



How's Your Social Life?



TAKE A HIKE! Members of the Fortuna Senior Hiking Group on Johnson Road, which runs east from Bald Hills Road to the Klamath River. At the front are Larry Conwell (right) and Rees Hughes, followed by Teri Langs, Jeanne Baird, Connie Doyle and others. Nancy Spruance photo.

Hikers Make Connections on the Trail

By Lynn Crosthwait

Ranging from Richardson Grove to Smith River, and from simple to strenuous, the Fortuna Senior Hiking Group's (FSH) Friday hikes of 5 to 10 miles are on trails, rural roads, beaches, along sections of abandoned railroad tracks, up the occasional mountain, and across a few private

ranches, too.

Initiated by Fortuna Senior Center in 2007, FSH started with a few Fortuna seniors taking an easy walk at Humboldt Bay Wildlife Refuge. Since then, the Friday hikes have grown to

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'Food Tastes Better with Friends'

By Ted Pease

Lunchtime is a busy time of day at the three Senior Dining Centers run by Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) in Arcata, Eureka, and Fortuna. Sure, the food is good, the regulars say, but they don't really come just for the grub.

"We do come to get a good meal," said Deanna Bartlett, 79. She and her husband of 48 years, Elwood, have been volunteers at the Arcata Dining Site for 17 years.

"These are our friends," she said. "Elwood and I are both Arcata people. We've known some of these people for years. We enjoy the people. And it gives us something to do when we get up in the morning."

For many seniors, loneliness and isolation can be as great a challenge as health and finances. A March 2019 TIME magazine article is headlined, "One in Three Seniors is Lonely," and reports a National Poll on Healthy Aging. "Some research suggests that chronic loneliness may shorten life expectancy even more than being overweight or sedentary, and just as much as smoking," researchers found.

So it's no surprise that some of the regulars at the HSRC Eureka Dining Center show up early and stay late to talk and visit and gossip.

"We don't do any gossip, we share information," corrected Elizabeth Flores, who presides over one of the dining room's "power tables." Her five regular lunch-mates laughed.

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SINCE 1981

ASK THE DOC

LETTERS

CROSSWORD

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HUMBOLDT SENIOR RESOURCE CENTER

Making Connections

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Life, Dogs, Health & More

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A 'Hard Scramble'

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Published monthly since 1981 by



Humboldt Senior
Resource Center

Circulation 11,000

All opinions expressed in Senior News are those of the writer and not necessarily of the Humboldt Senior Resource Center. HSRC does not endorse any products, services or candidates advertised in Senior News. All advertising is paid for by the businesses involved, which are totally responsible for content.

Advertising: Call Elizabeth Whitley at 707-443-9747, x1227, or visit www.humsenior.org.

Submissions: Senior News may accept unsolicited readers' stories, up to 400 words. Contact the editor, Ted Pease, at 707-443-9747, x1226, or tpease@humsenior.org at least one month prior to the desired publication issue for details.

Subscriptions: \$20 a year. Call 707-443-9747 or mail to 1910 California St., Eureka CA 95501.

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TEDtalks: Building Social Capital

By Ted Pease

The last time I had what I'd call a "social life" was in high school, that time of life when a combination of youthful energy, insecurity, hormones and a freedom from adult obligations made hanging out with other people attractive.

Once the adult demands of jobs and family and life strike, it's harder to find time to be "social." And in a mobile society where most people no longer grow up and grow old in the same community, friendships can be hard to come by.

Social scientists and psychologists tell us that creating and maintaining "social capital" — the personal relationships that connect people to one another — is crucial to healthy communities and individuals. But those assets can start to drain away over time.

"As we age," writes psychologist Jill Suttie, "we tend to shed family and friends, which can hurt our mental and physical health."

So how do Humboldt seniors stay connected? Maintaining friendships, and creating new ones, can take work.

Here at the Humboldt Senior Resource Center, about 150 residents of Arcata, Fortuna and Eureka find social contact over lunch. At our three Senior Dining Centers, the noon meal is about more than food.

In the community, of course, there are plenty of places where people connect — quilters and hikers and pinochle players, musicians and actors, bikers and bocce players and golfers, book groups and OLLI classes.

If you happen by Beau Pre Golf Course in McKinleyville, or the Muni in Eureka, any weekday morning around 8, you'll find a group of mostly older men gathering, loading up their golf carts, shooting the breeze in the coffee shop.

It's the regular "morning game." They may be retirees, mostly, but the competition is cutthroat, and so is the camaraderie. Some of these guys play five days a week, year-round. During last winter's heavy rains, they were still at the clubhouse, glumly playing cards while the fairways flooded.

Social isolation is the flip side of social life, especially as we age and our social capital dwindles. This can be a serious and pervasive problem for seniors, as some of the stories in this month's issue of Senior News illustrate. Staying connected is as important to health as a good diet or low cholesterol.

"Homo sapiens are social animals," writes Dr. Jennifer Heidmann, medical director of Redwood Coast PACE, in her column this month [page 5]. "We are biologically dependent on connections to other people."

If you're reading this, then Senior News is doing its part in connecting you to your community. But (I can't believe I'm saying this) reading the newspaper isn't enough. Get up off the couch and go talk to somebody.

You'll be glad you did, and so will they.

—
Ted Pease is editor of Senior News, and a shameless social butterfly.

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Reaching Out to Seniors in Their Own Homes

The Social Worker Connection

By Thea Rowan

I've always yearned for the primal connection we humans can forge with each other.

Eager but anxious, I remember starting my role as a social work care manager in the MSSP (Multipurpose Senior Services Program) last year worrying, "Will I be able to connect with these folks? Will the generation gap get in the way?"

Over the last year, however, the connections I've made with my MSSP participants make that concern seem laughable now.

Every month, I speak with at least 45 different individuals about their health, their caregiving needs, their personal safety, and other challenges that come up.

Every month, I strive to connect them to the services they need to remain living in their homes with as much dignity and self-determination as possible.

Every month, I learn a little bit more about these individuals beyond their "needs." I hear

the joyful and the humorous, the curious and passionate. I could fill a book with the stories I've heard.

I am new in the field of social work, just shy of 30 years old. I am learning every day. It is an honorable role and an intimate one. In some cases, I am one of very few or perhaps even the sole connection between an individual and the world that moves around them.

Aging and mortality seem surreal until it doesn't anymore, and my exposure to this reality has me thinking about social connections in a whole new way. I understand that the world becomes harder to navigate as its pace moves faster and the body moves slower. I am keenly aware that the connections we have with those around us keep our bodies healthy and safe, our minds stimulated.

This awareness makes it all the more crucial to lift up those in our community who

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'I Don't Have a Social Life'

By Ted Pease

A conversation with Sherry Watts is a delight.

The former hair dresser and "jack of all trades" from Los Angeles can keep up a lively and informed running commentary on a range of topics, from the latest news from China Central TV to U.S. politics ("Don't get me started.").

"I'm very politically active. I'm a gray panther," said Watts, 73, sitting at her desk behind her computer screen. "I can't get out and march, but I sign a lot of petitions on Facebook and I do pay attention to the world."

The reason Watts can't get out and march is that she won't leave her tidy two-bedroom, Section 8 apartment in Eureka. Besides TV and the internet, Watts' only link to the world are social workers and caregivers.

"I don't have a social life," she said. "I have agoraphobia, and I don't like what I see outside around here on the streets."

"My anxiety is so darn bad," Watts added, looking out the window of her ground-floor apartment. "I am a very depressed person. I would rather be in bed than go across the street."

One of her lifelines and connections to the world outside, Watts said, is Thea Rowan, a social worker with the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP). "Thea is an angel," Watts said. "I don't know what I'd do without her."

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MSSP Services

Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) participants must be 65 or older, Medi-Cal recipients, and whose health makes them eligible for nursing home care. Services MSSP can help coordinate include:

- Case management
- Mental health care
- Personal care services
- In-Home Support Services (IHSS)
- Respite care
- Home Delivered Meals
- Home equipment
- Minor home safety repairs
- Transportation
- Chore services
- Personal emergency response system communication device
- Adult day care/support center/health care
- Protective supervision
- Money management



HOME VISIT — Sandra Holloway of Arcata, left, is one of 45 people that social worker Thea Rowan visits in their homes every month as part of the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP). Ted Pease photo.

Don't Be Lonely — Get Out There!

By Cheryl Kelly

If you're feeling lonely, you're not alone. Last year, a survey of more than 20,000 people found that 47% "sometimes or always feel alone."

Other research correlates loneliness with serious illnesses like dementia, depression, heart disease and strokes, and a 2015 Brigham Young University study equated social isolation to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

These reports are disturbing, but also highlight the positive health benefits of having an active and engaged social life. So how do we do that?

Ironically, the road to getting out there to make new friends may begin with an inward journey through meditation. UCLA researchers found that meditation can ease negative health issues associated with loneliness, and increase self-assurance.

