



Check out our
Humboldt Photo Album,
Page 21

Back to Nature



MISTY MORNING — Joan Levy greets the morning sun along an Arcata Community Forest trail. Steve Salzman photo.

Arcata's Community Forest

By Mark André

Arcata's Community Forest is one of the Humboldt Bay area's premier green assets. The forest forms the backdrop to the town and contains more than 19 miles of

recreational trails.

Dedicated in 1955, the 2,400-acre tract of redwoods and firs was the first municipally owned forest in California, and the first community

forest in the United States certified by the international Forest Stewardship Council.

For many Humboldt residents, the Arcata Community Forest is a

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Please Don't Pave Paradise

By Ellen E. Taylor

A popular Joni Mitchell song came out around 1970, "Big Yellow Taxi" — probably everyone over 60 remembers it. Joni sang it lightheartedly, even giggled at the end, but the song never failed to bring listeners a cloud of melancholy and a vague unease.

*"Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got
til it's gone.
They paved paradise
And put in a parking lot."*

Today, as the natural world shrivels before our eyes, instead of the light nostalgia of Joni Mitchell, we feel a tormenting anxiety. And because of our helplessness and the sense that we are responsible, metaphors from medieval frescos surface in our consciousness, such as the Last Judgment, with St. Michael's sword forcing us down into the flames.

These images depict what has just become clear to the damned souls as they plummet downward, wailing — they had failed to understand when they were on Earth that all living things are bound to-

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TEDtalks: Go Catch a Snake

By Ted Pease

When I went away to summer camp on Lake Winnipesaukee in New Hampshire in 1965, the only thing my parents heard from me for two weeks was a single homesick postcard. I was 10, and it was my first time away from home.

My little brother was furious when I got back, tanned, carefree and full of happy summer camp stories.

"You made Mom cry," he hissed. "Why didn't you just go and catch a snake or something?"

It's still excellent advice. Whenever I'm out of sorts, going out into the woods to catch a snake or watch the surf or hike among the ferns and gape at 1,000-year-old trees is just what the doctor ordered.

That is literally true. Researchers find that just living near green space makes people healthier, from pregnancy through old age. If simply *seeing* trees and grass through the window can make us healthier and happier — as data from one mega-study involving more than 290 million people suggests — imagine what wonders a walk in the woods might achieve.

That's why so many of us just have to get out there. As naturalist John Muir said, "The mountains are calling and I must go."

This month, Senior News celebrates that irresistible force of Nature, and recognizes what so often gets forgotten or drowned out in the busyness of our daily routines: That Mother Earth loves us.

Sadly, it seems to be unrequited love.



Young people, understandably worried about what kind of planet they will inherit, are demonstrating worldwide to protest climate change.

As well they might: A new United Nations report says that ocean "heat waves" have already irreparably damaged ecosystems, and that the "cryosphere" — polar ice sheets and glaciers — are disappearing faster than previously thought.

The U.N. report may be global in scope, but the impacts right here in Humboldt are already in view — sea-level rise is greater in Humboldt Bay than anywhere on the U.S. West Coast, says local climate scientist Aldaron Laird. He predicts that much of the Arcata-Eureka shoreline and its infrastructure — including Highway 101 — could be under water by 2050.

So this issue of Senior News, celebrating Humboldt's natural world, may be a little bittersweet. In her article, Ellen E. Taylor of Petrolia invokes folksinger Joni Mitchell's 1960s plea about not paving paradise (page 1). What made us uneasy and melancholy about that song, as Ellen says, is that we knew then and see now the heavy price of not protecting nature.

Nearly 200 years ago, Henry David Thoreau wrote, "We need the tonic of wildness. . . We can never have enough of nature." Best we take that sentiment to heart before it's too late.

—
Ted Pease, editor of Senior News, hasn't caught a snake in decades.

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'Traveling Oldies' Hit the Road . . . to Tierra del Fuego

By Ted Pease

They say that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, but Rus Krause and Emilio "Pollo" Bolé aren't planning that kind of motorcycle trip.

Even if they did take the most direct route, the two septuagenarian bikers would still be looking at a 10,000-mile straight line between Arcata and Ushuaia, Argentina, the capital of Tierra del Fuego Province and the southernmost city in South America.

"We don't have an itinerary — we're just heading south, which way we don't really know," said Krause, 72, a longtime Humboldt musician and businessman who has come to love the open road "in my old age."

"We're at the point in our lives where we have the freedom to do this," he said. "It's unfortunate that people have to get this old before they have the freedom."

The "Traveling Oldies," as Krause and Bolé refer to themselves (Bolé, a native Argentinian, is 74), set off in early September on their loaded 1200cc BMW motorcycles to explore Central and South America.

"It's an opportunity to go to places I've never seen, with a guide who speaks Spanish," Krause said.

"We just love riding motorcycles," Bolé said. "It's an adventure."

The pair warmed up for their adventure with shorter tours of several thousand miles or so around the Western United States and Canada.

"This trip is basically an excuse to ride every day," said Bolé, who moved to Los Angeles from Buenos Aires in the 1980s, and owned a women's clothing manufacturing company. "After working for a freakin' 70-something years, we deserve it."

Like Krause, Bolé has ridden motorcycles since the 1960s, including many long road trips. "Even before then, when I was 17, some friends and I drove a 1931 Model A Ford from Buenos Aires to Tierra del Fuego," a distance of nearly 2,000 miles. The road is in his blood.

"The bottom line is riding bikes is the closest thing to having wings," Bolé said. "When you are on these mountain roads, you feel like a bird."

Krause agreed. "You're out in the open air, and you see and experience a lot more than you do in a car — the cold and the heat, the smells — whether



ROAD TRIP — Septuagenarian motorcyclists Emilio "Pollo" Bolé and Rus Krause at Arcata Plaza before rumbling off on their 10,000-mile adventure. At left, Emilio and a new friend on the road. Ted Pease photo.

er it's a field of flowers or a dead skunk."

Their first destination was the "pueblos magicos," the relatively undiscovered "magical" former colonial towns and villages in the mountains south of Mexico City.

On Sept. 18, 12 days and 3,500 miles into their trip, Krause emailed some photos showing the pair with new amigos they met in small towns in Oaxaca. "We've found Mexico so varied and beautiful, from desert to thick, green forests, from unbearably hot to uncomfortably cold," he wrote.

"We feel so welcomed by nearly everyone, we even got hugs from the guy who pumped our gas today in Taxco. Hotel owners have let us park our motorcycles inside the lobby if they'll fit through the door."

He added: "Your readers should know that Mexico is safe, the people are gracious, the land is beautiful, the roads are good and the food is delicious."

The point is not the destination, but the journey. "We're going to take it slow, explore as we go," Krause said.

They hope to reach the bottom of South America by Christmas, but that will depend on what they find.

"We do have one deadline — we have to be back by Feb. 25," Krause said, "because we're going motorcycle riding in Vietnam."

—
Ted Pease, editor of Senior News, has never ridden a motorcycle. The "Traveling Oldies" will check in from the road. Look for their update in November's Senior News.

A Walk by the River, a Slip, a Splash, Regaining My Balance

By Annie Kassof

Nature's calling me.

It's the Van Duzen River, enticing me in her lilting voice: "Annie, come on down and take a walk along my tranquil bank!"

"OK, I will," answers the voice in my head.

But first, I'll replace my cowboy boots with sneakers. All summer long, I've sat on my horse's back while she did the walking. Now it's my turn.

It's a sun-dappled Friday, the temperature a comfortable 65 degrees. I have no appointments, no obligations. Semi-retirement allows for days like this.

So I walk to the river.

What starts as a semblance of a trail with patches of sandy ground covered with various animal prints — birds, deer . . . Oh! and look there, is that bear scat? — soon yields to fallen trees and dense foliage and rocks that seem to grow larger and more uneven as I plod slowly upriver.

I make my way carefully, the shallow Van Duzen burbling where mini-waterfalls cascade, the rocks at water's edge growing coats of soft yellow-green algae. I feel the breeze, I look up at the silent, wide-open sky.

