



**Thank Our
Veterans
on Nov. 11.**

Family Stories

Our Stories, Our Selves

By John Heckel

The whole earth is the sepulcher of famous men and ordinary men, and their story is not graven on stone, but lives on, woven into the stuff of other men's lives.

—Pericles' Funeral Speech

Storytelling in one form or another is as old as we humans are.

Certainly, our telling got more detailed and sophisticated with the advent of the spoken word, but no one can deny the passion and urge to share inherent in the ancient cave drawings of Lascaux in southwestern France.

If you look carefully at those 17,000-year-old drawings, you can see the stories and the humanity of those telling the story. If we allow ourselves to look deeply into those drawings — and the stories they tell — they can transform how we perceive our early ancestors and, in turn, how we see ourselves.

So it is with all stories.

Anthropologist Victor Turner, considered by many to have been one of our more serious scholars of storytelling, suggests that storytelling is

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'Crazy Uncle Ed' and Poor Aunt Wilma

By Seabury S. Gould V

I don't remember ever meeting my Great-Uncle Edward Gould, nor his wife Wilma. He was sometimes referred to "Crazy Uncle Ed," as he supposedly had psychological ailments and was eventually put away in a sanatorium by his brother, my Great-Uncle Norman Gould.

Norman was president of the family company, Goulds Pumps in Seneca, Falls, New York, and a former congressman from New York.

Uncle Ed lived in upstate New York and died in 1966. Wilma became rather notorious — sadly or heroically — and came to be known as "Billy the Bitch."

The story goes that Wilma supposedly worked as a "call girl" known as "Billy Rose-lie," and was living with a racetrack bookie in Chicago up to the night before her marriage to Ed in 1921.

To her credit, Wilma was known to be a hard-working dressmaker as well.

Ed and Wilma traveled to Paris in 1927, where he left her penniless. He returned to New York City, and Wilma had to borrow money from friends to return to the United States.

In 1931, Wilma was ambushed by newspaper photographers in a hotel suite, where she was supposedly having an affair with a fake

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UNCLE ED and his dog in happier days in upstate New York.
Photo courtesy of Seabury Gould.

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Herd Immunity

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Good Neighbors

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Folks Quartet

Page 22

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TEDtalks: Family Stories

By Ted Pease

One of the (many) casualties of the technological age has been how we remember our own history.

Before email and Twitter, texting and social media, humans told each other stories through songs and folktales — around a fire in a cave after a good meal of mastodon, if you want to get all romantic about it — and that was how families and villages remembered their past.

In Europe, the oral tradition of transmitting history to new generations through the spoken word disappeared shortly after Johannes Gutenberg introduced movable type around 1450. People learned to read, and the practice of telling stories in families and small groups morphed from spoken tales to typography.

For historians, that was a good thing, because it meant there was a written record — books, newspapers, letters. But what also happened was that, through disuse, human memory got flabby, and people literally lost their capacity to remember and repeat their own histories.

Where it had once been commonplace for people to be able to rattle off their family stories back generations, they had to depend on written records to remember who married Aunt Mabel, or what happened the night the donkey sat on Grampa and the barn burned.

That dwindling of our capacity to remember things, even crucial information about ourselves and those closest to us, has left us poorer, to the point that what we remember lasts about as long as a tweet or a text — *poof!*

So we are grateful to writers in this month's Senior News who could actually remember their own stories, and were willing to share them with us, their extended village.

As John Heckel discusses in "Our Stories, Our Selves" (page 1), recounting and hearing stories helps both the teller and the listener know themselves better.

Some memories are wild and salacious, as Humboldt musician and storyteller Seabury Gould recounts in remembering "Crazy Uncle Ed," his wife Wilma, and underhanded Uncle Norman (page 1).

Some memories are linked to great people — Dave Rosso's dad at 15 tracked down Albert Einstein (page 3), and columnist Betsy Goodspeed crossed the color line with Nat King Cole (page 6).

Loré Snell writes of sweet-smelling memories, of Grandma Ruby's apple pie (page 7). And Janet Patterson realizes that her mother, in taking up writing at age 80, was preserving her own childhood as her life drew to a close (page 9).

Remembering feels good. "Thanks for the prompt to write these things down," says Jim Lahman (page 23).

This is a prompt for you, too — to remember and help others remember your family stories. Because when they're gone, they're gone.

—
Ted Pease, editor of Senior News, is working on his own story.

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Chip Off the Old Block: ‘What a Reporter You Will Make!’

By Dave Rosso

I am sure my father wanted me to be a journalist. I have a letter he wrote me about what a good journalist I would become after attending journalism school at Syracuse University.

“I can picture you when you return from Syracuse, Dave,” he wrote. “It will be a reflection of me when I graduated. What a reporter you will make!”

He wrote that letter in 1946 as part of a class assignment. I was 3 years old at the time, and never attended Syracuse University.

My father started journalism at a young age. He is mentioned in Walter Isaacson’s 2007 book, “Einstein,” as the 15-year-old Princeton High School student who interviewed Albert Einstein as part of a class project in 1935.

When dad went to Einstein’s house, the man who greeted him at the door told him the Princeton professor did not do interviews. A milkman overheard, and told Dad that the renowned physicist took a walk every morning at 9.

So dad skipped class and waited for him, got the interview for his class, and The New York Times picked it up.

Dad was the reporter, editor and distributor of the Local Express in Princeton. One of the founding partners of the newspaper quit after the first issue, and Dad stepped in.

The other two founders quit just six months later, leaving Dad on his own with the newspaper in March 1936.

He dubbed the Express “Princeton’s Progressive Newspaper,” trying to distinguish it from the two other, well-established local newspapers, The Princeton Herald and The Princeton Packet.

On May 12, 1938, the Local Express became The Princeton News. My father was sole editor. The final issue appeared March 9, 1939.

When he was 19, Dad broke through police lines to interview survivors of the Hindenberg, the dirigible that exploded and crashed in Manchester Township, New Jersey.

So I could clearly see that Dad was very disappointed when I told him I was majoring in music at College of Marin. Well into the first classes, however, my music instructor held up one of my papers, looked me in the eyes and said, “Why don’t you major in journalism?”

I think Dad knew him.

But they were right. After I left the Air Force, I took journalism at American University in Washington, D.C., and I loved it.

—
Dave Rosso, 76, of Eureka is a veteran UPI newsman.

~~It~~ Nature Is In Principle a Simple Structure It Is ~~a Mathematical Fact~~, Declares Einstein My Creed

No part or parts of this story may be published by any other publication.

HENRY A. ROSSO '35

“Even nature is simple if we happen to look at it in the appropriate manner”, stated Dr. Einstein to a Towns reporter who, after numerous vain attempts at attaining an audience with the professor, was finally admitted to his presence.

At first Dr. Einstein was rather hesitant in granting an interview but after a pleasant conversation he talked freely of his profession. The preliminary conversation revealed a great deal of his character; he is not austere and cold to strangers but pleasing and friendly and has a wonderful sense of humor. When asked about his life he laughed in a jovial manner and said: “My life is a simple thing that would interest no one”.

About the question of birth: “It is a known fact that I was born and that is all that is necessary”. Again he laughed heartily.

Dr. Einstein’s interest, as it is known, is founded in the field of Mathematics. He began an interesting discourse about his experience with the subject.

“In my first acquaintance with Mathematics I had the experience to find out by reason the meaning of relation. It was for me wholly different from a ny other thing in life. It seemed to me a revelation of the highest author and I will never forget it.

“Later on I discovered that nature was constructed in a wonderful way and our task is to find out the mathematical structure of nature itself.

Even nature is simple if we happen to look at it in the appropriate manner.

Then if nature is really in principle a simple structure, it is a mathematical fact. This I have discovered

and it is my own belief; but it is not the belief of other investigators. It is a kind of faith that helped me through my whole life not to become hopeless in the great difficulties of investigation”.



DAD’S SCOOP — “My father was my inspiration to go into journalism, even though I did not know it at the time,” says veteran journalist Dave Rosso. This is a copy of a 1935 article by Rosso’s dad, then a 15-year-old high school student. Rosso, Sr.’s interview with the reclusive Dr. Einstein was rare enough that The New York Times carried it. This shows Einstein’s comments and his signature at the bottom. Courtesy of Dave Rosso.