Locally, the Arcata Zen Group off Fickle Hill Road offers a range of meditation practices (arcatazengroup.org, or 707-826-1701). Or consider getting started with the popular meditation app, Headspace.com.

Experts acknowledge that forging new social connections can evoke feelings of vulnerability. Developing a social network isn't like jumping out of an airplane, but it can take you out of your comfort zone.

"Courage starts with showing up and letting ourselves be seen," says Brené Brown, author of the book "Daring Greatly." Brown's 2011 Ted Talk on "The power of vulnerability" is worth watching (if you're not one of the 41 million people who already have).

One way to build your social network is to reconnect with the friends you already have. Schedule regular get-togethers or host a dinner club, with potluck-style dinner parties hosted by a different person each week. Tell your friends you want to enlarge your social circle, so it's

okay to invite new people.

What if you don't have any friends yet? Proven methods for meeting new people include volunteering, joining interest groups or faith-based organizations, and attending regular club functions.

If you enjoy multi-player games, board game cafés are a great way to meet people of all ages. NuGames in Eureka is a "the hub of the gaming community in Humboldt," and Tuesdays are board games nights from 6-9 p.m. at the 1662 Myrtle Ave. location.

"Everyone is welcome to come in and play board games like cribbage and backgammon, or to learn new games," says NuGames manager Carr Thorpe.

Other local groups can be found on meetup.com. Humboldt County has groups for hiking, salsa dancing, language learning, software development, sailing, horseback riding and more.

For those who've lost a companion or spouse, having a roommate can help fill the void (and pay the rent). New online services such as Silvernest.com are designed to help mature adults find and screen reliable roommates. And, of course, online matchmaking sites like Stitch.net, OurTime.com, or SilverSingles.com are options for those looking for more than friendship.

Like anything of great value, making and keeping friends takes focus and commitment, but it doesn't have to be hard. Experts suggest that the best friends are good listeners, offer help when it is needed, and are a positive influence.

Simply put, be the kind of friend you'd want to have.

—
Cheryl Kelly, 61, of Trinidad enjoys friendship, nature and great books.

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings.
Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into
trees. . . . while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

—John Muir (1838-1914), naturalist.

Grandmother Faces

By Nancy Peoples

"Who finds a faithful friend, finds a treasure."
— Jewish proverb

My friends (whom I refer to as "The Girls with the Grandmother Faces") are my treasures.

After age 65 or 70, when our adult children are busy being umbrella parents, guiding their teenagers, paying for college tuitions, etc., we older women turn to each other for support and friendship.

My treasured friends do not come from Japan or Italy, where older living family members are valued and revered as crones (wise, aging women), as respected storytelling grandfathers, or as frail elder parents who need guidance and attention from their adult children. So we American older people have to lean on each other to socialize, and to fend off isolation and depression.

These are my treasured friends:

Mary, who meets me at the park so our two dogs (whom we treat like our children) can romp together on the grass.

Naomi, who organizes us to attend brown bag lunch presentations by OLLI, because they are free and very interesting.

Liz, who is the volunteer queen of our area, but always has time to drive her friends anywhere.

Cathy, who takes care of all her family and her neighbors, but finds time to save me a few of her famous homemade *deee*licious peanut butter cookies.

Vicki, who lets me unload my dog on her and her spacious yard and neat house when I take a trip.

Beverly, who makes sure we all meet on senior discount day at the Gourmet Gallery for coffee, and to catch up on all the latest "Girls with Grandmother Faces" news.

And **Reva**, who — at 95 and spry as a spring chicken — opens her house to five of us every month for Mahjong.

Where would I be without my treasured friends who keep me active and smiling?

—
Nancy Peoples, 81, of McKinleyville is "a loyal fan of Senior News."

ASK THE DOCTOR**Making Connections***By Jennifer Heidmann, M.D.*

Homo sapiens are social animals. We are biologically dependent on connections to other people, meaning our health and wellbeing depends on how we interact with our community.

Yet we are also sold the idea that we are individualists who need to succeed and prosper on our own or only within our immediate family unit. Population studies suggest that both mental and physical health are affected by loneliness or perceived loneliness. There seems to be a higher risk of mortality and cardiovascular disease in those who are lonely or isolated (see “Antioxidants and Redox Signaling,” 2018 Mar 20;28(9):837-851, “Annual Review of Psychology,” 2015 Jan 3;66:733-767, and several other sources).

One might point out that we are more connected than ever, given social media and the internet. Our cell phones and even sometimes our watches give us updates on what is happening in the world or what someone just posted on Facebook.

Exercise-related social media let us follow other people’s workouts. We can give each other kudos, thumbs up or “pokes.” We can keep track of people we might otherwise never interact with.

We can join support groups for our diseases, start political actions, and send each other flashes about concerts or art shows. We can find out which plumber our social media friends prefer.

I remember wondering in the early days of the internet what on earth it would be used for, and now I have

to laugh at my own lack of imagination. Still, is it an adequate replacement for personal contact and being engaged in meaningful activities?

Older adults are especially at risk for feelings of loneliness and isolation. This may be because they have fewer enforced activities like school or work. It might be due to reduced ability to walk or drive. Hearing loss can also add to isolation and less interest in socializing.

There is no simple answer to this. Going out with friends or connecting regularly with family and others we care about certainly helps. As does taking a role in our communities (however one might define community), and the chance to do meaningful things that may help others.

Even though doing art or playing music or writing then sharing it with others is done in isolation, that can be a way to reduce loneliness. Time outside in nature might also be a way to reconnect with the world in general, with its sights and smells and sounds, and make us feel less isolated.

Reviewing the scientific literature on loneliness and health seems to point to two main themes: 1) Loneliness has an adverse effect on health; and 2) we need more research to figure out how to make people feel less lonely, and what specific interventions might help.

I have seen interesting presentations at medical conferences about technology as an answer. This can

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Social Secrets of Long Life

The ancient Italian island of Sardinia is not only one of the most geographically ancient places in the Mediterranean, but it also is home to an astonishing number of centenarians.

The Mediterranean region in general boasts long lives, often attributed to “the Mediterranean diet” of fresh vegetables and fruit, fish, whole grains and red wine. But Sardinia, off the west coast of Italy, has about three times as many 100-year-olds as anywhere else in Europe.

Sardinia is doubly unique in the life expectancy of its men. Across most of Europe, 100-year-old women outnumber men 4-to-1, but in Sardinian mountain villages, the ratio is 1-to-1.

Judy Hodgson, former publisher of the North Coast Journal publisher, is vacationing in Sardinia. “I think it’s social,” she wrote in an email. “All

these small mountain towns have gangs of old men hanging out together, stopping in at bar/cafés to meet friends.”

Researchers think this social activity contributes to longevity. “Although good genes, diet and exercise are often cited as crucial to living a long life . . . social interaction may be just as influential,” CNN reports.

Luigi Corda, who studied the Sardinian centenarians for two years, says the old men’s social status is fundamental.

“The fact of still feeling important, being the center of attention and head of a family, makes them active and gives them the strength to move ahead, underlying the importance of the family, in addition to genetic aspects, diet and religion,” he writes.

—Ted Pease

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HEAVENS TO BETSY

BY BETSY GOODSPEED

My Social Life

Words fascinate me. My favorite book is Roget's Thesaurus.

Most dictionaries define "social" in the context of the need for companionship, and I have to agree that humans are social animals. Some definitions put the word in political terms, which accounts for the term "Social Security."

I was 7 when my father bought a sailboat to escape from the pressure of his job in radio. When I needed to escape from the pressure of childhood, I preferred to visit my grandparents because their woodshed was filled with musical instruments, most of which had been invented by my grandfather to balance the pressures of being a circuit judge.

I never liked being "social." Cocktail parties were torture unless I was paid to supply background music. Much later, during the year-and-a-half I spent at assisted living centers, I learned that most "socializing" was just killing time — a common diversion at the old folks' home.

The fact that I'm an entertainer at heart probably relates to my attitude toward socializing. Even hosting daily talk shows, as I did for years, required being social.

My favorite talk show was "The Magical House," which aired twice a week on ETV. All the guests were children, who drew pictures or acted out stories that had to be original (because it took too long to get clearance from publishers). Songs could take even longer, so writing

original songs and music was also necessary.

I learned that the good-morning shows fulfill TV stations' obligation for public service announcements about events like county fairs and church suppers. Our librarians supplied info about any subject that would attract interesting guests.

My husband worked for a company that provided cameras for special events like the Olympic Games and the Pasadena Rose Parade. He was a weekend dad, and we didn't have time to argue, or to be very social. I wasn't a lover of TV when it quit being live, so I wrote fiction to entertain myself.