Now, with no trail left to follow, I wade through the shallows when I'm blocked by walls of foliage or banks too steep to navigate. The river is the temperature of lukewarm tea, and I splash across



Annie Kassof illustration.

it, looking down as I contemplate each step over glistening rocks.

I fall.

Unhurt, I get up quickly, a little wetter, and splash-splash my way on. I walk and I walk and I imagine myself far from civilization. Who will find me if I slip on a rock and can't get up? I don't have

my phone with me, and even if I did, there's no reception. It's both freeing and daunting, and I feel small and vulnerable. But it's OK.

I fall in the water again, several times, zig-zagging along the Van Duzen while the sun gets hotter and my skin grows rosy.

But each time I fall, I stand and regain my balance. I walk and I think and I feel. I'm grateful for everything, and also a little hungry, so I turn and head back, picking blackberries when I can.

When I get home in the late afternoon, I'm still surrounded by nature. I feel lighter, healthier.

I leave my soggy sneakers out on the front porch to dry. My cabin sits under old, old redwood trees, and it's so quiet inside that I can hear my two goldfish knocking against the little glass rocks at the bottom of their bowl. It's when I sit down to write this that I begin to think about all the metaphorical falls I've experienced and overcome — the hard stuff of life: breakups, loss, depression — and how I've always managed to get back on my feet after a tumble, and how there's no place I'd rather live than exactly where I am right now.

—
Annie Kassof, 62, of Carlotta went from suburbs to cities to the country, where she thinks she'll stay awhile.

Where Are the Birds?

If you head out to the woods or to the shore to commune with nature and listen to the calling of the birds, it may be quieter than you expected.

Almost 30% of the population of North American birds have died off since 1970, according to scientists in the journal *Science*.

This is not just extinction of endangered species, says Cornell University ornithologist Ken Rosenberg, but an overall decline in the total numbers of birds by about 3 billion.

"I would call it an imminent disaster," Rosenberg said. Most of the loss is in common species "across every habitat" from grasslands to forests to mountains and oceans.

The culprits, of course, are increased human activity, climate change, increased pesticide use and loss of bird habitat.

Rosenberg calls the trend "an unraveling of ecological processes. People need to start paying attention."

—*Ted Pease*



Brown pelicans are getting scarce.
Ted Pease photo.

ASK THE DOCTOR**Chronic Pain**

By Jennifer Heidmann, M.D.



Many years ago, I read a book called "Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants" by Paul Brand, a physician who worked with people with leprosy. Leprosy damages nerves, making people less sensitive to pain and at risk for burns, wounds and injuries. The very loss of pain leads to bodily destruction in this condition.

Pain is constructive in how it warns us that something is wrong and needs immediate

opioid use can actually worsen pain instead of making it better. Local and national campaigns work to reduce opioid misuse and explore safer options for pain management.

Non-opioid analgesics are available for inflammation and pain, including nerve pain, but even these have potential side effects, and cannot be the only answer. I do not

have all the answers (nor does anyone that I know of),

but I propose that pain should be approached in a holistic fashion.

In an ideal world, everyone would have immediate access to skilled physical therapists when something starts to go awry with the body. Body mechanics and exercise can have a profound impact on pain management and mobility. Physical therapists have other tools for pain control, like ultrasound or transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation units, massage, stretching, and warm or cold water. Sometimes pain in one area can lead to discovery of weakness or instability in another area that must be addressed.

Mindful meditation can also help with chronic pain management. There are substantial data showing that, with proper guidance and training, meditation can allow people to self-regulate response to pain, and improve their mood and physical mobility. We do not know the exact mechanism for the effectiveness of

"Pain is a complex subject. We literally need it to survive."

attention. The flip side is when pain itself becomes destructive. "Chronic pain" is a catch-all term for any long-term, debilitating discomfort that affects ability to function. It can be caused by any number of things, including old injuries, nerve damage (which can ironically both decrease pain and increase it in other ways) or problems with joints and muscles. Pain from something sudden and acute (like an inflamed appendix or stubbing a toe) is different from the syndrome of daily chronic pain that reduces quality of life.

During my medical school and residency training, we were strongly encouraged to prescribe opioids for pain control. Pain became the "5th vital sign," and physicians were taught that addiction was not likely when opioids were used for pain.

We now know that opioid overuse became a deadly epidemic, and that many people ended up with opioid dependence and addiction. We have also learned that higher levels of

Continued on Page 19

Don't Be Silly — Sleep

Mom used to tell us kids, "You're acting silly — go to bed!" It made me a lifelong believer in both silliness and sleep.

Back when we were young, sleep was no issue. The challenge was often getting us up sometime before noon. But as we age, many of us develop insomnia in varying degrees, and it can become a problem, both physically and mentally.

The "common wisdom" used to be that older people need less sleep, but that's hooey (to use the scientific jargon). Infants need about 16 hours of sleep per night, and adolescents should get about nine hours, the National Sleep Foundation says, but adults — including older adults — still should get between seven and nine hours.

"Sleep is just as essential as air,

water or food," they say. "We need continuous, uninterrupted sleep to restore energy, and maintain health and well-being."

But insomnia is very common in people age 60 and older — 50% of us — brought on by a variety of factors.

Sleep deprivation is described as "potentially very debilitating," so if you're experiencing more than occasional insomnia, you should consult your doctor immediately. Sedatives should be used only as a last resort, because they are addictive and bad for brain function.

Mindfulness meditation has been found to be helpful, but if you're experiencing chronic sleeplessness, don't stay up nights worrying about it. That would be silly — go see your doctor.

—Ted Pease

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HEAVENS TO BETSY

BY BETSY GOODSPEED

Human Nature

I've moved 28 times since I was born, and the closest I felt to nature has been now, living near Sequoia Park, surrounded by some of the oldest trees in the world. All because my children insisted that I wasn't old enough to retreat to an assisted-living facility.

My life is practically perfect, so I want to talk about trusting nature — or your destiny, if that makes sense.

I'm sure I'm not the only 90-something-year-old who finds lucidity the greatest gift at this age, because the world appears to have lost its ever-lovin' mind.

But simple daily tasks are no longer second-nature, and if your caregivers are relatives, the relationship may get complicated, because although love can solve problems, it can also create a few.

I cared for my mother after my father died, and then for my husband, who suffered from dementia. Each case is different, of course, since we tend to make interpretations according to our experience and conditioning.

Anxiety is a common symptom in the caregiving relationship. I thought about writing a manual called "How to Be a Caregiver for Dummies" that would start with "How to Respond," because responding is different from answering.

For example, my favorite scene in the Broadway musical "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" has Lucy telling her woes to Peppermint Patty, who replies, "We had

spaghetti at our house three times last week." It's a response, but not responsive.

Communication is crucial, of course, in caregiving as in life. It's made all the more problematic as listening has become a lost art. Explanations can confuse the issue, and being interrupted only creates frustration.

Too much information can make us hang up on a conversation, figuratively speaking, and drift off. Even someone whose hearing is excellent can fail to understand a conversation when words run together.

These days, I bounce between being interested in the changes I see occurring in myself and hiding from the fact that I'm aging. But I've learned to replace reaction with action.

I'll turn 93 in October, and I believe my common sense is improving, and my right brain — which controls creativity — is working better than my left brain — which handles logic. Instinct tends to take over, as a lot of what I've stored is becoming intermittent. Creativity still works, but editing is iffy.

That's nature.

Betsy Goodspeed, 93 this month, is a lifelong professional musician and writer who found life in assisted care stifling. So she bought a house near Sequoia Park in Eureka, where she's playing music, singing and working on another book.

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Walk to End Alzheimer's

by Kim Coehlo

The fourth annual Humboldt County Walk to End Alzheimer's will take place on Saturday, Oct. 12, at the Adorni Center in Eureka.

Participants will walk a one- or three-mile loop course and will learn about Alzheimer's disease, advocacy opportunities, clinical studies enrollment, support programs and services from the Alzheimer's Association. Walk participants will also join in a meaningful tribute ceremony to honor those affected by Alzheimer's disease.