“If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales.

If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.”

—Albert Einstein (1879-1955), physicist.

ROAD TRIP, PART 2

Los ‘Viejitos Viajeros’ Motor on into Colombia

By Rus Krause & Emilio “Pollo” Bolé

Editor’s Note: *Senior News’ South American correspondents Rus Krause and his Argentine sidekick Emilio “Pollo” Bolé set off from Arcata on motorcycles in September, heading for Ushuaia, Argentina — 10,000 miles as the crow flies. This is the second report on their travels.*

This issue of Senior News finds us, the intrepid Viejitos Viajeros (“Traveling Oldies”), and our BMW motorcycles on the beautiful, hot and humid Caribbean coast of Costa Rica. We left Arcata on Sept. 7, and are now 6,000 miles into our journey to the bottom of South America.

As we crossed from Mexico into Guatemala, we immediately entered a different world. The indigenous Maya hold tightly to their culture, much of it adapted from Spanish influences hundreds of years ago, but now uniquely their own.

At the home of old friends Diego and his wife Blanca, we were honored by a traditional Mayan “bendición,” a two-hour ceremonial blessing for our safe travels and the welfare of our families at home.

In Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, the land, animals and people have a harder

life than farther north in Mexico, and it shows. The streams and rivers are muddy from erosion, there is very little wildlife with the notable exception of vultures. Dead dogs lie alongside every road, the infrastructure is in disrepair, governments are inefficient and corrupt, and the people are noticeably less happy than in Mexico, Costa Rica and Belize.

We saw many exceptions, where the land was beautiful, things were working well and people were hopeful, but the unrelenting pressure of poverty gradually had its effect on us as well, and we were relieved to cross into Costa Rica, where we haven’t seen a dead dog yet. But we have to acknowledge the universal helpfulness we’ve encountered everywhere we’ve traveled. A wrong turn can lead to a great conversation and an escort to a perfect place to stay or to eat, and Emilio has been in constant contact with numerous new Facebook friends he makes at every chance encounter.

Here’s a handy travel tip: eat street food! It’s so much better and cheaper than in restaurants, and you can see it before you order.

Another tip: the entrance and exit of every tiny village features deadly, suspension-killing speed bumps, called “topes” in Mexico and “túmulos” elsewhere. Sometimes marked, often not, just one

encounter at speed makes you a believer in slowing down.

One last handy travel tip: It turns out that you can’t drive to South America. There’s a nasty, impassable stretch of land between Panama and Colombia called the Darien Gap, infested with mosquitoes, bandits and other unfriendly people, plus numerous other hazards that make building a road impossible.

We’re lucky to have the Panama Canal, and that was hard enough. From Panama, you have to take a boat or plane to continue your journey south.

We chose to go by boat (it seemed more consistent with being old guys), and found an ancient Dutch sailing vessel, the *Stahlratte*, to take us and our motorbikes from Panama to the port city of Cartagena, Colombia.

Wish us luck, we’ve got a long way to go to reach Tierra del Fuego.

Rus Krause, 72, and Emilio “Pollo” Bolé, 74, hope to make it to Tierra del Fuego by Christmas. See “Traveling Oldies” in the October issue of Senior News, and look for another installment of their journey next month.



LIFE ON THE ROAD — Our intrepid bikers, somewhere in the wilds of Mexico (left); and Emilio makes friends in Panama. Emilio “Pollo” Bolé photos.

ASK THE DOCTOR**Herd Immunity***By Jennifer Heidmann, M.D.*

When I talk to those who are reluctant to get the influenza vaccine, I discuss two aspects of immunizations: personal health and public health.

For individuals, immunizations reduce risk of severe illness. More broadly, being immunized adds to “herd immunity.” If enough people are immunized against a disease in a group (a city, a church congregation, a schoolroom, an airplane), the chances of the disease hopping from one person to the next is reduced. For people who are frail or ill, immunizing the “herd” can be lifesaving.

Individual health is wonderful. Societal health is also important. Vaccines are just one tool to improve the health of a community.

A child of mine and their partner once stepped off public transportation in a West Coast city to find a wall of people with megaphones screaming in rage about LGBTQ people. Rage and hate are bad for societal health, creating fear, division and collective *dis-ease*.

A friend’s child texted from a university classroom where students had been ordered to shelter in place and lock the door to a credible violent threat on campus. The classroom had no lock, so the professor stood against the door to guard the class. The health of that student, everyone on campus, the city at large, parents and loved ones and anyone who looked at media on their phones was adversely affected.

A young black student was murdered in a local college town, and

still no one has been found responsible. Posters of his lovely face fill shop windows. Other posters of people of color dot the walls with the message “We Are Your Community,” to remind us that diversity is normal and positive. But our community has not proven to be a safe haven for diversity, and micro-aggressions have macro-consequences on societal health.

Another of my children faced constant reminders at school that they are not white and that they look different. Verbal and social media abuse affect my child’s health, the health of our family, and the health of the school community, which still cannot wrap its collective brain around the viral nature of micro-hate. Denial and soothing words won’t stop a disease like hate.

Which brings me back to herd immunity. Each person who has the ability to stand up for others, even when it is uncomfortable, serves the health of the community. Every person who chooses compassion and acceptance over rage and hate immunizes themselves against being a vector for spreading *disease*. Each person who demands action against injustice helps ensure the health and survival of our community.

And please, get your flu shot.

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.

Surgery or No Surgery?

Deciding whether to undergo surgery can be complicated.

Sure, if your appendix acts up or you break a hip, there’s not much of a choice, but as we age, weighing the costs and benefits of an operation can be a challenge.

“Replacing someone’s hip when they’re 85 is harder than when they’re 50,” says Dr. Clifford Ko, director of optimal patient care for the American College of Surgeons.

Older patients face more post-op complications, including mortality, just because their parts wear out, but researchers say that age alone is not a risk factor in surgery.

Rather, patients should be evaluated on their functional age — How independent are they? Do they live alone, shop for themselves, dress themselves? How frail are they?

Ko and other geriatric medical specialists have spent three years developing new standards of care for older patients considering surgery, focusing on patients 65 and older.

Some of the 30 factors include cognition, mobility, functional independence, depression and fragility.

“Fragility is an emerging concept that goes beyond chronological age,” said Dr. Emily Finlayson of the University of California-San Francisco Center for Surgery in Older Adults. “You can be 80 and really fit, or you can be 55 and have a lot of physical function and cognition issues.”

A key question is what the patient wants to get from a surgical procedure, longer life or better quality of life. That’s a conversation to have with your doctor.

—Ted Pease

The advertisement features a festive Thanksgiving dinner scene with a roasted turkey, cranberry sauce, and other dishes. A green banner at the top reads "10% SENIOR OFF TUESDAYS". Below the banner, the text "Happy Thanksgiving" is written in a cursive font. At the bottom, there are two locations for Eureka Natural Foods: Eureka (1450 Broadway, (707) 442-6325) and McKinleyville (2165 Central Ave., (707) 839-3636). The website www.eurekanaturalfoods.com is also listed.



HEAVENS TO BETSY

BY BETSY GOODSPEED

Thanks for the Memories

Remembering the address of my childhood home in Westwood, I managed to call up a view of it on my computer. The memories came flooding back, and I felt like I was living in two worlds simultaneously.

I had retired to an assisted living facility in Simi Valley, and bin-go seemed my only alternative to inactivity. So I started recording my memoirs.

When my musician father set down his memories of having been a pioneer of the Golden Days of Radio, he used a portable recorder, because he believed he wasn't a writer.

Among his memories was accompanying an audience at Carnegie Hall to sing the "Star-Spangled Banner" during a war bond tour with Burns and Allen. He lowered the key to make it easy to play, and the audience sang the entire song with gusto.

He was very proud of the fact that his orchestra found the Red Inquisition of the 1950s unconstitutional. Unless the musicians would swear in writing that they had never been members of any Communist organization, they would be fired. So they quit.