After I retired in 1973, my social life involved producing amateur theatre at the Ojai Art Center. Now, I find it interesting that my eldest daughter is wonderfully social, but my son spends most of his evenings alone composing music, and my youngest daughter vacillates between being social and seeking solitude.

I enjoy lively conversation, but I've been told that I think too much, so I write and create alternate worlds peopled with fictional characters. If I need to be social, email offers an ideal way to stay in touch, which makes me a happy camper.

—
Betsy Goodspeed, 92, of Eureka is a former stage and TV performer and the author of more than 30 books. Who has time for a social life?

Still Cool Backstage

By *Laurene Thorpe*

To expand beyond my own age circle is to time-travel, so to speak — backward and forward and around again. Time sometimes moves so fast it takes my breath away.

I first met Aurora Pitts when she was 2. Now, 10 years later, I see her shine in the lead role in Humboldt Light Opera Company's production of "Anne of Green Gables."

This is my seventh HLOC venture as a performer, so I have spent most of my senior citizen summers singing and acting with incredible and talented people of all ages, including Aurora.

As I deal with some of the challenges of growing older, it is a true gift to be working and keeping up (more or less) with a younger crowd. Not to say there aren't some of us oldsters doing very well in this production as well.

When I was in high school, I looked slightly older than my classmates, much to my delight, and was able to blend and hang out with the "cooler" college crowd. Now, at 69, I'm thrilled if someone thinks I'm a few years younger.

But that is just my own vanity. I'm more thrilled to find the pure delight of working with a group that strives, individually and together, to give this stage production their very best. I found it's true in every show I've ever done and with every age group.

I was lamenting to my doctor the other day,

"What happens in the future when I can't do all the things I want to do?" (Thinking, "If I can't, I'll end up old. Alone. Done for.")

The doctor smiled and said, "Laurene, you don't have to do everything." A light went off in my head and heart. I grinned to myself. She's right, I thought — not *everything*, but this one thing, "Anne of Green Gables," this thing for sure.

One of these days I will have my swan song, but not yet.

"Anne of Green Gables" is at the Hart Theater in Ferndale Aug 1-3 and 8-10 at 7:30 p.m., and Aug. 4, 10, 11 at 2 p.m. For tickets call (707) 407-0924 or buy online at hloc.org.

—
Laurene Thorpe of McKinleyville is an actor and singer.



The author and the "Anne of Green Gables" cast. Carol Ryder photo.

Not Cut Out to Be a Recluse

By *Patty Holbrook*

I moved to Eureka from Los Angeles knowing nary a soul. I sold my home in the early '90s, shortly after neighborhoods throughout the city were set afire during the riots following the Rodney King verdict, and bought a three-story cabin in Kneeland.

The cabin was “off the grid.” Cool, I thought. The only source of heat was a wood stove, which took me a half-hour to get going. Crumpled newspaper, sticks, branches, split logs, in that order.

When I went out on errands, it went out too. I would return to a cold cabin and start over.

My shallow well went dry every summer and water had to be trucked in. Propane had to be trucked in, and wood for the stove was trucked in, too. I had to stack it, sometimes in heavy rain. So much for “being off the grid.”

I loved my cabin in the woods, enjoying the mystical redwoods when ghostly tendrils of fog drifted among the branches, the lush maidenhair ferns, trillium like white orchids, and the wild pink rhodies blooming by my water tank.

In all that solitude and beauty, I considered becoming a recluse. But after nothing but brief exchanges with store clerks — “Have a good day” — I realized I was not cut out to be recluse and needed a social life. So I moved into town. But where to start?

Meeting people in bars or bowling alleys wasn't my thing, so getting on the Humboldt County Grand Jury

seemed like a good idea.

It was. I met 19 delightful people and learned a lot about my new community. I went on to join art classes, aerobics classes and writing workshops.

Being a pianist, I missed playing the songs of Gershwin and Jobim, and wanted a bass player to play them with. I found a great bassist, and our jazz duo ended up at the Palm Lounge at the Eureka Inn for many years when the Lounge was always packed with people having fun, enjoying cocktails and listening to good music.

Music was a pathway to meeting and playing with other talented musicians.

Missing my close friends from SoCal, I wanted to make new ones here. Who else but a close friend can tell you that you look fat in a pair of white pants?

I found a few kindred spirits, but then one took up yoga and decided to live a life of solitary contemplation, and the other one bought a dog and I haven't seen her since.

So, my classes continue — Mah Jongg, ukulele, bocce ball . . . But making close friendships remains elusive.

Everybody's busy. They're enrolled in classes.

—
Patty Holbrook of Eureka is a pianist, writer and perennial student. She hasn't had to build a fire in years.

“Love is a condition in which the happiness of another is essential to your own.”

—Robert A. Heinlein (1907-1988), author.

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PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

Antisocial Butterfly

For the third time in 30 years, I'm reading author Anne Morrow Lindbergh's volumes of diaries and letters, starting with "Bring Me a Unicorn." Extraordinary, the way her 1922-1928 journal and letters to family succeed in outlining (if not preparing her for) the rest of her life.

Here the shy Smith College girl meets the dashing Charles Lindbergh, fresh from his transatlantic flight. He has become, instantly, the most famous man in the world.

She's fascinated but wants nothing

to do with him. She can't imagine her life under a microscope, if they were to marry. Charles shrugs off the global mania as a pesky but necessary part of his ultimate goal: to fly all over the world.

Even at 20, Anne herself is no one to sneeze at. Already a respected writer at college, she's a daughter in one of America's wealthiest families. But like a Jane Austen heroine, Anne longs to shrink into the wallpaper during her parents' interminable string of parties. She's anxious until she can talk alone again with Charles or curl up with her books and her writing. Call her an antisocial butterfly.

Somehow, though her life becomes unimaginably hard — you'll need to read the succeeding volumes — Anne navigates married life in the air and on the ground with a stumbling grace. Leaving her beloved babies at home with nannies

for months at a time, Anne helps Charles achieve his dream of making survey flights to far-off islands and continents in their pint-sized monoplane.

Whenever they drop onto a snowy or muddy airfield — in Greenland or Iceland, say — Anne changes her clothes in the tiny plane, switching out of pants and boots for a skirt and heels. Without a break, she gamely drags along beside Charles, shaking hands with

crowds and dining with dignitaries, all of whom want to talk.

Trying to fulfill all roles of daughter, wife and mother in the 1920s and 30s, strung between hero worship and a succession of family losses, Anne wonders in her diaries if she, the antisocialite, will ever have a quiet, normal, family life at home with her husband. There in her home studio, she imagines, coffee in hand, she'll finally write her books. But with her husband pointing out unknown fjords far below the cockpit, Anne seems unaware that she's patiently, day by day, scribbling down her own unrepeatable story.

—
Margaret Kellermann is giving journal-keeping workshops through 2019, with book readings of her Eureka-based novel, "Annie California." Reach her at bluelakestudio.net/contact.

"Will she ever have a quiet, normal family life?"

ON THE TRAIL . . . From Page 1



COLORFUL TREK — Hikers (front to back) Janet Whitworth, Dolly Lockett and Jeanne Baird descend the Tey-wo-lew Section of the California Coastal Trail in Redwood National Park. Nancy Spruance photo.

between 20 and 30 over-50 men and women from various towns who come out every week to experience Humboldt's outdoor beauty.

After more than 12 years of weekly rambles, the Hikers will set off on their 600th hike next month.

The group has never been just about exercise. Socializing runs a close second to hiking, and strong friendships have developed over the years. The camaraderie is obvious from the chatter and banter as the hikers hit the trail.

"For me, the beauty of the hiking group is community within community," said Ranada Laughlin of Rio Dell, "connecting with others who have a similar love and respect for nature."

Hiker Diane Larkin, 64, of Eureka, joined the group about four years ago as retirement approached. "I thought it would be a good way to get some exercise, but the group has given me much more than I expected," Larkin said.

"I've hiked some spectacular trails, making great friends with wonderful, caring folks," she said.

One measure of the hiking group's

success as a social connection is that two spinoff activities have recently formed. There's a group who hike Monday mornings, followed by a lunch at a restaurant. And a group of super hikers takes on the challenge of higher elevations and steeper terrain once a month.

"What better way to grow friendships than out in nature around a common interest — hiking," said Nancy Spruance, 81, of Eureka. "The weather isn't always perfect, the terrain isn't always easy, but sharing experiences out of your comfort zone brings a sense of camaraderie that is deeply satisfying. And it's terrific fun."

Larkin agrees. "It has become my physical and mental health therapy, my spiritual connection, my 'church,'" she said. "For me, the FSH Group has been the best gift."

For Friday hike info, call 707-725-7953.

—
Lynn Crosthwait is a native Ferndaler who returned after 50 years to hike and enjoy her retirement years in Humboldt.

'FOOD TASTES BETTER WITH FRIENDS' . . . From Page 1

"I like to come early and I like this place," Flores said. "I like this chair."