Participating in the Walk to End Alzheimer's helps to take away the stigma of this disease, and begins the conversation about how to end it.

Nationwide, some 5.8 million people have Alzheimer's, including more than 3,000 in Humboldt and Del Norte counties, according to the Alzheimer's Association, a number projected to rise to more than 5,000 in the next decade. It's the third leading cause of death in California and the only disease among the top 10 causes that cannot be cured, prevented or even slowed.

WALKERS FOR A CURE
— LaVonne Strohm and her daughter, Laura Strohm, were part of last year's Area 1 Agency on Aging team. Nancy LaVallee photo.



One in three seniors is diagnosed with a dementia-related illness. The goal of fundraising through activities like the Walk to End Alzheimer's is to identify, slow down and ultimately prevent the disease. Last year, the Alzheimer's Association made grants of over \$30 million to 131 scientific investigations.

Local support is provided by the Humboldt Senior Resource Center Alzheimer's Resource Center, Redwood Caregiver Resource Center, Area 1 Agency on Aging, Adult Day Health Care of Mad River and the Alzheimer's Association.

A toll-free 24/7 Alzheimer's Help-line (800-272-3900) is staffed by master's-level clinicians who provide support, offer information and suggest referrals.

For more information, contact the Humboldt Alzheimer's Association office at 707-296-9060 or email kcoelho@alz.org.

—
Kim Coehlo is community engagement manager for the Humboldt Alzheimer's Association

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PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

Stopping Time

*Ne looke for entertainment where none was;
Rest is their feast....*

—Edmund Spenser

One late afternoon, agitated and exhausted, I drove my dog Luke to a nearby beach. It was October, well after summer crowds had gone home. Still, the weather was temperate enough to go barefoot and toast marshmallows, if I'd thought to bring marshmallows.

Spring/Summer beach people — I thought irritably, kicking sand — always remember to bring marshmallows, along with inflatable toys, whistles, whizzing kites, invasive drones, and those colorful chairs that don't have legs. Fall/Winter beach people bring a single black leash that dangles from their necks, as their dogs run wild across empty sand.

I walked down the beach, crossed a creek, threw sticks into the waves, sat on the sand with my back to a redwood log, and watched Luke cantering around the beach like a colt.

Luke ran up to see what fun he could have in my spot. The precise area of beach where I sat, he noticed, was an unexplored playground for dogs that love to dig deeply, just behind their owners, between backrest and seat, until the owners notice their very foundation has collapsed. When he tired of games, Luke sat beside me, and we gazed out at the bay.

"Do you see the fuzzy, gray seal on the rock out there?" I asked him. "With the huge eyes, looking at

us?" Luke followed my hand-waving to see the seal, which returned the wave with a flipper; I laughed. Nonchalant, Luke turned to the unoccupied horizon. He was in the Zen zone.

Impressed by his meditation technique, I followed my dog's lead. I stopped everything, including my judgments about distinct seasons of people. Looking beyond the bay to the ocean, I let waves be the only sound.

For a while I stopped thinking, and this non-action ... stopped ... time. I was aware only of myself as an animal in my animal skin. I was as much at home as the seal on the rock and the dog on the beach. We were a pack: seal, dog and me. Breathing lightly in the sun's heat, not needing to go anywhere, not caring what time it was. Just being a natural being.

Since then I've realized that when everything stops whirling around, including my thoughts, I can listen and breathe that way again, hold the sun back, stop time. And Luke is one of those rare, charming beings I can stop time with.

—
Margaret Kellermann's Fall drawing lessons are going on now for all ages in Ferndale's venerable venue, The Old Steeple. Visit www.ferndalemusiccompany.com/lessons.

ARCATA'S COMMUNITY FOREST . . . From Page 1

redwood jewel. "My wife and I spend many hours every week hiking and biking in the Community Forest. It's the City of Arcata's greatest asset," said Steve Salzman, who lives near Essex Junction off Highway 299. "We're moving into town so we can walk to the forest from our house."

When it was established, the forest was envisioned to be "managed for the benefit of all the citizens of the city, with attention to watershed, recreation, timber management and other values," as the Humboldt Times reported in 1955. Since 2003, the forest has doubled in size.

Prior to public ownership of the land, the various parcels that make up the Community Forest had been claimed for timber in the 1860s. Most of the forest was logged during the 1880s and later, with old-growth trees falling to axes, wedges and crosscut saws.

After the logging, large trees with defects and many smaller diameter trees were left behind, although they were usually consumed in the slash fires that regularly followed. Oxen teams were once used to skid massive redwood logs down the hill to Humboldt Bay.

Most of the trees that remain today were naturally regenerated from the stumps and seeds of the original first-growth forest.

After this area was logged and cleared, the land was used for grazing and for Arcata's water supply. It was not until the 1930s and '40s that the citizens of Arcata gained title to the property for the purpose of providing water to the town. The Union Water Company collected and conveyed water from the forest to residents until 1963, when wells were constructed on the nearby Mad River.

The Community Forest is managed for multiple uses, including both

recreation and harvesting of timber. In fact, most of the parks in Arcata were purchased with timber harvest revenue.

Under the city's forest management plan, the property is governed by three elements of community-based forestry: ecological, social and economic. The plan promotes community engagement and builds local relationships among diverse (and sometimes opposing) groups. Community members support a conservation ethic, and take pride in managing land for future generations.

The plan, which is being updated this year, also enhances community knowledge and the skills necessary for planning and implementing sustainable forestry practices in the Community Forest. The goal is both more resilient forest ecosystems, and more resilient communities.

For more info, trail maps and volunteer opportunities, visit cityofarcata.org/190/City-Forests.

Mark André, 63, is Arcata's environmental services director.

Forestry in Arcata is a participatory approach to forest management that strengthens communities' capacity to build vibrant local economies while protecting and enhancing their local forest ecosystems. By integrating ecological, social, and economic components into cohesive approaches to forestry issues, community-based approaches give local residents both the opportunity and the responsibility to manage their natural resources effectively and to enjoy the benefits of that responsibility.

—Arcata Forest draft plan, 2019

Explore Humboldt's Coastal Dunes

By Mike Cipra

The coastal dunes on the outer arms of Humboldt Bay form an inspiring and dynamic landscape — a diverse and inviting natural world in all seasons.

As the rains of fall and winter arrive and seasonal wetlands begin ponding in dune swales, this incredibly rich habitat suddenly comes alive with frogs, newts and the sounds of birdsong.

In winter and spring, coastal forests of beach pine display striking beards of pale-green lichens dripping from their branches. The understory of this dune forest is verdant with huckleberry and bearberry; mushrooms and lichens pop from the forest floor in wet months, while in summer, stunning orchids send up slender stalks to bloom.

Follow trails into the wind-swept dunes to witness a mosaic of coastal wildflowers blooming throughout the spring and summer in native dune habitat that local people have worked for years to restore.

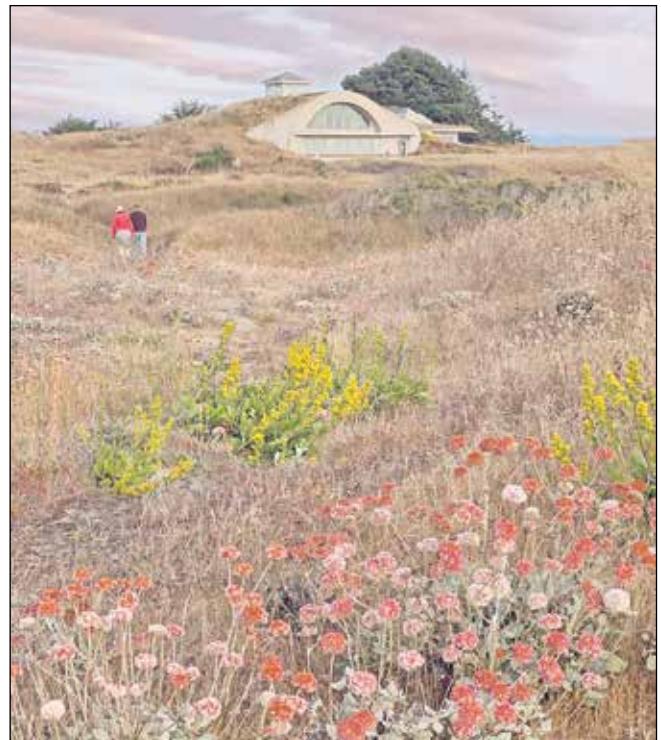
When you reach the beach, shorebirds are there to greet you, running and flying in unison, chasing behind the retreat of the surf.

