90 years ago to take a trip to town. According to my dad (5 years old) it was an all-day trip to go from Heppner to Walla Walla for doctor appointments.

Could see all kinds of things while traveling along at 25 m.p.h. (faster was considered speeding by his dad). Grandad

had hunted/broke/sold wild horses, to the Army, from the hills around there and had all kinds of things to point out to his boy. I have not been able to find the cave in the cliffs that was a hideout for outlaws (according to Grandad) because the speed limit is now 55 m.p.h. and you cannot see as much as you can when traveling along at 25. There are advantages to a slower pace, I'm thinking.

I am back to volunteer driving for Rural Resources and loving the sense of freedom that I get from driving my car – especially after being house/couch-bound for over six weeks. The area has sure changed in that small amount of time. Canola fields on the way to Spokane. A new (to me at least) plant growing in the fields where the sunflowers were – unless they are sunflower stems waiting for the flowers? New construction – houses, businesses, RV park.

Love the new road topping (or whatever it is really called) out of Arden up past Blue Creek. It is so smooth and very little tire noise which is GREAT! Waiting for the roundabout at Loon Lake – had to stomp on the brake my last trip south through that intersection. New road topping on Miner in Colville – drive it a lot and very much appreciated but that bump/dip on Hawthorne still gets me most every time.

Still looking for more changes – heading up to Marcus next week and will see lots of changes, I am sure. Such a beautiful drive along the river. Seems to be a surprise around each corner.

We, at the *North Columbia Monthly*, really appreciate the feedback that we get from our readers. I'd like to share one from a Rural Resource client that I drove to Spokane and back to Colville. After sharing that I write for the *Monthly* he wanted to read my latest article. A couple minutes into reading it he said, "This is just like talking to you." Thanks, Larry. A customer at the Colville Do-it Center asked if I ever ran out of things to talk about. A fellow worker (anonymous) said, "Have you *met* Becky?" A big THANK YOU to all of you out there for taking the time out of your lives and spending it with all of us.

Be safe and enjoy each day!

Becky is a mother, gramma, and great-gramma 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."

The Joy of Basil

Article & Photo by Aja Bridge

When I am messing about in the kitchen, whether preparing dinner or undertaking a large preservation project, I tend to take over the space. This was the picture recently, the kitchen island covered with cutting board, utensils, food processor, measuring cups, washed herbs draining in the colander, and various other items including garlic, parmesan cheese and olive oil. It was a disorderly and delightful sight, a promise of something tasty to come.

A sweet and unmistakably powerful aroma accompanied the cluttered countertop. My teenager walked into the kitchen exclaiming, "You're making pesto, aren't you?"

Pesto is a thick sauce, almost a paste, featuring basil as the main ingredient. The scent of fresh-picked basil leaves is strong. Once the leaves are finely chopped or pulsed, as they are when making pesto, that scent is magnified. I've heard the smell of basil described as lemony, peppery or sweet. To me, it smells like ... basil. Fragrant, delicious and very distinct.

Basil is a heat-loving herb that doesn't tolerate frost, so in our area it is grown as an annual. The plant, a relative of the mint family, needs direct sun, whether in a garden or flowerpot. The tender leaves can be harvested throughout the summer growing season. In fact, the more the leaves are picked, the more leaves the plant will produce.

Once the plant begins to show small flowers, leaf production stops, as the plant's energy will then go into growing flowers, and eventually making seeds. Pinching off the flowers before they mature is a good way to trick the plant into continuing to grow its tasty leaves.

I like to keep some basil plants growing outside in the summer so I can quickly snip a few leaves whenever I want to

add basil's unique flavor to a dish. However, when I want to churn out mass quantities of pesto, to spread on homemade pizza, garnish panini sandwiches, or store in the freezer for wintertime, I use the large bags of fresh basil available at farmers markets.

Basil can flavor marinades or dressings, and it blends well with other herbs like oregano, thyme, rosemary, parsley and marjoram. When used fresh in sauces and soups, it is best stirred in at the end to preserve the savor. Whole leaves go well on top of pizza or flatbread. Basil is featured in many Mediterranean dishes, including pasta and other Italian recipes. It pairs perfectly with tomatoes, the two together creating a classic summer flavor.

The many different varieties of basil include Thai, lemon, cinnamon and sweet, each with a distinctive taste to bring to a recipe.

While this herb has so many good culinary uses, pesto is my hands-down favorite. I've been using the same recipe, from my well-loved and tattered copy of *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon, for over 20 years. Usually I don't have pine nuts on hand, but the results are just as pleasing.

Pesto oxidizes quickly, meaning the part that is exposed to air can turn from bright green to icky brown, though the taste is not impacted. Putting a thin layer of olive oil on the top, before covering tightly with a lid, helps preserves its color. Drying the leaves completely before processing can also prevent discoloration.

Sally Fallon describes basil as being cherished for centuries among many cultures, and not just for cooking. Whether being used to repel mosquitoes or cure



sicknesses, as it was in India, or for more sacred purposes in the ancient cultures of Greece, Persia, and Rome, basil seems to have a history of great value. It has also been shown to benefit mood and disposition. This is terrific news for me. One of my favorite herbs is also good for my spirit? I better double the batch and look for more foods to smother in pesto.

Pesto

(Makes 1 cup)

2 cups packed fresh basil leaves, washed and dried

2-4 cloves garlic, peeled

½ teaspoon sea salt

¼ cup pine nuts

¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

¼ - ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Place basil leaves in food processor. Pulse until well chopped. Add garlic, salt, pine nuts, and cheese and blend well. Using attachment for adding liquids drop by drop, and with motor running, add olive oil. Pesto will keep for several days, well-sealed, in the refrigerator, or it can be frozen.

Aja lives in Colville, where she enjoys working with food education programs, senior nutrition, and farmer's markets.

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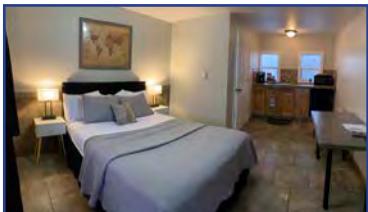
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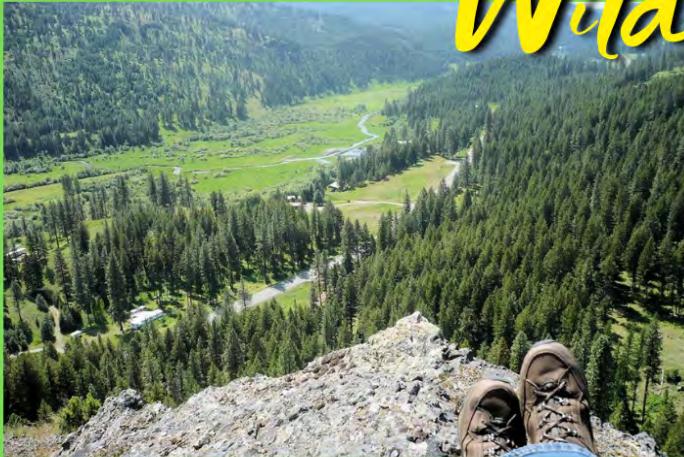
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