"She's called 'Queen Elizabeth,'" one woman said. "Don't sit in her chair."

Lunch is provided four days a week to 145 people in the dining rooms, and to another 151 seniors through Home Delivered Meals. The goal is to raise funds to get back to five meals a week.

Vanessa Kuerten, the coordinator of the Arcata Senior Dining Center, told of a man whose life has changed since he joined the dining room group.

"The first time he came in he was wearing flip flops and holey shorts, and it was the dead of winter," Kuerten said. "I pointed him in the direction of some shelters and some other services, and he has always come back grateful, kind and respectful."

Over the past year he has come

to lunch more often. "I've seen him open up and reach out and connect with his tablemates, laughing and sharing stories," she said.

Kuerten got a note from him in mid-June: "Today I enjoyed the meal and the company," he wrote. "It was so good to share a meal with others. It might not seem like much but this is the gold I live for. Thanks."

"Many people come for the meals, because for some it's the main meal of the day," said Barbara Walser, HSRC director of Nutrition & Activities. "But just as many come for the friendship, companionship, conversation around the table. There is power in breaking bread together."

Martha Devine of Arcata has debilitating arthritis and says she can't walk much. But nothing can keep her from walking the three blocks from her apartment on Union Street across to

the senior dining room in the Arcata Community Center.

Devine lives independently, but she says residents' apartment doors at the Bayview senior living complex are closed. "There's no one to talk to," she said.

"The main reason I come here is to get some company. Without it, I would be alone. It's not good," she said. "I have some really good friends here."

From the banter and give-and-take before, during and after the meal, it's clear that companionship is always on the menu.

As HSRC's Walser says, "Food tastes better when you're eating with a friend."

Ted Pease is editor of *Senior News*.

'One More Line' Film Online

In 2009, Arcata artist/filmmaker Carrie Grant released a documentary film on her friend, Ferndale artist Jack Mays, created when she learned he was dying of cancer.

With co-director and cameraman John Howarth, "One More Line" was Grant's labor of love, and now it's available online at Amazon Prime.

Mays' drawings over more than a decade document the life of Ferndale, and the film tells both the artist's story and the larger tale of the town he loved.

"It was my way of dealing with the crushing blow that I was losing my artist friend," Grant said.

For more on the film and the artist, visit onemoreline.net.

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AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

Passing the Torch

Ageism is a prejudice or discrimination based on a person's age.

I have experienced, felt and struggled with the prejudice and discrimination that comes with age. That struggle has me mostly at the receiving end of that prejudice.

In a previous column, I suggested that I wanted to be the one to decide when it was time to hang up my car keys. I do not want someone else to be forced to make that decision.

That makes what I am questioning now all that much more difficult.

In a recent presidential debate, one of the candidates

said to another, *older* candidate, "If we are going to solve the issue, pass the torch. If we are going to solve climate chaos, pass the torch. If we want to end gun violence and solve student debt, pass the torch."

Are there moments in our lives that suggest when it is time to pass the torch?

Are there times that suggest we should become elders who get results not by control but through influence? When do people who are accustomed to being in positions of overt power discover the role of the wise elder? When do they make generous contributions that help guide issues and events, as opposed to controlling them?

A presidential candidate must be at least 35 years old to run. Why no upper limit? We do not seem to get

overly introspective regarding the minimum age limit; so why is it that the possibility of voting for someone in their late 70s and early 80s causes me much consternation?

When do we decide it is time to let go, to pass the torch?

Have there been other recent moments where other generations have confronted this question? Were the civil rights marches and the speeches of Martin Luther King, almost 60 years ago, such a moment? In those moments, did a generation stare into

the future and confront the idea that it was time for them to let go?

I do not want anyone else to decide that I should hang up my car keys. So I guess I should not be the one to decide that it is time for someone else to pass the torch. I support their right to make that decision for themselves.

I can and do hope, however, that our aging political leaders have all given this issue their careful consideration. I also want them to know that when they do decide it is time to let go, there is a wonderfully rich world of community elders that needs their participation.

John Heckel, Ph.D., reflects on life and aging as a regular *Senior News* columnist and chair of the *Senior News Community Advisory Council*. He is a retired *HSU* theater and film professor with a *doctorate in psychology*.

"When do we decide it is time to let go, to pass the torch."



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- Talk to OLLI Faculty



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‘The Senior Center Saved My Life’

By Janet Ruprecht

Shelly Heber of Eureka had an exciting career promoting rock & roll bands, starting in the 1950s as a teenager, organizing fan clubs for her favorite artists.

She became the first-ever female (and youngest) chart editor for *Billboard Magazine*, keeping track of the country's top bands and hits, first in New York and then in Los Angeles.

In the 1970s, Heber struck out on her own, using her music business and Hollywood connections to start her own company, marketing records for major stars like Elton John, Tom Petty and Peter Gabriel.

She made certain the records were stocked, played and promoted in stores — the things that helped drive the albums up the charts. On the side,



NO LONGER INVISIBLE — Shelly Heber says she resisted coming to the senior center, but now she's grateful she did. “We need people,” she says. “We need contact.” Ted Pease photo.

.she also managed some bands, one of the only women in a very male-dominated industry.

After 22 years, Heber gave up her business, left LA and moved to Eureka. For 20 years, she volunteered at the Discovery Shop, where she was the “Book Lady.” When lifting and bending began to hurt, she had to quit, and found herself sitting at home doing nothing, lonely and depressed.

At first, Heber resisted going to the senior center. She thought it was full of nothing but miserable old people.

“There are so many stereotypes we have to break,” she said. “Seniors are treated like they are invisible, and after a while, you begin to feel invisible. It is important to be acknowledged, respected for who we are.”

Now Heber thinks senior centers should be mandatory in every community. “The senior center saved my life,” she said.

She says she feels welcome there. She feels respected. She enjoys the camaraderie of her tablemates at lunch. She enjoys meeting people from different backgrounds and experiences.

Heber comes to the Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) on California Street in Eureka most weekdays for lunch, bingo and to see her friends. In the past year, she said, she has made five real friends there, the kind of people you can rely on when you have a problem.

“I heard that when we are alone, we smile 50%

less and we laugh 100% less,” Heber said. “We need people, we need contact.”

The HSRC Nutrition Program relies on donations to provide nearly 300 meals four days a week to people like Shelly Heber, and there is much more demand than funding allows.

To become part of a long-term solution to help provide meals for seniors, join HSRC's Circle of Friends, donors whose monthly contributions help provide continuity of services that seniors can depend on.

To join or to donate, go online to humsenior.org and click on “How to Help.” Or call 707-443-9747, x1231.

Janet Ruprecht is development coordinator at Humboldt Senior Resource Center.



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August SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

Humboldt Senior Resource Center in Eureka

An HSRC Senior Dining Center

1910 California Street

Call Tasha at 443-9747 x1228

Lunch: Tuesday-Friday at 11:30 a.m.

Every Weekday

9:00-1:00 Library
9:00-3:00 Senior Service Office
12:00-3:00 Billiards

Mondays

10:00-1:00 Mahjong
11:00-12:00 Tai Chi for Better Balance w/Sandi
1:15-2:00 S.A.I.L. w/Muriel
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/Beth & Lois
2:30-4:00 Memoir Writing Class

Tuesdays

10:00-11:00 Harry's Bingo (not Aug. 6th)
11:30-12:15 Lunch
12:15-2:15 Pinochle
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. with Beth & Lois
3:30-4:30 Tai Chi for Balance & Arthritis Practice Group

Aug. 6 10:30-11:30 Dine & Dance w/Ray, Dave & Lois
Aug. 13 11:30-2:00 Foster Grandparents Program
Aug. 27 6:00-9:00 Stamp Club

Wednesdays

11:30-12:15 Lunch
1:15-2:00 S.A.I.L. w/Muriel
1:00-3:00 Android Smart Phone & Tablet Group
1:30-3:30 Intermediate Line Dancing
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/Beth & Lois

Aug. 7 & 21

1:00-2:00 Caregiver Support Group
Adult Day Health & Alzheimer's Services Library, 2nd floor, Bldg. B
1901 California St., Eureka

Aug. 14 11:00-11:30 LeAnne Morini performs
Aug. 14 11:30-12:15 Emblem Club serves lunch
Aug. 21 10:00-11:30 Commodities Distribution

Thursdays

10:00-11:00 Grocery Bingo: Bring 1 grocery item
11:30-12:15 Lunch
1:15-2:00 S.A.I.L. w/ Muriel
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/ Beth & Lois
3:30-4:30 Laughter Yoga

Aug. 1 & 15

10:00-12:00 Genealogy group

Fridays

9:00-10:00 Falun Dafa
10:00-11:00 Beginning Tai Chi Movements
11:00-12:00 Beginning Yoga
11:30-12:15 Lunch

Aug. 9

1:00-4:00 Bridge Games
11:30-12:15 Hawaiian Luau Lunch
Aug. 30 10:30-11:30 Accordionaires Perform
Aug. 30 11:30-12:15 Birthday Celebration

Saturdays

Aug. 3 Noon Sassy Seniors
Oriental Buffet
5000 Valley West Blvd.,
Arcata
Aug. 17 Noon Nooners
Banana Hut, Eureka

Fortuna Senior Dining Center

An HSRC Senior Dining Center at Mountain View Village

2130 Smith Lane • Call Launa at 725-6245

Lunch: Tuesday-Friday at 12:00 p.m.