The best place to start your journey in this unique and inspiring landscape is the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center, an earth-sheltered visitor center at 220 Stamps Lane in Manila, owned and managed by Friends of the Dunes. The center is open to the public Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A trail network starts just behind the nature center and connects with more than 1,200 acres of coastal dunes managed for public recreation and protected habitat that form one of the most intact native coastal dune ecosystems on the West Coast.

And it's all right here, in our back yard.

Mike Cipra of Eureka is executive director of Friends of the Dunes.
Contact: friendsofthedunes.org.



PEACEFUL PASTELS — There's so much more to dunes than sand and grass, out at the Humboldt Coastal Nature Center in Manila. Jane Cipras photo.

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AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

As Men Age

My doctoral dissertation, "Transgressive

Gender Performance: An Act of Personal and Cultural Transformation," was completed and published in 2013.

My thought, or hypothesis, during the research was that if I could get men to experience gender as a performance, they would come to realize that gender — what it means to be a man — is not something you *were* but something you *did*. Then those men would be more able to adapt and alter their perception of what it meant to be a man.

The term "gender" refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men — norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. Those characteristics vary from society to society and, as my research indicated, can be changed over time.

For us, as men, healthy aging depends on our ability to change and alter our perceptions of what it means to be a man. Defining and performing masculinity at 80 the same way we did at 35 benefits no one. As we age, many of us continue to follow perceptions of masculinity learned as youth, leaving us ill-equipped to handle the myriad changes brought on by old age.

If embracing the best of what aging has to offer is our goal, then, as we age, we need to increasingly adapt to an ever-changing set of

conditions that require different definitions of what it means to be a man.

For example, "My self-esteem is bound up in my job," might be a self-serving refrain at 35, but what happens to feelings of self-worth and self-esteem at 80, when there is no longer a job?

Masculinity is a construct of both time and place.

Many aspects of the definitions we received earlier in life of what it means to be a man are no longer relevant, and often even counterproductive in old age. Recent studies have shown that, as we age, hard and fast masculine gender

identities can lead to increased rates of loneliness, social isolation, depression and suicide.

As we men age, we need to remember that being a man is not something that we *are* but something we *do*. If we accept that masculinity is something we act out, then we can edit and rewrite that role to adapt to the demands and realities of old age. In so doing, we increase the possibility of embracing the best that aging has to offer.

John Heckel, Ph.D., 72, of Eureka 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.

"...being a man is not something that we *are* but something we *do*."

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Eureka Senior Dining Center Returns to 5-Day Lunches

The Eureka Senior Dining Center at Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) returns to a five-day lunch schedule beginning Monday, Oct. 7, with lunch served Mondays through Fridays at starting at 11:30 a.m.

The return to a five-day-a-week lunch schedule comes six years after HSRC reduced service to four days a week, Tuesday-Friday, following federal budget cuts that impacted Title III Older American Act funding, coinciding with diminishing funds to support the Nutrition Program. With

uncertainty regarding how adequate funding could be ensured, the agency had no choice at the time but to curtail meal services.

In 2016, however, HSRC's Board of Directors approved a five-year strategic plan that included restoring lunch service to five days a week by 2020. The Board has decided to make the commitment to return to five days now.

"Over the past few years, HSRC has enhanced its program offerings to complement growth," said Barbara

Walser, director of Nutrition & Activities. "In turn, this growth has allowed the agency to build back reserve funds to handle program needs. This, coupled with increased community engagement and support, is allowing us to begin restoring some of these lost services."

A decision will be made at a later date regarding Monday lunch service at HSRC's Arcata and Fortuna Senior Dining Center locations.

HSRC's three Senior Dining Centers serve community members of

all ages. The suggested donation for those 60 and older is \$3.50 per meal, but no senior 60+ is denied a meal if unable to donate. For those younger than 60, the cost is \$6 per meal.

Reservations are always recommended: in Arcata, call 825-2027; in Eureka, call 443-9747; in Fortuna, call 725-6245. See pages 12-13 for this month's lunch menus, or go online to the HSRC website: humsenior.org.

—René Arché

Inseparable: 'Best Friends' for 40 Years

It was like old-home week for James Jeffries the day in 2011 that he walked into the Adult Day Health Center (ADH) at Humboldt Senior Resource Center.

There was his old buddy Wes Oxford, whom Jeffries worked with back in the 1970s at the old Redwood United workshop, a training program in Samoa.



OLD FRIENDS — Wes Oxford, left, and James Jeffries have been best friends for 40 years, and now see each other every day at the Adult Day Health Center. Ted Pease photo.

"That was quite a thrill for me," Jeffries said. "My old friend Wes. We've been best friends for 40 years."

Oxford and Jeffries worked together for six or seven years as carpenters, making wooden planters and fish boxes, and then lost track of each other after the Redwood United workshop closed. They were reunited at Adult Day Health.

Since then, ADH staff say, the two old friends are inseparable.

"We get along pretty good," Oxford said. "We just have a good time together."

"We see each other every day," Jeffries added. "We have a lot of laughs."

Oxford, originally from northern Idaho, is now in a wheelchair and about to turn 89. He has been coming to the ADH Center for 15 years. Jeffries, 65, grew up in Rio Dell. He sings rock 'n roll, and every year opens the ADH talent show.

"He's a pretty good singer," Oxford said.

"And Wes is a pretty good friend," Jeffries said. "My best friend."



MEDAL WINNER — Ardi Areson, 59, an HSRC Adult Day Health participant in Eureka, proudly displays the medal she won in the 50-yard dash at the Special Olympics in Redway last month. "I like running," she said. Ted Pease photo.

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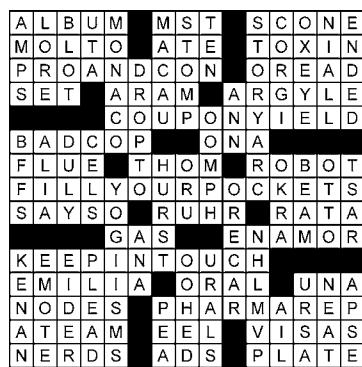


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**Crossword Puzzle
on page 22**



OCTOBER SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

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azaleahall@att.net • 839-0191

Mondays

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 8:30-9:30 | Tai Chi |
| 9:00-12:00 | Computers (<i>call for availability</i>) |
| 10:00-11:30 | Writing Workshop |
| 10:30 | HighSteppers at Knox Cove |
| 11:00-12:00 | Yoga - (<i>Bring mat & blanket</i>) |
| 1:00-4:00 | Party Bridge |
| 6:30-8:30 pm | Multi-media Art Class
(<i>Inquire about fees due at 1st class</i>) |
| Oct. 7 10:00-11:30 | Genealogy |
| Oct. 28 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 (<i>call for availability</i>) |
| 10:00-12:00 | Needlework |
| 10:00-11:00 | Line Dancing |
| 11:00-12:00 | Yoga - (<i>Bring mat & blanket</i>) |
| 10:30 | HighSteppers at Knox Cove |
| 1:00-4:00 | Pinochle |
| Oct. 2 & 16 3:00-5:00 | Caregiver Support Group |
| | Timber Ridge at McKinleyville |
| | Private Dining Room, |
| | 1400 Nursery Way. |
| | <i>For info call 443-9747</i> |
| Oct. 23 11:00 | Board Meeting |
| Oct. 30 12:00 | \$5 Monthly Luncheon |