In her memoirs, my Aunt Freda wrote that my grandfather bought the first car in Fort Collins, Colorado. He was a circuit judge whose hobby was inventing musical instruments, which no doubt affected my father's choice of a career.

My memoirs balance being a full-time wife and mom with having a

part-time career in early television. I wrote about my 12-year-old son buying a roll of 5¢ tickets to sell sled rides down our snowy driveway in New Jersey. Then he had to warn his dad to park his car in the front yard.

Then he bought a roll of 25¢ tickets to sell woods tours in the acre behind the house.

My children's imaginations match mine, and although they became excellent performers they took daytime jobs because the world was not the same.

My favorite memory about a superstar occurred when supper clubs were refusing entry to blacks and Jews. So when Nat King Cole came to hear me, I had a waiter carry my harp outside, and traffic stopped as he sang with me on the sidewalk.

Later I realized that he was in the process of changing history.

I tell people who say their lives weren't exciting enough to write their memoirs, because their first-hand view of history will thrill their great-grandchildren.

The final line of "Nature Boy," recorded by Nat King Cole in 1948, is: "*The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return.*"

Betsy Goodspeed, 93, of Eureka is a musician and author of some 30 novels and memoirs.

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Grandma Ruby's Hands

By Loré Snell

Peeling apples at the kitchen sink, I look down at my hands and see Grandma Ruby's hands, crackly with spots, stubby fingers and gnarled knuckles.

Such sweet memories. Oh, the apples she peeled, the pies she made.

Pie-making is just one of the many gifts from her. As a child, come September, the apple orchard was one of my favorite places. I'd weave daisy chains, make wishes with dandelion puffs, dream, and, of course, eat apples. The big juicy Kings were light green and flecked red, not too sweet, crisp, absolutely perfect.

And those pies . . . I'd gather a basket of fallen apples, always leaving some for the deer.

First, Grandma Ruby and I would peel them at the kitchen sink. She used a paring knife, making circles of peel that she threw into a pot on the old cookstove, boiling them for jelly.

When Grandma had a bowl full of sliced apples, she would add sugar and spice. She was never shy with sugar; the apple slices were a treat to eat before baking. Then she would squeeze a lemon and add a little flour to thicken the mixture.

Next came the dough. She taught me that, "Good cooks get their hands in the mix." Be it meatloaf or pie dough, fingers play their part. Importantly, you need to mix the shortening into tiny crumbs before adding liquid. Otherwise, the crust will be tough.

After adding liquid, she would work the dough quickly with her hands into balls for rolling.

Grandma would deftly roll out the balls of dough onto a floured bread board. She also floured the rolling pin, and then would roll the balls out in

circles to fill the pie dish. She taught me to roll the dough circles onto the rolling pin and carefully put them into the pie dish.

Next, repeat for the top crust, making it larger to cover the apples. Before adding the apples Grandma always sprinkled the bottom crust with a little more sugar.

You can use whatever sweetener and spice you prefer. I like brown sugar, cinnamon, cloves and ginger. Add some huckleberries if you are lucky enough to have them.

Dot the apple mixture with a few pats of soft butter. Cover with top crust, pinch the edges and make a few air holes with a toothpick or fork. Sprinkle a little more sugar on top and bake.

Like Grandma Ruby, I don't really measure the sugar and spice in the filling, but I do follow her pie dough recipe: flour, shortening (she used Crisco; I use butter), an egg, apple cider vinegar, water and salt.

If there is leftover dough, make rollemups, (my Mom's recipe): Roll out the dough and slather with soft butter. Generously sprinkle with white and brown sugar, and dust with cinnamon. Roll it up, slice into bite sizes and bake until bubbly and the crust is done. Be sure to let them cool before eating so you don't burn your mouth!

As I write this, I look down at my hands. Grandma Ruby's wedding ring from dear Grandpa Mac is on my finger; I've worn it since she passed in 1983.

So many sweet memories. So much to be thankful for.

Loré Snell has fresh pies cooling in Trinidad.

The original lovebirds.

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PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

Not Decay — Patina

Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, but beautiful old people are works of art.

—Eleanor Roosevelt

Scanning my living room, I see four family heirlooms. All bear scars of . . . if not decay, let's say patina. There's one heirloom from each beautiful grandparent.

1. Thanks to my father's father, George, a 7-foot oak coat tree stands inside the door. When I was half its size, I'd stand on tiptoe to admire overcoats of many colors hanging like fruit from the towering tree.

After my grandfather died, the coat tree was sent from Virginia to me in the West. The graceful antique is unscathed, except for discolored feet from a mudslide (long story).

2. In a corner stands a low, octagonal, tiger-maple dining table, built by Grandmother Cornelia's grandfather, John Needles, a Baltimore cabinetmaker. He designed it in the 1800s for his own family.

It was once known as "the children's table" at our Thanksgiving meals. Even when we children were in our late teens, we were relegated to this table in the kitchen. It separated us from the grownups' mahogany table in the dining room.

Now I love the way the table retains our childhood scrapes, scuffs, and . . . is that old gravy?

3. Thanks to my mother's father, Jacob, a small, pine horse statue stands on my bookshelf. Decades ago, my grandfather displayed

his antique horse statue collection on a low table, at grandchildren's-eye-view. One hoof is now patched with wood dough. The rest, to me, is equine perfection.

It's clear the woodcarver knew horses. It's not a simple carving, one side a mirror image of the other. This horse has turned to look at the observer with casual interest, as if noting an apple offered over a fence.

4. And from my mother's mother, Faye, I've kept one felt-backed coaster from the 1940s, topped with a water-color print of a songbird. It perches on my end table. The coaster collects water rings, but I'm loath to throw it out.

All of these heirlooms, no matter how many stains and scrapes they've endured, have developed what is known in Japan as *wabi sabi*. The term has a lovely, curious meaning: the older and scruffier something becomes, the more beautiful it is.

Suggestion: If someone sneers at one of your family heirlooms, or even scoffs at you, and mentions aging or decay, correct them: "Not decay: patina." —

Margaret Kellermann gives art lessons for all ages in Ferndale's venerable venue, *The Old Steeple*. Visit ferndalemusiccompany.com/lessons.

"...the older and scruffier something becomes, the more beautiful it is."

STORYTELLING . . . From Page 1

reflexive in two ways: The storyteller may come to know her/himself better through the act of telling the story; and we may come to know ourselves better through the hearing or participating in a story told by others.

The telling of stories is one of the most persistent ways people make sense of themselves. Stories are a way for people to reveal themselves to themselves. By telling ourselves stories, we give expression to actual and desired truths about who we are. And in sharing and telling stories, we contribute to the evolution of who we are, who we want to be, and, maybe, who we should have been.

Stories are mirrors we hold up to ourselves. Like mirrors, stories may distort, lie, or mislead us with the meanings they reflect. Many of the theater's greatest stories tell of women valued only by their emotional, intellectual or financial proximity to men. Millions flocked to hear stories in which a female character's status was defined by that of the significant man in her life — a husband, a father or a brother.

Maybe there are some stories we should stop telling.

The finding and telling of the significant stories of our lives has been

an important part of talk therapy since the early 20th century. We now know that the act of sharing stories has a positive impact on mental, psychological and emotional well-being.

Research has clearly demonstrated that engaging in storytelling leads to "higher mental stimulation, improved memory, deeper social connections and activeness in older adults." Those same older adults also report "higher levels of life satisfaction and greater overall satisfaction with the care they receive."

The act of storytelling and selecting which stories we decide to tell may very well be an extremely important aspect of successful aging. The emotional benefits for the aging storyteller are clearly evident.

Let us also consider, however, that through storytelling and the active engagement with stories and those who tell them, we elders have the capacity to change the stories our culture tells about us, its elders.

Wouldn't that be great?

—
John Heckel, Ph.D., 72, of Eureka participated in storytelling as a theater and film professor at Humboldt State University.

'Against the Wind' Expands

The Against the Wind Festival, created to focus on nuclear arms and to fund the anti-nuke vessel, the Golden Rule, is expanding this year.