Tuesdays 12:00 Lunch

Wednesdays

Aug. 7 10:30 Music with Bill, Corena & John
5:00-8:00 pm Bingo

Thursdays

12:00 Lunch
Aug. 8, 15 & 22 Caregiver Support Group
12:00-2:00 United Methodist Church,
Fireplace Room
922 N Street
For info call 443-9747

Fridays

Aug. 9 12:00 Lunch
Aug. 30 12:00 Hawaiian Luau
12:00 Birthday Lunch

Arcata Community Center

An HSRC Senior Dining Center

321 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway

Call Vanessa at 825-2027

Lunch: Tuesday-Friday at 11:30 a.m.

Mondays

Aug. 12 & 26 11:00-12:00 Silver Quills Writing Group

Tuesdays

9:00-11:00 Katie's Krafters
10:00-10:50 Senior Aqua Time-HealthSport
\$5 fee (prior registration required)
11:00 Bread distribution
11:30-12:15 Lunch
12:30-2:00 Bead Jewelry Class
Aug. 6 & 20 10:00-11:00 Caregiver Support Group
Mad River Community Hosp.
Minkler Education Room
3800 Janes Road, Arcata
For info call 443-9747
Blood Pressure Check
Aug. 6 10:00-11:00

Wednesdays

11:00 Bread distribution
11:15-12:15 Tai Chi with Kathy (advanced)
11:30-12:15 Lunch
12:30- 1:30 Tai Chi with Kathy (beginning)
Aug. 7 & 24 10:30-11:30 Brice Ogan & Guitar

Thursdays

9:00-10:00 Tai Chi w/Tim (\$3 donation)
9:00-11:00 Katie's Krafters
10:00-10:50 Senior Swim hour-HealthSport
\$5 fee(prior registration required)
Lunch
11:30-12:15 PJ's Musical Group
Aug. 1 10:30-11:30 Swing 'n' Sway Trio
Aug. 15 10:15-11:15 Commodities Distribution
Aug. 15 10:30-11:00

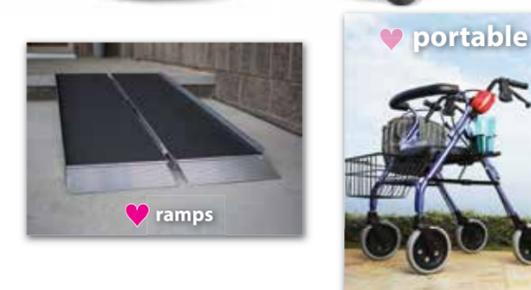
Fridays

10:00-11:30 Ping Pong
11:30-12:15 Lunch
Aug. 9 10:30-11:30 Luau & Entertainment by H.U.G.
Aug. 16 10:15-11:15 Sing w/the Dotted Half Notes
Aug. 23 10:30-11:30 John Humphrey on the Piano
Aug. 30 11:30-12:15 Birthday Celebration

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August 2019

Humboldt Senior Resource Center
Nutrition & Activities Program

Senior Dining Center Menu

FIRST WEEK
Aug. 1 **Chicken Pesto Sandwich**
Aug. 2 **Old Fashion Goulash**

SECOND WEEK
Aug. 5 *Dining Centers closed*
Aug. 6 **1/2 Chicken Salad Sandwich & Broccoli Cheese Soup**
Aug. 7 **Philly Cheese Steak**
Aug. 8 **Braised Pork Stew**
Aug. 9 **Kahlua Pork**

THIRD WEEK
Aug. 12 *Dining Centers closed*
Aug. 13 **Chinese Chicken Salad**
Aug. 14 **Hamburger**
Aug. 15 **Lemon Dill Fish**
Aug. 16 **Cheese Tortellini w/Alfredo Sauce**

FOURTH WEEK
Aug. 19 *Dining Centers closed*
Aug. 20 **Mediterranean Chicken**
Aug. 21 **Meat Loaf & Gravy**
Aug. 22 **Pulled Pork Sandwich**
Aug. 23 **Almond Chicken**

FIFTH WEEK
Aug. 26 *Dining Centers closed*
Aug. 27 **Spinach Lasagna**
Aug. 28 **Chicken Parmesan**
Aug. 29 **Taco Salad**
Aug. 30 **Catfish Po'boy Sandwich/Birthday Cake**

People 60+ are invited
\$3.50 suggested donation.
\$6.00 for those under 60.

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**Crossword Puzzle
on page 22**



August SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

McKinleyville Senior Center

Azalea Hall • 1620 Pickett Road
Open Monday-Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
mckinleyvillecsd.com
azaleahall@att.net • 839-0191

Mondays

	8:30-9:30	Tai Chi
	9:00-12:00	Computers (call for availability)
	10:30	HighSteppers at Hiller Park
	1:00-4:00	Party Bridge
Aug. 5	10:00-11:30	Genealogy
Aug. 26	11:00	Low Vision Workshop

Tuesdays

	9:00-11:00	TOPS
	9:30-10:30	S.A.I.L. Class
	10:40-11:40	Stretching
	12:30-3:30	BINGO
	1:00-2:00	Exercise

Wednesdays

	8:30-9:30	Tai Chi
	9:00-12:00	Computers (call for availability)
	9:45-11:00	Writing Workshop
	10:00-12:00	Needlework
	10:30	HighSteppers at Hiller Park
	1:00-4:00	Pinochle
Aug. 7 & 21	3:00-5:00	Caregiver Support Group Timber Ridge at McKinleyville Private Dining Room, 1400 Nursery Way. For info call 443-9747

Aug. 28	12:00	\$5-Monthly Luncheon Roasted Chicken, Sauteed Veggies & Dessert
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Thursdays

	9:30-10:30	S.A.I.L. Class
	10:30-12:00	Pinochle Lessons
	10:40-11:40	Stretching
	12:30-3:30	BINGO
Aug. 1	11:00-11:30	Chicken Enchiladas -\$3
Aug. 8	11:00-11:30	Meatloaf-\$3
Aug. 15	11:00-11:30	Chicken Noodle Soup-\$3
Aug. 22	11:00-11:30	French Dip-\$3
Aug. 29	11:00-11:30	Tomato Soup, Grilled Cheese-\$3

Fridays

	8:30-9:30	Tai Chi
	10:00-11:00	Drop-In Grief Support Group by Hospice of Humboldt
	10:30	Walking Group at Hiller Park
	1:00-4:00	Pinochle

Rio Dell

Every Mon, Wed & Fri

11:30-12:30	Senior Exercise Class Chamber of Commerce Bldg. 406 Wildwood Avenue
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Fortuna Senior Center

MGC is at 2280 Newburg Road
fortunasenior.org
admin@fortunasenior.org • 726-9203
Mon-Fri 10-noon & by appointment

Mondays

River Walk	8:30	Walking
MGC	9:00	Tai Chi
	11:00	Line Dancing
Aug. 5	1:45	Book Club
	3:30	Ukulele Group
	5:00	SAIL Class

Rio Dell/Scotia Chamber of Commerce
11:30-12:30 Exercise Group

Tuesdays

Rohner Park Trails	8:30	Walking
MGC	1:30	Senior Stitchers
	2:00	Seated Tai Chi
	3:00	Recorder Group

Wednesdays

River Walk	8:30	Walking
Aug. 7	12:00	Senior Lunch Bunch

Call Chris 725-2020 or Carol 725-2931

Rio Dell/Scotia Chamber of Commerce
11:30-12:30 Exercise Group

MGC	1:00	Tai Chi
	5:00	S.A.I.L. Exercise

Thursdays

Rohner Park	8:30	Walking
	3:00	Bocce Ball
MGC	9:00	Cards
	1:00	Mah Jongg
	2:00	Seated Tai Chi

United Methodist Church

Aug. 8, 15 & 22	12:00-2:00	Caregiver Support Group Fireplace Room For info call 443-9747
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Fridays

MGC	9:30	Cards & Games
	2:00	Scrabble Group

United Methodist Church

Aug. 23	7:30 pm	Fortuna Camera Club
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Rio Dell/Scotia Chamber of Commerce
11:30-12:30 Exercise Group

Fortuna	9:00	Hiking (Call 725-7953)
	9:00	Biking (Call 725-1229)

Saturday

Rohner Park	11:00-12:30	Picnic in the Park
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Sunday

Fortuna-The Monday Club		
Aug. 25	2:00-4:00	Open Mic

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No SOCIAL LIFE . . . From Page 3

And that's not just because Rowan arranged to have outdoor lights installed on the front porch and side of Watts's building, or worked with healthcare providers to get her essential dental care.