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 |
| Oct. 3 11:00-11:30 | \$3 Mini-Lunch |
| Oct. 10 11:00-11:30 | \$3 Mini-Lunch |
| Oct. 17 11:00-11:30 | \$3 Mini-Lunch |
| Oct. 24 11:00-11:30 | \$3 Mini-Lunch |
| Oct. 31 11:00-11:30 | \$3 Mini-Lunch |
| Fridays 10:00-11:30 | Support Group |
| | Walking Group at Knox Cove |
| 1:00-4:00 | Pinochle |
| Saturday 9:00-11:00 | Celebration of Life & Death |
| 2:00-4:00 | Art of Origami - 4 sessions |

Rio Dell

Every Mon, Wed & Fri

11:30-12:30 Senior Exercise Class
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Fortuna Senior Center

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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 |
| Oct. 7 | 1:45 | Book Club |
| | 3:30 | Ukulele Group |
| | 5:00 | S.A.I.L. 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 |
| Oct. 2 | 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 Trails | 8:30 | Walking |
| | 3:00 | Bocce Ball |
| MGC | 9:00 | Cards |
| | 9:30 | Yoga (<i>donation suggested</i>) |
| | 1:00 | MahJong |
| | 2:00 | Seated Tai Chi |

United Methodist Church

- | | | |
|------------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Oct. 10, 17 & 24 | 12:00-2:00 | Caregiver Support Group |
| | | Fireplace Room |
| | | 922 N Street, Fortuna |
| | | <i>For info call 443-9747</i> |

Fridays

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

United Methodist Church

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---------------------|
| Oct. 25 | 7:30 pm | Fortuna Camera Club |
|---------|---------|---------------------|

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

- | | | |
|---------|-------------|---------|
| Oct. 19 | 11:00-12:00 | Potluck |
|---------|-------------|---------|

Sunday

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| <i>Fortuna-The Monday Club</i> | | |
| Oct. 27 | 2:00-4:00 | Open Mic |

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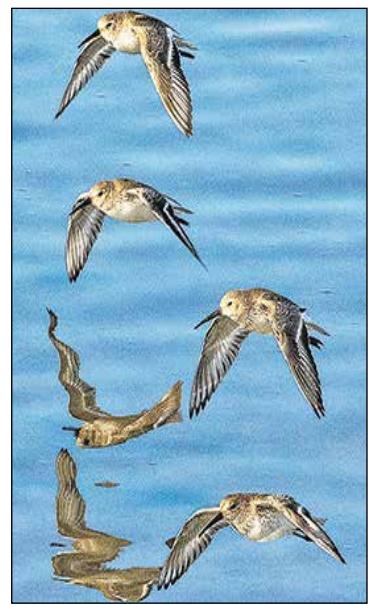
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Marsh Willets. Mark Larson photo.

Simplify, and Reconnect to Life Off the Grid

By Doug Vieyra

As a young boy I read a lot. I still do. But when we are young, we are easily impressed with what we read.

I was especially taken with Henry David Thoreau's "On Walden Pond" (1854), a reflection on simple living in natural surroundings. "Our life is frittered away by detail," he wrote. "Simplify, simplify."

Like Thoreau, through many other readings and experiences, I also became a transcendentalist. Thoreau's "Walden" re-enforced in me my own belief in striving for independence, spiritual discovery and self-reliance, especially as found in living in nature.

And so it was that I spent all my life either at sea as a merchant seaman or in mountain wilderness as a wilderness patrolman/trail-builder for

the U.S. Forest Service.

When I left the Forest Service in 1980, I bought a raw piece of wilderness in the mountains of central-eastern Humboldt County and built my own version of Walden Pond. I still live there today.

My wife of 40 years died three years ago, and, like Thoreau, I now live there alone. But the routine of wilderness living is unchanged, and the lessons and values of "Walden Pond" are still with me today.

My simple cabin in the wilderness is off-grid, two miles from the nearest road. I live a simple life there, some might even say Spartan. After years living with oil lamps, I now have solar panels for lighting and listening to Jefferson Public Radio. A propane

tank powers my small refrigerator and cooking stove.

My water comes from a crisp mountain spring high above my cabin. I am proud of my indoor plumbing, including a special room for a commode and claw-footed tub/showер. The woodstove warms the cabin and heats my water and cooks my food in the winter.

My daily routine is fairly typical of those who live in the outback. Upkeep, repair and maintenance are ongoing chores, along with tool maintenance and firewood duties.

Now that fall has come and winter is just around the corner, an urgency begins to creep into my sense of things that need to be done. Living on Walden Pond requires a constant

dedication to things that give one independence and self-reliance.

But the reward for all the effort, sacrifice and primitive living is to be found every morning as I watch the sun come up, and every evening as I watch it go down.

I listen to the quail, turkeys and grouse talk to me during the day, and to the coyotes howl at night. I watch the shooting stars race across the night sky, and breathe the fresh mountain air. All the many treasures of nature add a rich texture to my overall contentment as I commune with God in nature.

Doug Vieyra, 76, simplifies his life off the grid in Iaqua.

New Treatment for Painful, Numb Feet *by Ed Handl*

Do you have painful, numb feet? You may be suffering from a nerve disorder called peripheral neuropathy.

An estimated 15 million people nationwide suffer from this painful disorder. The symptoms can be burning, sharp and aching pains, cold feet or hands, tingling and numbness that gradually progresses from the toes or fingers to involve the feet or hands.

Another common experience is that the severity of the symptoms increases at night. Some people eventually begin to lose their balance as nerve signals become poorer.

There are many different causes of peripheral neuropathy. Diabetes is the most commonly recognized but not the most commonly diagnosed.

Idiopathic peripheral neuropathy is the most commonly diagnosed form. Idiopathic means that it is of unknown origin.

Whatever the cause, the effects on the peripheral nerves are similar and cause insufficient blood and nutrient supply to those nerves. This can result in loss of the nerves' protective barrier (myelin sheath) and widening of synaptic gaps (junction points from one nerve to the next). This damage is what causes the symptoms of peripheral neuropathy.

Most people suffer from sensory nerve issues — burning, tingling and numbness. Fewer have motor nerve involvement, with muscle weakness, cramping and loss of balance.

TREATMENT

The treatment for peripheral neuropathy has mostly consisted of a multitude of medications, from narcotics to antidepressants and anti-seizures. Popping pills is not what most people want anymore.

But there is a revolutionary new

treatment for this painful nerve disorder. It is called the Sympathetic Therapy System (STS). At Humboldt Hand and Foot Therapy in Eureka, we have introduced a successful program designed to treat peripheral neuropathy patients with the STS (Sympathetic Therapy System) and infrared lights.

STS works by applying electrical stimulation over peripheral dermatome sites (areas of skin that are mainly supplied by single spinal nerves). This unique form of stimulation is unlike any used before and gives dramatically different results.

By stimulating bilaterally over these peripheral nerve sites and communicating along these nerve pathways across the spine, we can target the sympathetic nervous system, calming and normalizing it. Lowering sympathetic nervous activity dilates

peripheral blood vessels.

In essence, STS asks the body to calm these overactive nerves, as well as to increase blood flow out to the hands or feet. The increase in blood flow brings back the nutrients that those damaged nerves desperately need, creating a healing environment. Most neuropathy patients respond to this treatment at some level. Treatments are Medicare and FDA approved.

These comfortable, non-invasive treatments have no side effects and can potentially reverse the symptoms of this condition.

Call **Humboldt Hand and Foot** with any questions, at 441-1931.

Ed Handl is a Kinesiologist and the Clinic Director for Humboldt Hand and Foot Therapy at 1587 Myrtle Avenue in Eureka.

PLEASE DON'T PAVE PARADISE . . . Page 1

gether interdependently in a once-glorious web of life. In their ignorance and greed, they have torn it apart.

Because Humboldt County is a climate refuge, cooled by ocean currents, rain and fog, we — unlike Bahamians struck by Hurricane Dorian, or last year's Paradise fire victims — so far have not had to confront the unbridled wrath of the planet.