Running Monday Nov. 11, through Sunday, Nov. 17, at the Arcata Playhouse (1251 9th St.), the festival offers seven free and ticketed events addressing nuclear weaponry, war and peace, climate change and the environment. All events begin at 7 p.m.

The programs include a free panel "Honoring Veterans and the Human

Cost of War" on Monday, Nov. 11, a "Nuclear Jeopardy" game show on Thursday, Nov. 14, and the Practicing Peace Award to Edie and Bryan Jessup on Sunday, Nov. 17.

Proceeds from the week-long festival benefit the operation of the 34-foot, Humboldt Bay-based 1956 anti-nuclear sailboat Golden Rule, which sails to ports with education programs on nuclear proliferation.

For tickets and more information, go to againstthewindfestival.org.

Keep Writing and Reading the Stories of Your Life

By Janet Patterson

My mother, Lois Churchman Patterson, was born on Jan. 26, 1919, and died on Jan. 3, 2019.

For the last two years of her life, she was fading. She was “sleeping” most of the time at the very end, with fewer and fewer moments of what we younger folks would call lucidity and conscious presence.

But she often surprised us. From the time she was about 80, she wrote. An English major at UC Berkeley, from which she graduated in 1941, she was always a good writer, but small classes later helped her hone the skills.

She wrote about her family and her ancestors; she wrote about growing up in Sonoma County. She wrote stories about all of us, her four children,

and her memories of our childhoods. Lastly, she put together a compilation of her and my father’s letters to each other, written daily (and saved) while they were apart during the year before they were married in 1941.

She wrote well into her 90s, and self-published five

short books. Mom always used to say that she was writing for her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren; she was not writing for herself, or for any wider audience.

My older sister and I would roll our eyes and comment to each other about how Mom never did anything

for herself. She was raised female before feminism took hold, and to do anything for herself would be selfish, after all.

But she did surprise us. Because her vision was severely limited at the

end of her life due to macular degeneration, one of us kids

would often read to her from one of her books. Near her death, a favorite grandson was reading one of them aloud to her while she appeared to be sleeping. When he stopped reading, and was thinking of leaving, she uttered the command, “Keep reading!” and so he did.

Often I thought that, like me, she had a strongly visual imagination. Just reading aloud to her conjured up vivid images about playing in the creek or climbing trees as a child in Sonoma County. Eyes closed, she would listen as we read, over and over again, the stories of her childhood that she had written down for herself to hear as her life drew to a close.

So, write the stories of your life. You never know for whom.

—
Janet Patterson of Eureka is a former Spanish Immersion teacher with a Ph.D. in psychology who likes the old stories more and more.

“...reading aloud to her conjured up vivid images...”

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AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

Can You Imagine?

I would like to tell you a story. Once upon a time there was a magical land, a land in which rivers, mountains and ocean could and did meet. Animals of all kinds were drawn to this magical place. The Salmon swam its rivers, the Bear searched out apples and blackberries, and the Osprey fished the oceans.

Human beings were also drawn to live on this land. Humans of all shapes, sizes, and ages found refuge among its healing forests. Humans came from far and wide to drink in the land's revitalizing energy and wisdom.

Older human beings were especially drawn to this land, for here among towering redwoods, lush fern-covered canyons and pristine lagoons, Elderhood was practiced.

They came because here, alongside nature at its most pristine, the thought of disrespecting the elderly was obscene. Here in this magical land, with nature's lessons all encompassing, elders were honored and nourished.

Here, old age was not a disease to be treated, dreaded or disparaged. It was not a condition to be fixed, snipped, or tucked.

This was a land on which generations found healing through their differences.

This was an intergenerational land. Young and old learned from one another, shared stories with

one another. Elders respected the energy and the "I can do anything" approach to life of the young. The young held in deep reverence the life experience and wisdom of their elders, many of whom had survived a much more chaotic time and place.

These human beings belonged to each other. They talked and walked with each other. They saw and experienced in each other who they

had been and who they were yet to become. This land had taught them that what they saw in

each other was what it meant to be human.

They honored each other.

All the while, Salmon, Bear and Osprey were deeply respectful of the lessons being learned all around them, and decided to spread the word of this magic to other lands.

Salmon swam up many rivers. Bear climbed over many mountains, and Osprey flew miles and miles. And so it came to pass that the magic of this land of rivers, mountains and ocean spread far and wide, changing forever the course of our story.

Remember: "If you can imagine it, you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it."

— William Arthur Ward (1921-1994).

John Heckel, Ph.D., 72, of Eureka is a storyteller and retired HSU theater and film professor with a doctorate in psychology.

"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it."

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—Groucho Marx (1890-1977), comedian

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HSRC News 707 443-9747 • www.humsenior.org

Inside Adult Day Health

It's a dedicated and caring staff that works with the dozens of participants in the Adult Day Health Program (ADH) at Humboldt Senior Resource Center.

Some 70 Humboldt residents, ages 18 to 80, from the Eel River Valley to McKinleyville come to the ADH facility between one and five days a week to participate in therapy, activities and exercise, to work with health professionals and social workers, and interact with each other in games and meals, and talk.

It's not just the participants who get a lot out of the program. The work is fulfilling, staff say.

"I am able to see these participants make huge improvements in their lives," said Alicia Rusyn, assistant activities coordinator. "They get happier, get healthier."

Penny Lindsey, who works in the therapy department, agreed. "One of the greatest joys I have is that I help people feel less pain, and help them have a better quality of life," she said.

Kevin Emmanuel is an RN. "After

you work at Adult Day Health for a while, one of the things you notice is that it really is almost a family atmosphere," he said. "People make strong connections here, they make strong relationships here, and people just depend on each other here."

CarePartner Kate Boyes likes "being able to see how someone can flourish here." And Tea Wiegant says the work connects her with people she wouldn't otherwise have met. "I like finding new ways for them to enjoy their lives," she said.

Social worker Jackie LaBonte agreed. "You can see some people literally blossom from our program and that is very, very inspiring to me, to see what a difference we make in people's lives."

For staff and participants alike, said Michelle Rocha, "Some days, you don't know what you're going to get, but it's always a fun time."

For information on Adult Day Health and other HSRC programs, call 707-443-9747.

—Robbie Annis



Kevin Emmanuel

Good Neighbors in Eureka

When Eureka Mayor Susan Seaman declared Good Neighbor Week in September, members of the Humboldt Senior Resource Center stepped up to reach out to the neighborhood around the 1910 California St. campus.

"We are grateful to be part of this neighborhood, and we know our senior center has an impact on our neighbors," said Barbara Walser, director of Nutrition and Activities.

The HSRC kitchen staff baked 500 chocolate chip cookies, and other staff members delivered them door to door to neighborhood residents, and to staff and children at the Head Start center next door.

"We wanted to bring them a token of our appreciation," Walser said.

One street over, on Pine, HSRC staff who park there noticed graffiti on a backyard fence, so facilities supervisor Dave Gaddis volunteered to repaint it.



GOOD DEED, INDEED — HSRC facilities supervisor Dave Gaddis paints out graffiti that marred a neighbor's fence. Tasha Romo photo.

"It's a little thing," Gaddis said.

But Seaman, who became mayor in January, thinks little things add up to build a stronger Eureka.

"The desire to have close neighborhoods is there," Seaman said. "The steps to build that community are less clear to people."

"We need to find new ways to get to know our neighbors," she said — one fence or chocolate chip cookie at a time.

November Celebrations

Join your friends at Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) to celebrate November's special holidays.

• **Veterans Day:** On Friday, Nov. 8, the Eureka Dining Site honors veterans with the help of the Mad River Community Veterans Honor Guard, which will conduct a flag-folding ceremony at 11 a.m. Bob Ebenstein will provide music through lunch.

• **Thanksgiving Feast:** HSRC's three dining sites celebrate Turkey Day on Wednesday, Nov. 20. See the full menu on pages 12-13.

To make reservations for either of these events, or any regular meals, contact the dining center in your area. In Arcata: call Vanessa at 707-825-2027; in Eureka: call Cathy at 707-443-9747; in Fortuna, call Launa at 707-725-6245.