"Sherry is a gem," Rowan said. "Her perspective is so thoughtful and she has so much to share with the world. She also gives great TV show recommendations. I look forward to chatting with her every month."

For Watts and others like her — disabled, low-income and living alone — social service workers like Rowan are often the only human company they get.

"The caregiver comes most days, and Chris [Wilson], the home delivered meals guy — I really like him," Watts said. "And I like to visit with Thea."

"That's my social life."

It wasn't always like that. Originally from Los Angeles — "I looked like a Hollywood soap opera star" — Watts moved to San Francisco in the 1970s, and managed Macy's hair salon on Union Square.

Many of her clients were gay men, and she became a caregiver for some of them when they couldn't find treatment for AIDS. She also was assistant manager of a yacht club in Alameda, ran her father's plumbing company in Weaverville, and was caregiver for a 90-year-old blind man in Petrolia.

"It's scary at this age, losing that independence," she said, adjusting the oxygen tube she uses for COPD.

"I don't have the world I had before," she said. "I've learned to say 'No' to a lot of things that are enjoyable to me. Now I just automatically say 'No' to things I'd like to do."

"I don't have the confidence I used to have when I was younger," Watts said.

For information or to enroll in the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) at the Humboldt Senior Resource Center, call 707-443-9747, x1259.

Ted Pease is editor of *Senior News*.

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What Mortality Can Teach Us About Living



Join Ira Byock, M.D., as he shares relatable journeys of seriously ill patients and their loved ones as they found reconciliation and enriched relationships through the end of life.

Dr. Byock is founder and chief medical officer of the Institute for Human Caring at Providence St. Joseph Health. He is a leading palliative care physician, author, and public advocate for improving care through the end of life. He is an active professor emeritus of medicine and community and family medicine at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth. Dr. Byock is the author of *Dying Well* (1997), *The Four Things That Matter Most* (2004), and *The Best Care Possible* (March 2012).



Wednesday, August 14, 2019



6 pm Reception
6:30 pm Program and Book Signing

Book signing immediately following the program. The Best Care Possible will be available for purchase.



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LIVE VIGOROUSLY

BY JOAN RAINWATER-GISH

Exercising & Socializing

Upon becoming a group fitness instructor 10 years ago, I took myself very seriously. No kidding around — we're here to exercise so we can Stay Active and Independent for Life (S.A.I.L.).

However, it didn't take me long to realize there is much more to group exercise than exercising. Participants develop friendships that often fill a void in their lives.

My exercise groups arrive early to have time to talk and reconnect with each other. But it's not just my classes. At the Humboldt Senior Resource Center in Eureka you'll find crowded hallways of exercisers chatting, laughing and socializing long before class starts. So, I asked my class, what keeps you coming? Is it exercising — which is the main priority — or is it the socializing? The answer overwhelmingly was that BOTH are equally important.

Several members expanded on their answers.

For example, when Linda moved here from LA, she used group exercise as a way of meeting new people. "I didn't know anyone, so my first goal was to find an exercise program in order to find people like myself who enjoy physical activities," she said. "Exercise and friends is a win-win for me."

Evelyn said she joined to stay connected and not be so isolated. "Living away from family and surviving a soul mate husband has challenged my good intentions to stay active and connected to other people," she said. "S.A.I.L. class has provided visible and measurable proof that exercising

with supportive, caring friends of good humor is mentally, physically and socially healthy."

As for Yvonne, she joined in hopes of improving her balance. "I was amazed and delighted to find a bunch of vigorous, funny, helpful, intelligent 'old ladies' rocking out (warming up) to music," she said. "For me, exercising and socializing became a source of stress release and support."

For Patty, working at a desk all day gives little time for exercising or socializing, so coming to an exercise class provides both.

According to Jackie, "being with others who've been racking up the years is very comforting. We support each other, grateful that we're all in the same boat and can still paddle."

Mary adds, "Laughter and exercise are the best medicine."

It's a great combination — exercising and socializing. I encourage everyone to find a group to join — any kind of physical activity, be it a hiking group, Tai Chi, yoga or pilates. When you do, you'll not only be with people who support and encourage exercising, but you'll also find a great new social life.

Joan Rainwater-Gish, 76, of Eureka is a certified personal trainer and group fitness instructor, and a member of the Humboldt Senior Resource Center Board of Directors. To find out how to join one of her exercising and socializing classes, email jrainwater-gish@suddenlink.net.

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Friends Then and Now

By Annie Kassof

I didn't know anyone when I entered my new school. It was 1964 and I was in the second grade. So early in the school year I approached a tall, mischievous-eyed girl in my class named Karen and asked, "Will you be my friend?"

This was a bold move for a shy girl like me, but after a major geographical change (I'd attended first grade in Switzerland), I figured that potentially long-lasting friendships could make the difference between loving or hating school.

Karen said yes, so after school we'd decorate popsicle sticks or make

furniture-forts or vanilla pudding, and we rode our bikes and teased our siblings and practiced Pig Latin. Eventually I made friends with more girls in my class — Nancy and Lisa and Suzy — so second grade was a good year.

Sadly, by third grade, the powers-that-be decided to put me in a different classroom than any of my new friends, and with more limited contact we eventually drifted apart.

Because of my shyness and changing schools a few more times, the rest of my childhood social life was a fairly lonely one until I discovered that sometimes what nourishes my soul more than being with people is being with horses . . . or making art or music, or writing. But that realization was decades in the making.

Still, people need people. We give each other's lives shape and form and purpose.

Four years ago, on the cusp of becoming a senior citizen, I moved alone to a rural part of Humboldt County where I knew just a handful

of people. I'd moved from the place where I'd raised my family and had certainly amassed enough friendships. But I also knew that, as when I'd made a significant geographical change before second grade, some of my old friends would slip away like water. And they have.

But it's okay.

I'm content now. I have new friends, and a boyfriend. The people I chose to spend time with are people who not only share my interests, but

with whom I can compare notes on the myriad side-effects of aging: our stiffer joints, our wrin-

kles, our more fitful sleep patterns.

I think that as the physical effects of aging become inevitable, we senior citizens (or nearly senior citizens) begin to value each other more. Especially those of us who live alone, who may value our independence like a gift, but who also assume there may come a day when we'll need additional support from someone else — or a lot of someone else — as we glide into our 70s, 80s, and beyond.

Our quality of life is enhanced by our connection with our friends, our families, and with all the people who know and love us.

Wouldn't it be nice if all the lonely or shut-in seniors could approach people who they warmed to, and say, as I did as a shy second grader, "Will you be my friend?"

Annie Kassof, 62, of Carlotta sometimes finds herself wishing she could compare notes on aging with her horse, Jasmine, who's no spring chicken either.

"Still, people need people."



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Humboldters Open Homes, Hearts, and Enrich Lives

By Rebekah Uskoski

For some Humboldt and Del Norte residents, many of them seniors, opening their homes to others is a win-win.

Tim and Delia Shires of Eureka have been growing their household since 2013, when they became family home providers through Enriching Lives, an adult family home agency in Eureka. Taking two people into their home has expanded their own lives as well.

“Being a family home provider, we are able to make a real difference in someone’s life, and we get love, trust, and appreciation in return,” Tim Shires said.

The Shires’ extended family goes on outings — to church and to the pet store to look at animals, for example — and participate together in the Special Olympics.

Enriching Lives serves a growing need in Humboldt County for community-based living options for adults with varying degrees of developmental

disabilities, such as intellectual disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy or brain injury.

The arrangement also gives homeowners, especially seniors, extra income to help them stay in their homes, while providing company, companionship and friendship.

Family home providers receive a monthly stipend of \$1,400-\$7,400 per month to cover the costs of housing and caring for their new housemates. But the hosts say the benefits go far beyond the financial.

Kay Sherer, 75, of Eureka joined Enriching Lives in 2014. “I’ve loved every minute of it,” said Sherer, who is saving for her fulltime retirement in Mexico. “It makes you feel good to see people grow and have a home to live in.

“I would highly recommend it to anyone looking to help someone, and help themselves financially at the same time,” she said. Sherer and her participant enjoy family dinners and attending community events together.



‘SOMEONE WHO CARES’ — When Rosemary Parks, right, opened her home to Tammy Rose in 2017, they both found a new best friend. Patricia McGee photo.

who cared.’ We are blessed.”

The mission of Enriching Lives is to “provide an environment where individuals are afforded the opportunity, environmental supports and personal choice to grow into the best version of themselves.” The same might be said of the family home providers who open their homes to them.