But there are signs: Fewer lines of brown pelicans dip along the wave-tops. Nearly 100 starving whales died on beaches from California to Alaska this year. There's less kelp on the beach and fewer bugs in the air.

Signs from the embattled world beyond the Redwood Curtain jangle our complacency: release of methane gas warming the sea, melting polar ice, with the associated loss of solar reflectivity. The Amazon is burning, clogging the lungs of the planet. Pollinating insects, vital to our food supply, are down 82% in the last 27 years. Biodiversity researchers estimate that 1 million species will become extinct in the next 10 to 20 years.

In 2015, 21 children sued the U.S. government, claiming their constitutional rights are being violated and their future is being stolen by our generation's failure to address climate change. The lawsuit, *Julianna v. United States*, opposed by the Trump administration, fighting its way through the courts. Meanwhile, other young people are engaging in

direct action: organizations such as Extinction Rebellion, Sunrise, Earth Guardians, YouCan and Zero Hour employ a spectrum of tactics to avert the climate catastrophe.

Here in Humboldt County, sea-level rise on Humboldt Bay is the greatest of anywhere on the West Coast, and climate scientist Aldaron Laird predicts infrastructure, including Highway 101, will be under water around the Bay by 2040.

Sub-Saharan Africa has been laid waste by fire, flood and deforestation this year, which occasioned a visit to Madagascar from the Pope in September. "There can be no true ecological approach or effective efforts to safeguard the environment without social justice," was his judgment.

Humans have made a mistake. Our only chance is to walk back the current path of our evolution.

We can adopt a principle from our American indigenous ancestors. They are said to have contemplated every important tribal or personal decision from the perspective of both the preceding seven generations, and from their impacts on the next seven generations. Such an approach to our existential crisis and its penetration into the mind of all our fellow travelers on Earth will be necessary to redirect our present trajectory toward destruction.

Ellen E. Taylor, 77, watches the Earth from her home in Petrolia.

"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.



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— William Shakespeare (1564-1616) playwright.

How I Learned to Love Dandelions

By Brenda Cooper

Growing up, I hated dandelions.

Until my family moved to a post-WWII subdivision when I was 9, I never thought much about dandelions, except how fun it was to blow the puffball of seeds and watch them float through the air. The myth was that if you blew away all of the seeds at once, you'd be granted one wish, and I loved sending out my wishes.

All that changed when we left the dilapidated duplex with a tiny dirt yard that my parents had rented since I was an infant and moved to the 960-square-foot house that they bought by painting the interior as a down-payment. After sowing grass seed, Mom eventually had the green, grassy lawn she'd so longed for since leaving Tennessee 10 years earlier.

With the new lawn came dandelions. I thought the yellow blooms were pretty, and still loved blowing the puffballs. But Mom had a different perspective. She finally had grass, a lawn she was proud of, and would not tolerate weeds.

And so began the Dandelion War.

During dandelion season, my younger brother, Bobby, and I were assigned the job of digging them up. When Mom had time, she would join us with her trowel. Sometimes it was a daily job. Bobby got lucky — he developed allergies and was excused from yard work — so killing dandelions and mowing the lawn became my job.

Now I hated dandelions. It took me a long time, but my attitude changed completely on the day I graduated with my master's degree from the University of Dayton, 30 years later.



Before I left for graduation that morning, my dearest friend, Barb, gave me a precious gift: a small crystal vase filled with dandelions that she'd picked that morning. She explained that dandelions are a symbol of strength and determination, of the resilience needed to survive life's challenges and disappointments. Dandelions are fighters, Barb said: regardless of how many times they are cut down or dug up, they survive and come back stronger and more determined to live.

Barb said dandelions made her think of me and all the struggles I'd confronted, the times I didn't think I was strong enough to survive the hard times, the disappointments and loss. But I kept trying, she said, and kept growing back stronger.

I cried and hugged her.

I haven't dug up or killed a dandelion since that day, more than 30 years ago. Dandelions are my friends, they comfort me. And I still blow the puffballs and make a wish.

Brenda Cooper, Ph.D., of Trinidad
has been unrooted many times, but
just keeps growing.

CHRONIC PAIN . . . From Page 5

meditation, but it likely has to do with how the brain processes pain messages and, in turn, how unpleasant or intense our pain experience is.

Pain is a complex subject. We literally need it to survive. But if it overshadows everything, pain can make living life difficult. Pain in the context of life-threatening illness will likely require a different approach than pain related to more chronic, stable reasons.

There must be a respectful collaboration between physicians and those they treat, and the realization that a cure for chronic pain is unlikely. With time and patience, I do believe that there are ways to work together to manage pain so that people can have more good days than bad.

Our bodies have become the travel jackets we wear from place to

place. We have forgotten the reality of our physical requirements. What we eat, how we move, how much we sit, and how much we respect our bodies' needs are huge factors in reducing pain.

Our traveling jackets of skin, bones, tendons, muscles, arteries and nerves need movement, and we must pay attention to the messages they are trying to give us. Those messages can be a gift.

—

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. Send comments to seniornewseditor@humsenior.org.

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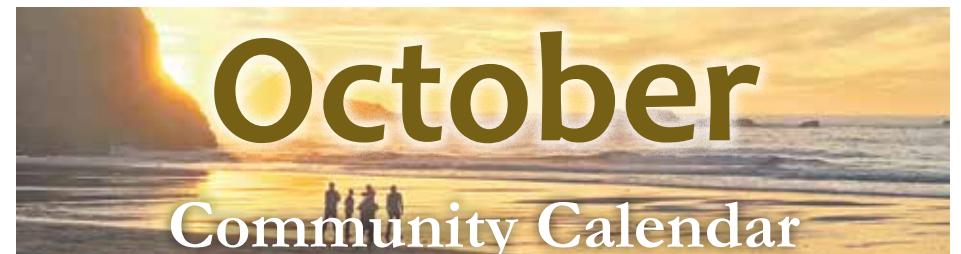
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October

Community Calendar

Redway Walking

The Redwoods Rural Health Center, County of Humboldt and Redwood Community Action Agency will hold a community walk, Wednesday, Oct. 2, to evaluate paths in Redway for walking, biking, skating and using mobility devices/wheelchairs. Mateel Community Center, 59 Rusk Lane, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Pastels on the Plaza

The 32nd annual Pastels on the Plaza, benefitting Northcoast Children's Services, hits the sidewalks in the center of Arcata on Saturday, Oct. 5, as artists turn the Plaza into an gallery promoting area groups.

Godwit Days Preview

The Godwit Days Bird Festival offers a fall preview with six small-group birding excursions on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 5 & 6, including a free family birding trip, birding by kayak and dragonflying. For info, prices and to register, visit godwits.org.

Read & Rock

The Morris Graves Museum of Art, 636 F St., Eureka, offers free events for kids and adults on Saturday, Oct. 5. Local author Byrd A. Lochtie reads from her children's book, "The Secret of the Hollyhocks," at noon, followed by a drawing activity and a free copy of the book. Then, the Absynth Quartet plays from 6-9 p.m. during Arts Alive! Stay after for the annual Kinetic Kouture: Fashion With a Re-Purpose, fashion show at 9 p.m. Info: humboldtarts.org

Photos Just Off the Bay

Photographer José Quezada's "Just Off the Bay" features photos taken less than a 10-minute bike ride from Humboldt Bay. The show at the Arcata Marsh Interpretive Center, 569 South G St. in Arcata, runs to the end of October. For more information, call 707-826-2359.

'A Reporter's Journey'

Pulitzer-nominated journalist and filmmaker Kevin McKiernan comes to Humboldt on Saturday, Oct. 19, for a screening of his new documentary, "From Wounded Knee to Standing Rock: A Reporter's Journey," at the Eureka Theater, 612 F St. Doors open at 6 p.m., film at 7. The film features Yurok elder Willard Carlson. Followed by Q&A. Tickets at Wildberries.

'Into the Mystery'

The Humboldt Unitarian Universalist Fellowship holds its annual "Into the Mystery" Halloween Festival on Saturday, Oct. 26, from 5-9 p.m. at 24 Fellowship Way, a half-mile east of the Bayside Post Office on Jacoby Creek Road. Tickets \$5 or \$6 for a family of four or more available Oct. 1 at huuf.org.