Lunch service begins at 11:30 a.m. at the Eureka dining center and at noon in Fortuna and Arcata.

For more information, contact Tasha Romo, Nutrition and Activities program manager, at 707-443-9747, x1228.

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Humboldt Senior Resource Center in Eureka

An **HSRC Senior Dining Center**

1910 California Street

Call Tasha at 443-9747 x1228

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

HSRC will be closed Monday, Nov. 11, Thursday & Friday, Nov. 28 & 29

Every Weekday

9:00-1:00 Library
9:00-3:00 Senior Service Office
11:30-12:15 Lunch (See menu below)
12:00-3:00 Billiards

Mondays

9:30-10:30 Karate with Jerry Bunch
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
Nov. 11 **CLOSED** Veterans Day Holiday

Tuesdays

10:00-11:00 Harry's Bingo (*not Nov. 5*)
12:15-2:15 Pinochle
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/Beth & Lois
3:30-4:30 Tai Chi for Balance & Arthritis Practice Group

Nov. 5 10:30-11:30 Dine & Dance w/Ray, Dave & Lois
Nov. 19 11:30-2:00 Foster Grandparents Program
Nov. 19 6:00-9:00 Stamp Club

Wednesdays

10:00-11:00 Bunco
1:15-2:00 S.A.I.L. w/Muriel
1:30-3:30 Intermediate Line Dancing
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/Beth & Lois

Nov. 6 & 20 1:00-2:00 Caregiver Support Group
Adult Day Health & Alzheimer's Services Library, 2nd floor, Bldg. B
1901 California St., Eureka

Nov. 13 11:00-11:30 LeAnne Morini performs
Nov. 13 11:30-12:15 Emblem Club serves lunch
Nov. 20 10:00-11:30 Commodities distribution
Nov. 20 11:00-12:00 Mason Matteoli performs
Nov. 20 11:30-12:15 Thanksgiving Celebration Lunch

Thursdays

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

Nov. 7 & 21 10:00-12:00 Genealogy Group
Nov. 28 **CLOSED** For Thanksgiving Holiday

Fridays

9:00-10:00 Falun Dafa
10:00-11:00 Beginning Tai Chi Movements
11:00-12:00 Beginning Yoga
1:00-4:00 Bridge Games
Nov. 8 11:00 Mad River Community Honor Guard Flag-Folding Ceremony
Nov. 8 11:00 Bob Ebenstein performs
Nov. 8 11:30-12:15 Veterans' Day Celebration Lunch
Nov. 15 10:30-11:30 John Nelson & Mark Bennet perform
Nov. 22 10:30-11:30 Accordionaires perform
Nov. 22 11:30-12:15 Birthday Celebration
Nov. 29 **CLOSED** For Thanksgiving Holiday

Saturdays

Nov. 2 5:00 Sassy Seniors meet at Humboldt Hill Grange
5845 Humboldt Hill Road
Eureka
Nov. 16 Noon Nooners meet at Sammy's BBQ
1709 5th Street, Eureka

November 2019

SENIOR DINING CENTER

FIRST WEEK

Nov. 1 **Braised Pork Stew**

SECOND WEEK

Nov. 4 **Eureka only: Shepherd's Pie**

Nov. 5 **Chicken Cacciatore**

Nov. 6 **Clam Chowder**

Nov. 7 **Black Bean & Chicken Casserole**

Nov. 8 **Beef Burgundy**

THIRD WEEK

Nov. 11 **All sites closed for Veterans Day**

Nov. 12 **Stuffed Cabbage, Peas & Red Peppers**

Nov. 13 **Meat Loaf & Mashed Potatoes**

Nov. 14 **Chicken & Dumpling**

Nov. 15 **Tomato Basil Baked Fish**

People 60+ are invited: \$3.50 sug

*NO SENIOR 60 OR OLDER WILL BE DENIED A MEAL
IF UNABLE TO DONATE.*

Call for Reservations.....

Arcata • 825-2027 Eureka

CENTER ACTIVITIES

Fortuna Senior Dining Center
An HSRC Senior Dining Center
Mountain View Village, 2130 Smith Lane
Call Launa at 725-6245

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

Closed Thursday & Friday, Nov. 28 & 29

Tuesdays	12:00	Lunch
Wednesdays	12:00	Lunch
Nov. 6	10:30	Music with Bill, Corena & John
	5:00-8:00 pm	Bingo
Nov. 20	12:00	Thanksgiving Lunch
Thursdays	12:00	Lunch
Nov. 14 & 21		Caregiver Support Group
	12:00-2:00	United Methodist Church Fireplace Room 922 N Street <i>For info call 443-9747</i>
Nov. 28	CLOSED	For Thanksgiving Holiday
Fridays	12:00	Lunch
Nov. 22	12:00	Birthday Celebration
Nov. 29	CLOSED	For Thanksgiving Holiday

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.

Closed Thursday & Friday, Nov. 28 & 29

Mondays	Nov. 25	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 (<i>prior registration required</i>)
		11:00	Bread distribution
		11:30-12:15	Lunch (See menu at left)
		12:30-2:00	Bead Jewelry Class
	Nov. 5	10:00-11:00	Blood Pressure Check
	Nov. 5 & 19	10:00-11:00	Caregiver Support Group Mad River Community Hosp. Minkler Education Room 3800 Janes Road, Arcata <i>For info call 443-9747</i>
	Nov. 26	2:00	Arcata Marsh Slow Walk
Wednesdays		11:00	Bread distribution
		11:15-12:15	Tai Chi with Kathy (advanced)
		11:30-12:15	Lunch (See menu at left)
		12:30 - 1:30	Tai Chi with Kathy (beginning)
	Nov. 13	10:00-11:00	Site Council
	Nov. 20	12:00-1:00	Thanksgiving Luncheon
	Nov. 27	10:30-11:15	The Old Gold Band
Thursdays		9:00-10:00	Tai Chi w/Tim
		9:00-11:00	Katie's Krafters
		10:00-10:50	Senior Swim hour-HealthSport \$5 fee (<i>prior registration required</i>)
		11:30-12:15	Lunch (See menu at left)
	Nov. 7	10:30-11:30	PJ's Musical Group
	Nov. 21	10:15-11:15	Swing 'n' Sway Trio
	Nov. 21	10:30-11:00	Commodities Distribution
	Nov. 28	CLOSED	For Thanksgiving Holiday
Fridays		10:00-11:30	Ping Pong with Pete
		11:30-12:15	Lunch (See menu at left)
	Nov. 8 & 22	10:30-11:30	John Humphrey on the Piano
	Nov. 15	10:15-11:15	Music with the Half Notes
	Nov. 29	CLOSED	For Thanksgiving Holiday



 **Humboldt Senior Resource Center**
 Nutrition & Activities Program

MENU

FOURTH WEEK

- Nov. 18 *Eureka only:*
Chicken w/Fire-Roasted Tomato
- Nov. 19 **English Muffin Breakfast Sandwich**
- Nov. 20 **Roast Turkey & Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Stuffing, Yams, Cranberry Sauce, Broccoli Salad, Green Beans, Whole Wheat Roll & Pumpkin Pie. *Holiday Meal***
- Nov. 21 **Taco Salad**
- Nov. 22 **Spinach Lasagna *Birthday Cake***

FIFTH WEEK

- Nov. 25 *Eureka only:* **Chicken Noodle Casserole**
- Nov. 26 **Broccoli Cheese Soup & Turkey Sand.**
- Nov. 27 **BBQ Pork Rib**
- Nov. 28 **All sites closed**
- Nov. 29 **All sites closed**

Suggested donation. \$6.00 for those under 60.

LOW-FAT OR NONFAT MILK SERVED WITH EACH MEAL

A vegetarian alternative is available by reservation daily.