For information on becoming a family home provider, contact Enriching Lives, 325 2nd St., Eureka, at 707-268-8891, or online at yourenrichedlife.org.

—
Rebekah Uskoski is program coordinator with Enriching Lives in Eureka.



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When Rosemary Parks of Arcata joined the program in 2017, she was looking for company and to share her home. But she got so much more, she says. “She is a roommate, friend and family,” Parks said.

“One day she said, ‘I guess I needed someone

THE SOCIAL WORKER CONNECTION ... From Page 3

may not have those kinds of connections. We are less and less a collective society, and those most isolated are the most at-risk for physical and emotional injury. Many of them live here in Humboldt and that number will increase as the “Silver Tsunami” tide rolls in.

I am grateful to be one of many who serve as a means of connection for my MSSP participants. If you are,

or if you know, someone who is at least 65, Medi-Cal eligible, and needs help to remain living safely at home, MSSP may be able to help.

—
Thea Rowan is a social work care manager in the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) at Humboldt Senior Resource Center in Eureka. Call (707) 443-9747, x1259, for more information.

MAKING CONNECTIONS ... From Page 5

involve an electronic “pet,” for example, which might be an actual person manning a camera/intercom that interacts regularly and as needed with homebound elders. They can help identify needs (Mom fell, or Uncle Bob forgot his meds), and can also offer conversation. These options are impressive, but I am skeptical that this is the best answer.

While we wait for research scientists to sort it out, I would recommend that people reach out to those who may be isolated. And those who are isolated should consider what makes them feel more connected.

As a doctor, I have been known to write prescriptions for beach outings and volunteer work, for writing and journaling, for listening to music, for exercise. These things are starting (albeit slowly) to show up in medical texts as having some ben-

efit, along with all the medications and procedures we offer that may prolong or improve quality of life.

Writer Mary Oliver asks in one of her poems, “Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” My prescription is to ask yourself this question every day. And add this, too: What might we each do to help one another have more contentment with this one wild and precious life?

—
Dr. Jennifer Heidmann is medical director and primary care provider at Redwood Coast PACE (443-9747). This column should not be taken as medical advice. Ask your medical provider if you have health questions. She welcomes comments at seniornewseditor@humsenior.org.

**Eureka Street Art Fest**

Eureka’s second annual Street Art Fest runs through Aug. 3 on 6th and 7th Streets between C and H Streets, with a free Block Party on Saturday, Aug. 3, from noon-6 p.m. Details at visiteureka.com.

Humbugs VW Car Club

The Humbugs VW car club holds its 15th Annual Car Show and BBQ on Saturday, Aug. 3, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Pierson Park in McKinleyville. Info at Humbugs on Facebook, or email humbugsvwclub@gmail.com.

Music in Pierson Park

Free concerts in Pierson Park in McKinleyville on Thursdays, Aug. 1 (Claire Bent & Citizen Funk), Aug. 8 (Blue Rhythm Revue), and Aug. 15 (DubbaDubs), 6-8 p.m. Bring family and friends for live music and good, old-fashioned lawn games.

TBAM’s Third Year

It’s the Trinidad Bay Art & Music Festival’s (TBAM) third season — two weekends of concerts in Trinidad, Aug. 9-11 and 16-18. Info and tickets at tbamfest.com.

Buck-a-Bag Book Sale

It’s bargain time again at the Eureka Public Library, 1313 3rd St., on Friday-Saturday, Aug. 2 & 3. Fill a bag with books for just \$1. Friends of the Redwood Libraries get a head start on Friday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (join at the door). Open to the public on Saturday, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Benefits Humboldt County Libraries. Visit eurekafrl.org for info.

UFOs Return to Bridgeville

The 22nd annual Bridgefest celebration runs from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 17, as intergalactic species of all kinds come together once again in Bridgeville for the annual Flying Saucer contest. Beam up to bridgevillecommunitycenter.org for details.

**August @Morris Graves**

The Morris Graves Museum of Art, 636 F St., Eureka offers several free programs in August. Saturday, Aug. 3, noon: PBS North Coast Kids Club workshop and book reading; Sunday, Aug. 4, 2-4 p.m.: Art talk by artists Nishiki Sugawara-Beda and Laura Corsiglia; Saturday, August 10, 2-4 p.m.: Print-making influenced by Lida Penkova’s exhibit, “Dreams of Far Away Places”; Sunday, Aug. 18, 3-5 p.m.: Wine & Jazz with Eureka Brass. Event info at humboldtarts.org or 707-442-0278.

Trinity Alps Music

The Trinity Alps Chamber Music Festival offers a series of outdoor concerts at stunning locations in Hyampom, Willow Creek and Coffee Creek, Friday to Sunday, Aug. 9-11. Hear Vivaldi’s classic “Four Seasons” by an ensemble featuring four different violin soloists and a 10-piece orchestra, plus pieces by Philip Glass and Edvard Grieg. Go online to TrinityAlpsCMF.org for info.

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Letters to the Editor

‘Life & Death’ Issue

To the Editor:

Please continue to provide information relative to your “TEDtalks: Life & Death” editorial in the July Senior News.

At 78, with most of my years in Humboldt, I can also relate to the struggle to find and retain reasonable health care here. Everything you’ve described I’ve experienced also, and I’m still in the fight.

Again, thanks for a frank and essential statement. Please keep this life and death issue in public view.

Roger Zoss, Ferndale



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But What Will It Cost?

To the Editor:

I share retired nurse Kathryn Donahue’s concerns about the failing healthcare industry [“One Nurse’s Perspective on Humboldt Health Care,” July 2019], and understand calls for government-run health care for all.

That said, considering the amount of government waste and fraud in Medicare and elsewhere, I am circumspect about flatly backing health care for all regardless of cost. Ms. Donahue likely would acknowledge she has no special knowledge about what associated costs might be, but all estimates are breathtaking — trillions of dollars.

I am not saying it is unfeasible. But assurances that, “Perhaps a small tax increase ... might be needed” by folks who acknowledge they have no idea what the costs might be, or how big

a tax increase might be needed, leave me skeptical.

Anyone who says flatly, “Despite past indications to the contrary, the government will administer this efficiently — trust us” leaves many of us that have experienced the opposite less than sanguine about the prospects for success.

But I’m willing to listen to what careful analysis says, and would consider it seriously. I just don’t necessarily take as gospel folks who begin advocacy with a small, tiny-tiny tax increase that may possibly, conceivably, perhaps be needed. My first instinct is to put my hand over my wallet.

Or maybe they’ll be honest enough to say, whatever the cost to you John Q Public, you must pay.

John Dillon, Eureka

‘Dog Days’

To the Editor:

I have been a regular Senior News reader for the past three years. I never miss it. But I think your June issue, “The Dog (& Cat) Days of Summer,” was the best yet!

It’s because I have always owned dogs, since I was a boy. I am 87 now, and can’t have a dog anymore. This is a real hole in my life. But I still remember all the good “dog days” from the time my parents got me a beagle named Pete for my 6th birthday, to my last dog, a mutt named Violet, who died eight years ago. I still miss every one of them. The lady was right who said, “They Fill a Place in Your Heart” [Senior News, June, page 1].

I’ve never been much for cats.

Thanks for reminding me of the nice memories.

John Biddle, Eureka

It’s Summertime, and Life Is Good

To the Editor:

As the song says, it’s summertime and the living is easy. But for some people, it’s not that easy, even in summer.

I’m very fortunate that I have so many wonderful outlets — with a little help from my friends and my animals, my social life is very rich and fulfilling. I can’t fathom a world without friends or animals.

I often see people struggling with loneliness. When we reach the ripe old age of AARP, there are abundant challenges and pleasures, and

we must change and adjust. At one point, I realized that I was not going to take up skydiving (not that I ever wanted to). But I find great joy in taking a hike through the redwoods, maybe dangling my toes in the river or ocean, taking a drive up Monument and Bear River Ridge. And I always go equipped with my trusty camera.

The Sequoia Park Zoo offers an abundance of giggles, and I love a stroll down the Eureka boardwalk or popping into Morris Graves to check out the artist of the month.

Summer is a good time for seniors.

You never know who or what you may encounter along your way of living your life, on solitary journeys in the mountains and the woods. We can make life simple or complex — it’s all about how we view ourselves.

I’m always looking for a laugh or at least a smile, and always grateful for a soft, furry critter that I need to touch. I’ve got to go now, as my kitten, Pelé, insists that my hands have a more important duty to perform. Petting and loving a furry creature is “Chicken Soup for the Soul.” Life is good.

Penny Whitehead, Rio Dell

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Music, Tomatoes and a Small World

By Sue Blick

After moving to McKinleyville from Wisconsin a few years ago, I was eager to meet people and get involved with activities for my age group — I'm not Sweet 16 anymore, rather the spectacular 70s.