Climate Action

Humboldt County planner Connor McGuigan and Julie Neander of Arcata Environmental Services will talk about 2020 emission goals at an OLLI Brown Bag program, noon-1:30 p.m. at the Hospice of Humboldt, 3327 Timber Fall Court, Eureka. RSVP at extended.humboldt.edu/olli/courses.

The Cost of Medicare-for-All

By Kathryn Donahue

I appreciate comments by John Dillon in the August issue of Senior News ["What Will It Cost?" page 20] regarding the financial aspects of an "Improved Medicare for All" healthcare system.

All the misinformation being used to scare us into compliance with the health insurance industry's program for profits confuses most people. Politicians, who receive large sums of money from the health insurance and pharmaceutical industries, are also complicit in the misinforma-

tion that is put forward.

Mr. Dillon's statement that I have "no special knowledge" on the topic is far from factual, however. As a longtime activist for healthcare access reform, I find research and factual knowledge vital to educating the public concerning this issue.

Here is a shorthand outline for a possible way to accomplish this goal. It is not the only way, but one way.

Cost of Medicare-for-All program: \$2.93 trillion

- \$1.88 trillion: Current spending by government for U.S. health care.
- \$623 billion: Estimated 8% cost savings to businesses for health care premiums.
- \$196 billion: Revenue from proposed 3.75% sales tax on nonessential items (excluding food, clothing and other items).
- \$193 billion: A proposed 0.38% tax on individual net-worth in excess of \$1 million.
- \$69 billion: A proposed long-term capital gains tax.

This revenue (from taxes) and cost savings (for businesses) add up to \$2.96 trillion, more than would be needed to fund Improved Medicare for All.

In fact, 26 studies by respected economists show that Improved Medicare for All would actually reduce healthcare costs for the country. Some of those lower costs will come from pharmaceutical pricing, reduced administrative costs, and uniform rates on delivery of care.

These studies indicate an overall 10% lower cost, and would cover every resident for all health-related expenses. No more premiums, copays, or deductibles. Nothing owed at the point of service. No networks. And everyone will have access to preventative care.

For more information, search online for "Dr. Ed Weisbert YouTube" for a presentation by the chair of Missouri Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP), who explains the points I make here.

Want to learn more? Humboldt Health Care for All meets every fourth Wednesday at the Sanctuary in Arcata, 5-6 p.m.

—

Kathryn Donahue, Blue Lake, is a retired acute care nurse and member of Health Care for All, Humboldt Chapter. See her article, "One Nurse's Perspective on Humboldt Health Care," Senior News, July 2019. Contact: healthcareforallhumboldt@gmail.com.

Letter to the Editor

Remembering Lily

To the Editor:

Last fall, after 17 years, my very first adopted kitten unwrapped herself from my heart and moved on to the kitty catnip fields. As my daughter took her to the vet on her last day — because I could not — I wrote a note and tucked it into her basket as we planted her in my garden. Someone added a heart rock from the river.

This was what I wrote:

She must be almost 100. We have shared two homes together for longer than I shared them with my children. I lived through my middle-aged years with her.

She was faithful and comforting during those turbulent years of change, a presence when the nest was empty, a crimp in my freedom to explore, and a constant upon every return.

It's October, a time of change, and the leaves and pumpkins have turned orange. Her hair glows copper in the afternoon sunlight with a touch of gray around her face, just like mine. We have grown old together.

She is ready to leave her old body behind and leave me with the essence of her . . . shy, loving, frisky, a killer of vermin, aloof, a swell bedfellow when she was younger, and the shedder of massive amounts of fine white hair, enough to have recreated herself a dozen times.

The vet called her a "diminished calico." My granddaughters called her Crabby. Her food dish named her "Scarf & Barf."

I called her Lily.

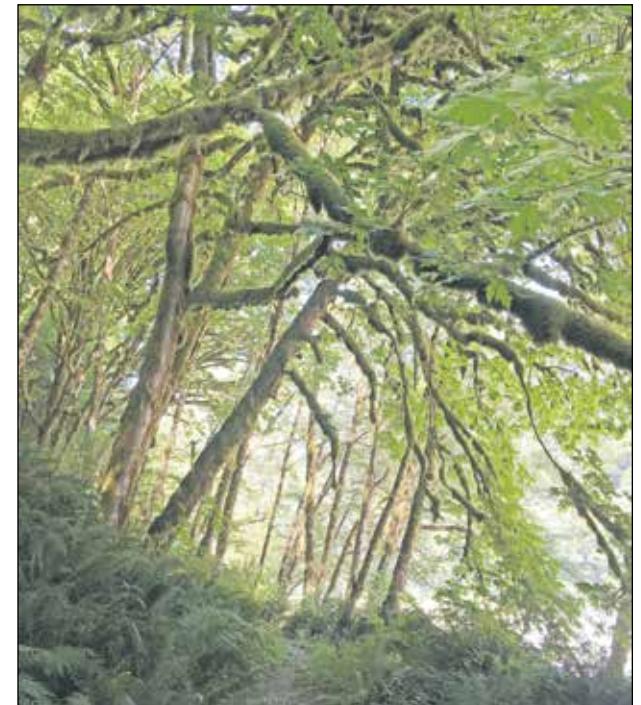
Patti Stammer, McKinleyville

Letters Policy: Senior News welcomes letters to the editor. To be considered for publication, letters should be received by the 12th of the month, must not exceed 300 words, and may be edited for space. Submissions must include the writer's full name, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address. Senior News reserves the right to reject any letter. The same requirements apply to those interested in submitting longer commentary columns (up to 400 words). E-mail tpease@humsenior.org or mail to Senior News, 1910 California St., Eureka, CA 95501.



Picture Perfect

Humboldt scenery is so beautiful that it makes every photographer an artist. Clockwise from top: The view north from Vista Point over Clam Beach, McKinleyville. Ted Pease photo; Sailing on Humboldt Bay. Alan Workman photo; Trees lean into Redwood Creek, Orick. Ted Pease photo; Shorebird flock at Arcata Marsh. Mark Larson photo; Tall trees at Prairie Creek State Park, Orick. Ted Pease photo.





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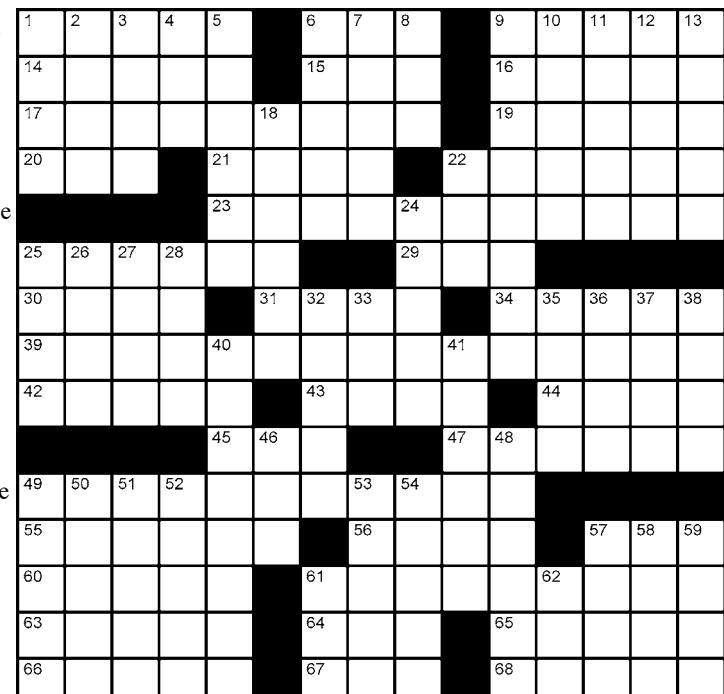
ACROSS