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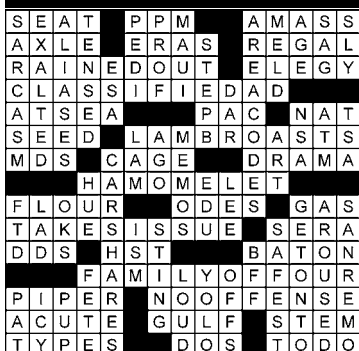
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Crossword Puzzle on page 22



NOVEMBER 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)
10:00-11:30 Writing Workshop
10:30 HighSteppers at Knox Cove
11:00-12:00 Yoga - (Bring mat & blanket)
1:00-4:00 Party Bridge

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)
10:00-12:00 Needlework
10:00-11:00 Line Dancing
11:00-12:00 Yoga - (Bring mat & blanket)
10:30 HighSteppers at Knox Cove
1:00-4:00 Pinochle
Nov. 20 3:00-5:00 Caregiver Support Group
Timber Ridge at McKinleyville
Private Dining Room,
1400 Nursery Way.
For info call 443-9747

Thursdays

Nov. 28 CLOSED Thanksgiving Day
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
11:00-11:30 \$3 Mini-Lunch

Fridays

Nov. 29 CLOSED
10:00-11:30 Support Group
10:30 Walking Group at Knox Cove
1:00-4:00 Pinochle
Saturday 2:00-4:00 Art of Origami - 4 sessions

Rio Dell

Every Mon, Wed & Fri

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

“Life is the past, the present and the perhaps.”

—Bette Davis, (1908-1989), actress.

Fortuna Senior Center

MGC is at 2280 Newburg Road
fortunasenior.org
admin@fortunasenior.org • 726-9203
Mon-Fri 10:00-12:00 & by appointment

Mondays

River Walk 8:30 Walking
MGC 9:00 Tai Chi
11:00 Line Dancing
Nov. 4 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 Stitches
2:00 Seated Tai Chi
3:00 Recorder Group

Wednesdays

River Walk 8:30 Walking
Nov. 6 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 (donation suggested)
1:00 MahJong
2:00 Seated Tai Chi

United Methodist Church

Nov. 14 & 21
12:00-2:00 Caregiver Support Group
Fireplace Room
922 N Street, Fortuna
For info call 443-9747

Fridays

MGC 9:30 Cards & Games
2:00 Scrabble Group
United Methodist Church
Nov. 22 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

MGC
Nov. 16 11:00-12:00 Speaker

Sunday

MGC
Nov. 17 4:00 Bingo
Fortuna-The Monday Club
Nov. 24 2:00-4:00 Open Mic

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Remembering the Creativity of a High-Flying Grandfather

By Peter Jermyn

My grandfather is a hero to me for one simple reason. It's not because the son of a Philadelphia bricklayer worked his way through college to become an architect. And it's not because while serving in World War I he flew one of the first planes over the Alps from Italy to Germany.

His real heroics came with the advent of the Great Depression in the 1930s. By then my grandfather, George Lewis, was a father, had the beginnings of a career, and was building his family a place in a small town of Waverly in the coal country of northeastern Pennsylvania. Imagine the courage it took to uproot his family and relocate to the remote Balearic island of Mallorca, off the Spanish coast.

This time in my family's life established a precedent, and gave each one of his children a stronger sense of resilience no matter what challenges came. It was a magical time when they had few resources except imagination.

He took them walking, and spent hours drawing with them. He was the audience for their home-grown theatrical productions. It was an unconventional Depression-era solution to a lack of work in a young man's life.

When the family returned to Pennsylvania, they joined their neighbors in Waverly in dealing with the economic downturn. But they did it with a sense



MY HERO — George Lewis flew one of the first airplanes over the Alps during World War I, but that's not what makes him a hero to his grandson. Photo courtesy of Peter Jermyn.

that they had other options.

This one act of creativity generated so many differences in the family: among the six kids were a fine artist, a realtor, a minister and another architect. All took to traveling when they were teens; they saw themselves as able to manifest their dreams. And they had a cohesion that survived most of the 20th century.

I wasn't around for this episode in my family's life, but I did spend a good bit of time with my grandfather in the last two decades of his life. The person who took that courageous step as a young man was still very much part of the mature man.

He and a friend who went to war together helped each other manage the challenges of living alone with disabilities. One suffered from Parkinson's disease; the other had poor vision from cataracts. But between them they could still drive to the village grocery.

The strength of character, the courage to challenge convention, and the pure "spunk" to take chances have been the guiding principles that have kept this hero in my life.

Peter Jermyn, 71, of Bayside continues his grandfather's example of creative thinking as an independent small businessman.

Senior Input Wanted for New A1AA Area Plan

Every four years, Area 1 Agency on Aging (A1AA) develops a new plan for its services funded by the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) and state matching funds. Citizen input is important.

The plan provides an overview of the region's demographics, services available for seniors, the challenges and opportunities related to serving seniors and their families on the North Coast, and how A1AA intends

to address these challenges.

Input from citizens in Humboldt and Del Norte counties help in advocacy efforts with other community organizations, and in grant writing to develop new services.

Services funded through the OAA are targeted to people 60 and older, including lunch sites, home-delivered meals, legal services, services for family caregivers, long-term care ombudsman, elder abuse prevention

and exercise programs. Additional required access services include information and assistance programs, limited in-home assistance, and volunteer driver transportation programs.

The Area Plan outlines how funding will be used to help older adults remain independent as they age, and to target services to the most frail, rural and low-income seniors.

Please make your voice heard by

completing the four-page survey, available at senior centers, libraries, Family Resource Centers and at the A1AA office, 434 7th Street, Eureka, CA 95501. The survey is online at [surveymonkey.com/r/a1aasurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/a1aasurvey) and at a1aa.org.

Please complete and return the survey by Nov. 30. For more information, email Maren Rose at mrose@a1aa.org or call 707-442-3763.



LIVE VIGOROUSLY

BY JOAN RAINWATER-GISH

Nonagenarian Neighbors

I'm happy to be living in a neighborhood with several nonagenarians (people between 90 and 99 years old). I'm hoping it's something in the air that accounts for their longevity, and that I might benefit by living among them.

My next-door neighbor Marj, 92, is the youngest and probably the most active of the group. She still cooks, does her own household chores, drives her car, plays bridge several times a week, and enjoys eating out.

Since she became a widow, I think she is very aware of the importance of getting out and socializing. Besides her circle of friends, Marj's family provides a great support system through their regular visits and annual holiday gatherings.

The family has expanded to 23 (children and grandchildren and their spouses, and great-grandchildren) — all coming to Grandma's house for Thanksgiving.

Across the street lives Maryn, who is 94. She is out walking her dog, Artie, every day. Together, they enjoy connecting with neighbors while getting in their daily exercise.

Artie is a rescue dog that Maryn adopted after her "significant other" passed away. Given the joy and companionship Artie provides her, I'm not sure who rescued whom.

Down the street is Arlene, 98. She is always stylishly dressed, with makeup and jewelry on.

One day, I asked where she was going, and she replied, "Nowhere. But, I always get up and get dressed

as if I'm going or someone is coming. Years ago, I promised myself I would do so and every day when I do, it makes me feel good.

"Another feel-good thing is volunteering, which I started doing in 1990," she said.

Which reminds me of Shirley, who is 96 and lives in an assisted-care care facility and is now confined to a wheelchair.

I asked her if she ever gets depressed about having to move out of her home.

"No," she said, "I don't feel sorry for myself. Instead, every morning I wake up, put on my lipstick and mascara and I roll out to meet the new day."

Shirley has the distinction of being one of the first women aboard the Honors Flight, which transports veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit memorial sites. She also received the Humboldt Hero Award for her service during World War II.

All these nonagenarian neighbors are great role models for aging. I'm hoping to learn from them so when I get to be their age, I know how to enjoy life and keep living as vigorously as I can.

Joan Rainwater-Gish, 77, of Eureka, as a personal trainer and senior group fitness instructor, is a pretty good role model herself for vigorous living and healthy aging. Contact: jrainwatergish@gmail.com.

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'CRAZY UNCLE ED' AND POOR WILMA . . . from Page 1

Russian Prince Romanoff (or she may actually have had an affair with him).

But she alleged later that she was set up by Norman, who hired the fake Russian to woo Wilma. He wanted her disgraced publicly, including in the newspapers, to establish grounds for a divorce so that he could get controlling rights of Uncle Ed's stock in Goulds Pumps.