At the Azalea Hall Senior Center, I met some very nice people.

Each summer, live music is offered on Thursdays at Pierson Park. At one concert, I ended up sitting next to Mary, who I had seen at the exercise class recently. We began a conversation about growing tomatoes, which I had miserably failed at.

"There's nothing like a Jersey tomato," she said. Since I was born and raised in New Jersey, I wholeheartedly agreed.

"What city?" she asked. When I replied Red Bank, she had a surprised

stare on her face. "So am I." We discovered we were born in the same hospital, went to the same schools in different years, and could name similar teen hangouts, and so forth.

I told Mary that I had corresponded with a woman who was living in the house that my parents built, and where I lived the first 16 years of my life. When I mentioned her name and address, Mary almost shouted, "That's my sister's best friend!"

When Mary told her sister about this, her reaction was, "The world is so small. Now I realize I should have always been on my best behavior."

Goes to show you how we are all connected in more ways than we know.

Sue Blick, 71, continues to make connections in McKinleyville.



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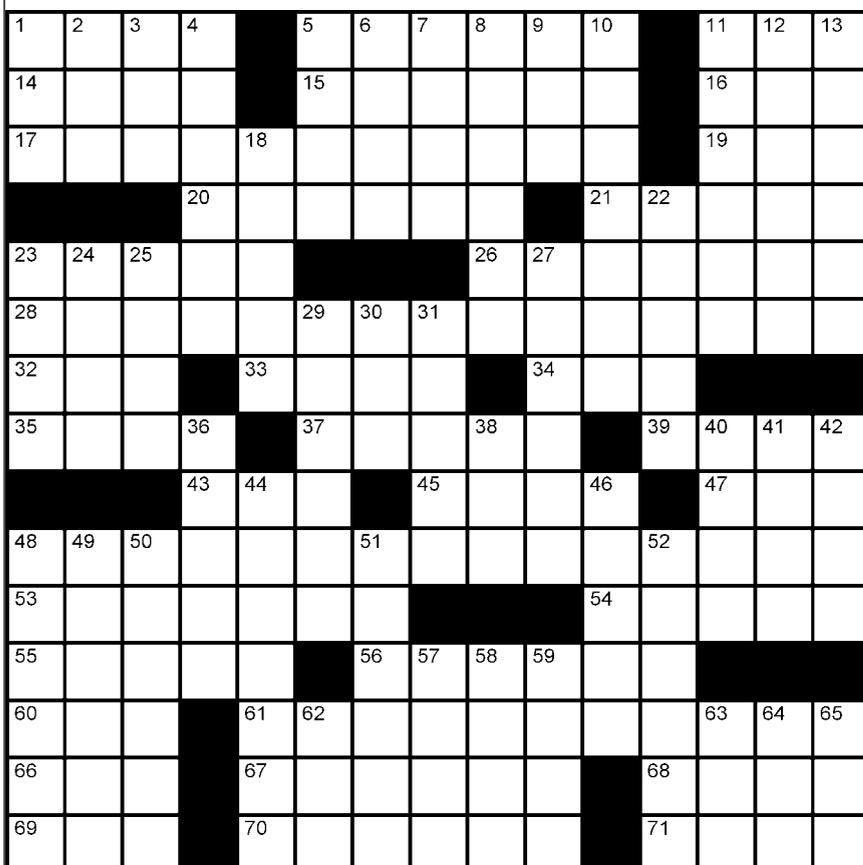
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Hard Scramble by Roland Huget. Edited by David Steinberg.



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- ANSWERS ON PAGE 14 -

ACROSS

- 1 Daily delivery
- 5 Walk unsteadily
- 11 52, in ancient Rome
- 14 Berry harvested from a palm
- 15 Night light?
- 16 ___ Taylor (fashion store)
- 17 *Prominent place for an NBA team's logo (see letters 1-8)
- 19 E.R. figures
- 20 Legendary
- 21 It may be inherited
- 23 For all to hear
- 26 Egg designation
- 28 *Farm family's food source, perhaps (letters 7-14)
- 32 Kimono accessory
- 33 Vivacity
- 34 Put mileage on
- 35 Gala
- 37 "In seventh heaven" or "on cloud nine"
- 39 Big Mack?
- 43 Like a fictional hatter
- 45 Former Chevrolet subcompact
- 47 Bossy's mouthful
- 48 *Certain jazz piece (letters 6-13)
- 53 Wide-ranging
- 54 Letter-shaped fasteners
- 55 First installment
- 56 Collared
- 60 In the style of
- 61 Foundation foundation? ... or ahint to the starred entries' indicated letters
- 66 Slop-serving spot
- 67 Sounds off
- 68 Top-of-the-line
- 69 Plea for help
- 70 Stunning weapons
- 71 Tear up

DOWN

- 1 Cheese partner
- 2 One-hit wonder?
- 3 Blackbeard portrayer McShane
- 4 Acid test paper
- 5 Small fruit pie
- 6 "That hurts!"
- 7 Deanna on the Enterprise
- 8 Froot Loops mascot, e.g.
- 9 Drop the ball
- 10 Noisy crib toys
- 11 Hedy in old films
- 12 Rainbow color before violet
- 13 Top of a foot
- 18 Singer Gorme
- 22 Speeds (along)
- 23 Beginning
- 24 Garage service
- 25 Final notice
- 27 Keen insight
- 29 Presentation parts, often
- 30 Wee bit
- 31 "Giant Brain" of 1946
- 36 "The Lego Movie" hero
- 38 ___-lacto vegetarian
- 40 Neutral shade
- 41 Mixed breed
- 42 Altar declarations
- 44 Small stone fruit
- 46 Good-sized chamber group
- 48 Six-point completion, informally
- 49 Theater district
- 50 Tanning bed emanations
- 51 Game with sets and matches
- 52 Win over
- 57 Dermal woe
- 58 ___ Rabbit
- 59 Porgy's girlfriend
- 62 ___-Locka, Florida
- 63 Curly companion
- 64 Rural stopover
- 65 Crossed (out)

Not the End of the World

By Pamela Philley

I recently found myself with the prospect of working in Fortuna one day a week. It was just 45 minutes from my home, but it seemed so far away — it might as well have been in Frazikstan.

As I prepared for this journey, there were knowns and unknowns. For example, I knew I would have to get up at the crack of dawn. I imagined putting lipstick on in the dark, and discovering when the sun finally came up that I had gorilla lips.

A potential unknown was, say, an earthquake — the really big one — which might leave me stranded far from home in Frazikstan. To be prepared, I spent days getting ready and packing my car.

I had the essentials, of course: a cooler full of enough food to feed a small village, CDs, plenty of coffee, and lots of water so I wouldn't shrivel up.

Hairbrush. A catastrophe does not mean I shouldn't look my best. I figured that the giant tsunami that will follow the mega-earthquake will carry me to a mountaintop, where I will lie amongst the forest creatures until a handsome rescuer comes and plants a perfect kiss on me to see if I am really most sincerely dead. Think Sleeping Beauty here. He is gorgeous, so I will want my hair to look good.

I prefer this scenario to the more likely reality of mangled car and body parts. Besides, the drive to

Fortuna is an eternity, so lots of things could happen to muss my hair. So: hairbrush.

Finally, the day came. I arose before dawn and embarked on the cross-country trek to Mount Everest, er, I mean, to Fortuna.

When I arrived, a coworker said, "Good for you for coming all the way to Fortuna for the day."

"Oh, it was no big deal. Piece of cake," I replied casually, thinking, "Cake!"

Mental note to self: Next week, pack cake.

—
Pamela Philley, 66, of Bayside credits her Tuesday Night Writing Group with inspiring her.

Advice for Men

If you want to be happy, advises author and psychologist Mary Pipher, live like you're a woman over 50.

Contrary to cultural stereotypes," she writes, "many older women are deeply happy." Pipher, author of the new book "Women Rowing North," points to a 2014 survey that found people in the 20s through mid-40s are least happy.

"Most women become increasingly happy after age 55, with their peak of happiness toward the very end of life," she said.

Why? Pipher says women are healthier and more active as they age. They have closer friendships, and can talk more deeply than men about things that matter to them. Women are more likely than men to have lifelong friends, which helps them build "emotional resilience," Pipher said.

Men can learn a thing or two from women.



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Lite bites and refreshments will be served.

To RSVP contact

christian.hill@stjoe.org or (707) 269-4225.

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Coming in Senior News

• **SEPTEMBER:** "The Health of Humboldt, Part 2" continues the conversation about medical care in Humboldt County. Got a story to tell? Contact Ted Pease, tpease@humsenior.org, or 707-443-9747, x1226.

• **OCTOBER:** Let's go "Back to Nature" with an issue celebrating the changing seasons in Humboldt. What's your favorite part of living on the Redwood Coast?

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