- 1 Place for photos
- 6 Denver winter hrs.
- 9 Pastry with cheese and cherry varieties
- 14 Very, in music
- 15 "Thanks, but I already ____"
- 16 Rattlesnake venom, e.g.
- 17 List headings for decision-making (see letters 2-5)
- 19 Mountain nymph
- 20 Sink below the horizon
- 21 Hebrew boy's name that anagrams to "Mara"
- 22 Diamond sock pattern
- 23 Bond investor's concern (letters 4-7)
- 25 Police interrogation role
- 29 Words before "whim"
- 30 Chimney duct
- 31 ____ McAn shoes
- 34 Metal worker?
- 39 Make a bundle (letters 1-5)
- 42 Authority
- 43 German industrial region
- 44 Pro ____ (in proportion)
- 45 It may be premium
- 47 Win the heart of
- 49 Not be a stranger (letters 4-8)
- 55 Clarke of "Game of Thrones"

Horsing Around by Roland Huget, Edited by David Steinberg

DOWN

- 1 Rock concert gear
- 2 Anecdotal knowledge
- 3 Ink stain
- 4 Hagen of Broadway
- 5 Gambling mecca by the Mediterranean Sea
- 6 Gambling mecca by the South China Sea
- 7 Tread heavily
- 8 Decimal system base
- 9 Curve with rising action
- 10 Small Welsh breed
- 11 Kind of daisy
- 12 Pop star Horan
- 13 Concluded
- 18 Fall on, as one's knees
- 22 Advice columnist Landers
- 24 Pizzazz
- 25 Close pals, in texts
- 26 Et ____ (and others)
- 27 Appropriately
- 28 Sleepy sheets?
- 32 Early 20th-century author Fannie
- 33 Tulsa sch.
- 35 Fried Southern vegetable
- 36 Structural support
- 37 Springfield school bus driver
- 38 Peter or Nicholas
- 40 "It's deja vu all over again" and others
- 41 Mine vehicle
- 46 Santa ____ winds
- 48 Wayne Gretzky, for a record nine times
- 49 Thompson of "SNL"
- 50 Act like a ham
- 51 Quilt filler
- 52 Answer a charge
- 53 Expressed amazement
- 54 Western Russian mountains
- 57 Bear in the sky
- 58 "No ice"
- 59 Church nook
- 61 Spherical legume
- 62 Feel poorly



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Back to Blocksburg — Echoes of a Bygone Boomtown

By José Quezada

About 126 years ago, Ida Miranda Burnell left on a stagecoach from Eureka at 5 a.m. under a full moon, headed over the Kneeland Ridge. Parts of the road on that dark morning were "very rough," she said, and drifted with snow.

"In one place on Yager Ridge, it had drifted so deep the driver had to find a road of his own to get by," the 20-year-old wrote in her diary.

Ida arrived at "The Bridge" (Bridgeville) at 6 p.m., "a small place situated in a very pretty place on the Van Duzen," she wrote, and finally got to Blocksburg, where she had been hired as a schoolteacher, the following afternoon.

Today, the drive from Eureka to Blocksburg takes a little more than 90 minutes, and it's not the same bustling town that Ida saw when her stagecoach arrived in 1893. Today, Blocksburg is just a wider stretch of pavement suddenly appearing along a twisting and turning Alderpoint Road

between Bridgeville to the north and Garberville to the south. A few old buildings remain in the historic town, structural ghosts of a vibrant long-gone era.

In the 1880s, Blocksburg was "a thriving community ... boasting three hotels, three livery stables, five saloons, a telegraph office, a meat market, blacksmith shop, saddle shop, dentist, doctor, a photographer, a drug store, millinery shop, and of course, a jail," wrote Hazel Hill, a correspondent for the Humboldt Times, in 1955. "The town also boasted one of the first racetracks in California ... during the racing season people traveled from as far as Los Angeles to attend the races."

Indeed, Blocksburg was a main stagecoach stop on the road between San Francisco and Eureka. Timber, cattle and sheep ranching were thriving industries that kept the town solvent.

"When the white men came to

Blocksburg, there were a great many Indians in the area and their wickiups of bark built against trees, were scattered through the hills and valleys," Hill wrote.

The colorful pioneer life, the rough and tumble folks and the native Indian culture may be gone, but the breathtaking, panoramic views of the Larabee Valley remain, as well as the rehabilitated schoolhouse where Ida taught.

On March 6, 1893, a few days after arriving, Ida wrote in her diary, "Blocksburg seems to be a beautiful little place. The view is lovely. It is high up on a sort of slope, and you can see hills and dales as far as the eye can reach."

Today, the view from the rehabilitated one-room schoolhouse is much the same. The building, a few yards downhill from the rehabilitated church on Church Road, serves as a community center today.

The Blocksburg post office sits

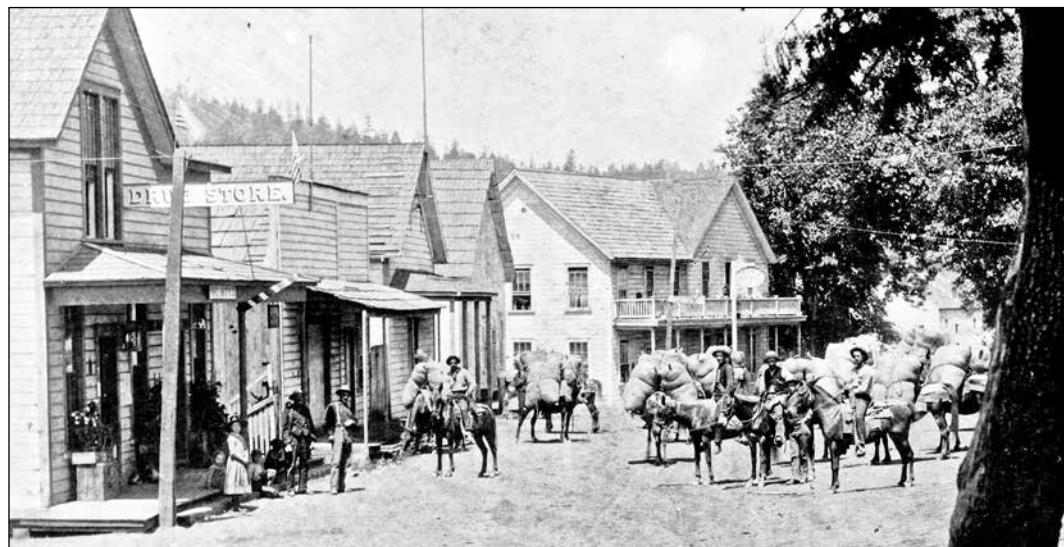
smack-dab on the main road though town, tangible proof that there is still a community present among the hardwood forests, meadows and ranch lands of the valley 30 miles northeast of Garberville.

The drive to Blocksburg through the ranch lands of the Larabee Valley and up meandering Alderpoint Road from Bridgeville is still a mesmerizing experience. These are the same ridges, creeks, forests, grazing lands and spectacular mountain views that Ida Miranda Burnell saw from her stagecoach in 1893, making it a day trip not only into the back-country of east-central Humboldt County, but also into its history.

—

José Quezada, 67, of Myrtlewood, is a photojournalist, writer and music-maker in his business, North Coast

Music Together. This is adapted from a piece that appeared in The Redwood Times in 2016.



BUSTLING BLOCKSBURG — When new schoolmarm Ida Miranda Burnell arrived to teach the children of Blocksburg in 1893, it was a busy town, a stage stop between Eureka and San Francisco and a staging area for miners and timber operations. Things have slowed down in Blocksburg today, but Miss Burnell's school and the community church are still there. Left photo courtesy of the Humboldt State University Library Collection; right photo by José Quezada.



Coming in Senior News

- NOVEMBER:** Do you remember the time...? We'll be sharing stories in "Family Stories" as a way of preserving the past. Share yours.
- DECEMBER:** What's the best holiday gift you ever got (or gave)? A pony? Coal? Or a visit from grampa you'll never forget? Tell us about your gag gifts and lasting memories in "Holidays to Remember." Contact editor Ted Pease, tpease@humsenior.org or 707-4543-9747, x1226.

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