It is said that Norman arranged for the newspaper photographers who burst into the suite at the Savoy-Plaza Hotel where Wilma and the "Prince" were dallying. She was scantily clad! Indeed, the story and photos hit the news and became one of the scandals of the day, ending in salacious court trials.

In court, Wilma claimed that the "Prince" drugged her and took her to his suite to create a compromising situation for the benefit of Uncle Ed, who was paying her \$450 a month in separation maintenance.

Norman had Ed institutionalized after the raid in 1931, and before Wilma's lawsuit in 1935. Wilma sued Norman for conspiracy, saying in court not only that she'd been framed, but, "I have never kissed any man other than my husband in my life." The divorce never was obtained.

I personally am grateful to Aunt Wilma, who indicated in her will that, upon her death, her china dishes and silverware (including pickle forks) should be bequeathed to the last surviving male Gould. That would be me.

Wilma died in 1986, shortly before



BABY BROTHERS — Uncle Ed, left, and his brother Seabury Smith Gould III. Photo courtesy of Seabury S. Gould V.

Halloween. I had changed the recording on my answering machine for the holiday, saying in a Count Dracula voice, "Please leave a message for SEA-bur-eee! BWAAHAHAHA!" with wolves howling in the background.

When Wilma's New York City attorney called to inform me of her demise and bequest, I can only imagine what he thought of her heir when he heard my crazy Dracula voice. He may have wondered if I took after my Uncle Ed.

—
Seabury Smith Gould V, 65, of Arcata, is a well-known Humboldt storyteller and musician.

"I hate television. I hate it as much as peanuts. But I can't stop eating peanuts."

—**Orson Welles (1915-1985), actor, director and filmmaker.**

Parkinson's Support Group

The Parkinson's Support Group meets the second Friday of each month to share information or listen to guest speakers: Immanuel Lutheran Church, 3230 Harrison Ave., Eureka, 3-4 p.m.

Parkinson's patients, families, caregivers and others are invited. Call Rose at 707-826-7764 for information.

For more about new treatment options in Humboldt County, see "Fighting Back Against Parkinson's" in the September "Health of Humboldt Part 2" issue of Senior News, available online under the "News" tab on the Senior News page of humsenior.org. Or call 443-9747 to get a free copy.

Weird Pets in History

Some people are obsessive about their pets, but that's not a modern phenomenon.

From ancient times through today, people have doted on everything from the usual dogs and cats to monkeys, eels and lobsters as pets.

Sixteenth century Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) had an extraordinary mustache and an alcoholic pet moose. Film star Audrey

Hepburn kept the baby deer, Pippin, from her 1959 role in "Green Mansions," and for 18 years, a 300-pound pot-bellied pig, Max, lived with George Clooney.

President Teddy Roosevelt had a zoo of more than 20 animals, and then there was the alligator that the Marquis de Lafayette gave John Quincy Adams in 1826. It's past time to drain the swamp.

—*Ted Pease*

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Wow! 74 Years of Holidays

By Gail Slaughter

I have celebrated 74 Christmases. That realization amazes me far more than saying, “I am 74 years old.”

Age is just a number by now, and I don’t even pause at that word “old.”

But 74 Christmases — wow! And I can remember something special from most of those many Christmases.

Receiving that red-haired Ginny doll I wanted. Writing “A Dog’s Christmas Story” and reading it to my 5th grade class. Being terrified by a department store Santa.

Of course, I’ve also celebrated as many Halloweens and Thanksgivings, Valentine’s Days, and all the other holidays.

Everybody has stored up a lifetime of special holiday memories. That’s why the Humboldt Light Opera

Company’s Boomer Troupe is devoting this year’s show to “Festivals, Feasts and Fun.”

I’ve been part of the Boomer Troupe since it began in 2015. Our performances blend music with personal stories from the cast members — all of us over 60. Again this year we share our own traditions and experiences, and sing a lot of fun songs, new and familiar.

There will be three performances at the Eureka Women’s Club, 1531 J St., Eureka: Saturday, Nov. 16, at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Nov. 17, at 2 p.m. See OLLI advertisement below for ticket information.

—
Gail Slaughter, a real Trouper,
lives in McKinleyville.

Granddad & a Dog Named Nick

By Patti Stammer

My granddad was from Texas. He had five brothers, and they all looked alike — tall, slim and either smiling or growling.

A photo taken in the early the ’50s in San Francisco at Finocchio’s shows my parents, grandparents, two of Granddad’s brothers and me.

I tried to pick Granddad out among the brothers. Then I located his distinguishing feature: he had only a thumb and two fingers — ring and pinkie — on his right hand.

He told me his brother had whacked them off, just like that. Years later, I finally got “the rest of the story.” He and Uncle Cecil were chopping kindling for the stove, Cecil missed the log he was holding, and did, indeed, whack off two fingers.

Granddad had sparse thinning hair, a sallow complexion and, being Texan, he always wore a Western style hat. He had his everyday hat — wide brimmed, soft gray and slightly beat up. On special occasions he wore his “go-to-town Stetson,” always kept in a big hat box.

A dog named Nick was his constant companion. Nick was a black and

white Boston terrier, sweet and cute, in spite of his mean-looking little face.

I spent many summer vacations visiting my grandparents in the hot, dusty little town of San Miguel, California. Every summer Nick would run out to greet me, nipping at my knees with slobbery kisses.

One summer, I noticed Nick didn’t have a spot where one should have been.

“New Nick,” replied Granddad, when I asked.

I guess I hadn’t become a keen observer until that seventh summer, because Grandma told me later that this was the third Nick.

In all, there were six little dogs named Nick. When the last Nick died, my grandfather soon followed.

Those years with my grandparents were filled with laughter, wisdom and unconditional love. I hope I’m a better grandma because of them.

—
Patti Stammer, 75, of
McKinleyville is a writer, artist,
movie location scout and grandma.

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FAMILY PORTRAIT — The author (in curls at left) in the 1950s with her parents and grandparents, including her three-fingered Granddad (fourth from left). Photo courtesy of Patti Stammer.

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November

Community Calendar

Harvest Concert

The Arcata Interfaith Gospel Choir will perform its annual Harvest Concert, "Celebrating Black Cultural Awareness," at the Arcata Presbyterian Church on Saturday, Nov. 2, at 7 p.m. Call 707-633-8781 for information. Tickets available at Wildberies, the Works and online at AIGC-Fall2019.brownpapertickets.com.

MGMA Events

The Morris Graves Museum of Art, 636 F St., Eureka, will offer several events during November. A free evening of art, music and wine takes place during Arts Alive, Saturday, Nov. 2, 6-9 p.m., with the Anna Hamilton Quartet. On Sunday, Nov. 3, at 2 p.m., local author Karen Angel will read from and talk about her book, "Angel's Flight." Free for members, children under 17, and CalFresh cardholders; adults \$5, seniors/students/military \$2. Information: 707-442-0278 or humboldtarts.org.

Chamber Players

The first concert of the season for Chamber Players of the Redwoods is Sunday, Nov. 3, at 2 p.m. at Christ Episcopal Church, Eureka. Free with a suggested donation. Featured works will be Hindemith's Sonata for viola and Mozart's clarinet quintet.

Historical Ethnic Eateries

Historian Gerry Hale will talk about six of Humboldt's great ethnic restaurants of the 1930s-1950s at the Redwood Genealogical Society meeting: Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 11:30 a.m. at the Sushi Boat Restaurant, in Fortuna. Optional lunch is \$9. For information, call 707-445-4342.

KEET's 'Retro Report'

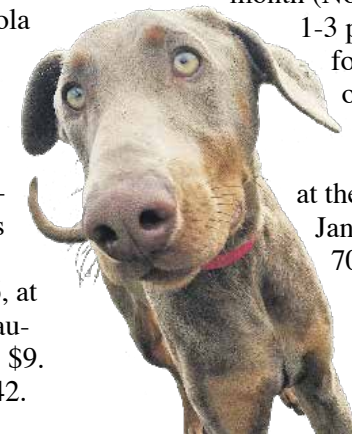
KEET-TV will host a free screening and discussion of two short documentaries, one on Duluwat (aka Indian) Island, and the other on immigration in Humboldt County, on Monday, Nov. 4, from 7-9 p.m. at Jefferson Community Center, 1000 B St., Eureka. After the films, filmmakers James Faulk, Sam Greene and others will discuss the project and issues. RSVP at KEET.org or call 707-445-0813.

Furnace Fundraiser

The St. Francis Church in Fortuna will hold a holiday pre-theater fundraising party at Lost Coast Imports, 406 Main St., Ferndale, on Friday, Nov. 29, 6-7:30 p.m., followed by a performance of "Matilda" by the Ferndale Repertory Theater. Tickets for the party and performance are available at Stitch in Ferndale, and Green's Pharmacy and Horizon Business in Fortuna. Call 707-407-5909 for information.

Read to a Dog

Kids can work on their reading skills and give a hound dog a thrill when Claudia brings her certified therapy dog, Katie, to the Trinidad Library on the fourth Saturday of the month (Nov. 23), from 1-3 p.m. Sign up for a 20-minute one-on-one reading session with Katie at the library, 380 Janis Court, or call 707-677-0227.



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Why I Never Had to Run Away and Join the Circus

By John Meyers

My mother was a freak in the sideshow of a circus. No kidding.

My mother, Thelma, was born into a circus family in 1917. Her father, Ed “Cap” Mundy, was a “lecturer” or “talker,” what we now call a “barker.” Her mother, Emily, was known as Princess Zola, a fortuneteller who even appeared with Houdini at one point in her career.

Cap performed as a magician, sword-swallower, rode in a motodome (a metal sphere in which daredevils rode motorcycles upside-down) and was known for his organization of a group of well-known sideshow veterans referred to at the time as “freaks.”

When not telling fortunes, my grandmother was one of the first circus women to ride full 360-degree loops on a motorcycle in the motodome. They toured with small circuses called “mudders” (because their wagons were often bogged down in mud), mostly throughout the South

When my mother, Thelma, and her sister were very young, they were often ensconced in the snake pit to keep them occupied while the circus was being set up. This led to Thelma having her own snake act by the time she was 12, even earning her own banner in front of the sideshow.

Another one of Thelma’s jobs was performing as Spidora the Spider Woman. Cap made a rope



SPIDORA THE SPIDER WOMAN — The author’s mother, Thelma, performing in the circus sideshow as a teenager. Photo Courtesy of John Meyers.

web and Emily sewed together a cloth spider body approximately 3 feet across. Then Thelma would sit in a chair in a darkened tent, using mirrors that made it appear that her head was attached to the spider body.

For your hard-earned nickel or dime, you could come in and actually talk to this amazing young girl who was born with the body of a spider. Step right up!

By the late 1930s, the family reached California and discovered the movie business. Cap had a

long career in numerous movies, often with small speaking roles.

Thelma became a movie “extra,” a favorite of directors because of her excellent screaming voice. She appeared in movies such as “Young America” (1942) with Jane Withers for whom she became a stand-in and close friend, “North Star” (1943), and “Wilson” (1944).

Hollywood was where Thelma met her husband (later my father) Milton, a stunt man who worked in movies including “Gunga Din” (1939) with Cary Grant, Victor McLaglen and Douglas Fairbanks Jr., “Stagecoach” (1939) with John Wayne, and “Sergeant York” (1941) with Gary Cooper.

Circus life was difficult for young Thelma, and the movie business held no real allure for her, so she and Milton moved to Greenville, California, partly so that my brother and I wouldn’t be tempted by show business. So you can imagine her consternation when, in 1980, my wife Sheryl and I quit our jobs to travel fulltime as a two-person melodrama and variety show.

What can I say? Performing is in my blood. I blame my mother.

—
John Meyers, 70, is retired from show business (and work in general) and lives a fairly normal life in Trinidad.

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When in Doubt . . . Do

By Barry Evans

A cold shower may not be everyone's idea of "therapy," but in my case, finishing every hot shower by switching faucets — hot off, cold on — is my way of acknowledging my dad, now long gone, but still a huge influence on my life.

As the shock of the cold water hits, I always say (bless his soul), "This is for you, dad!"

My dad wasn't always one to play it safe. In his 20s, he was a regular repertory player. Judging from some old cast photos I still have, he wasn't above cross-dressing and donning outrageous costumes.

In his 30, married to my mum, he brought her and my elder sister (then a baby) from the comparatively rustic reaches of southwest Wales to what would become my hometown 40 miles outside London. At the time, pre-World War II, this 300-mile move far from family and friends would have been an odyssey.

Later in life, though, in his early 40s, perhaps as a byproduct of the war in which he served as a "Home Guard," dad's formerly risk-taking temperament took a back seat to safety and security. So by the time I entered my teens, anytime I had to make a decision about something, he

would proffer his mantra: "*When in doubt, don't.*"

Fortunately, I was a pretty normal teenager, with a teenager's pretty normal rebellious streak when it came to anything my parents said. So I consciously adopted the opposite approach to life: "*When in doubt, do.*"

Which, thus far, has worked pretty well, despite my share of close shaves, near misses and more than a few awkward discussions with officers of the law. And, just to keep reminding myself of my dad's advice that I flipped on its head, I do what he (at least, his over-40 self) would never have done: end my showers on full cold.

I like to think he'd have been proud, in his unassuming way, to know what an influence he had on me, even if it wasn't quite what he intended.

—
Barry Evans, 77, is a writer and recovering civil engineer who lives in Old Town. He writes the *Field Notes* science column for the *North Coast Journal*, and his weekly rants on "*Growing Old Ungracefully*" appear *Sunday mornings on the Lost Coast Outpost.*

Calling Prince Albert

By Patty Holbrook

Prince Albert was a source of great merriment to us little kids. We didn't know who he was, but our delight was to call a drug store, ask if they had Prince Albert in a can and squeal, "Why don't you let him out ?!" and hang up, giggling hysterically.

Our other telephone amusement was listening in on the conversations of strangers who shared our party line. The receiver made a click when you picked it up to listen in. Too many clicks and you could get yelled at.

Lots of wrong numbers were made on the old rotary dials. When a caller learned they had dialed the wrong number, they usually apologized for the intrusion. Those who didn't are probably today's litterers. Sometimes people argued when you told them they had the wrong number, insisting they had dialed correctly, as if you were some imposter.

As I grew older and bolder, sometimes I would play with the wrong-number-dialer. In answer to, "Is Ginny there?" I would reply she was in the bedroom with a customer. If I was feeling cranky, I barked, "The ambulance just took her away, I gotta run!" and hang up.

Sexual predators came out of the woodwork and called late at night. That was scary, especially when they called again after you hung up on them. Thankfully, Caller ID nipped that in the bud.

High tech gave us daily telemarketers and robo calls. But I

actually have a little sympathy for the telemarketers. What a rotten job to sit in a cubicle all day on the phone, calling strangers and annoying them. A simple "Yes" to the question, "Is this Patricia?" could land you a timeshare in Guatemala. Once they have you on tape saying "Yes," they could weave that into a verbal contract, making you financially liable.

Devious schemes are being concocted every minute around the world and unleashed on the general public. These ploys have pulled in millions of dollars from the more innocent and gullible, just by using our phones and the internet.

Those who used speed dialing helped solve the wrong-number calls, and Caller ID scared off the late-night weirdos. Hopefully, technology can solve the invasion of unsolicited phone calls into our homes. The government's Do Not Call list seems not to work.

Which phone calls are more obscene? The heavy breather at midnight or the robo calls all day? The scary mechanical voice saying there is a warrant out for my arrest? Or the heart-stopping pronouncement that my bank or social security accounts have been compromised?

I think I prefer the heavy breather.

—
Patty Holbrook of Eureka is a writer, artist and musician. Her phone number is unlisted.



"Don't try to be young. Just open your mind. Stay interested in stuff. There are so many things I won't live long enough to find out about, but I'm still curious about them."

—**Betty White, actress and comedian**

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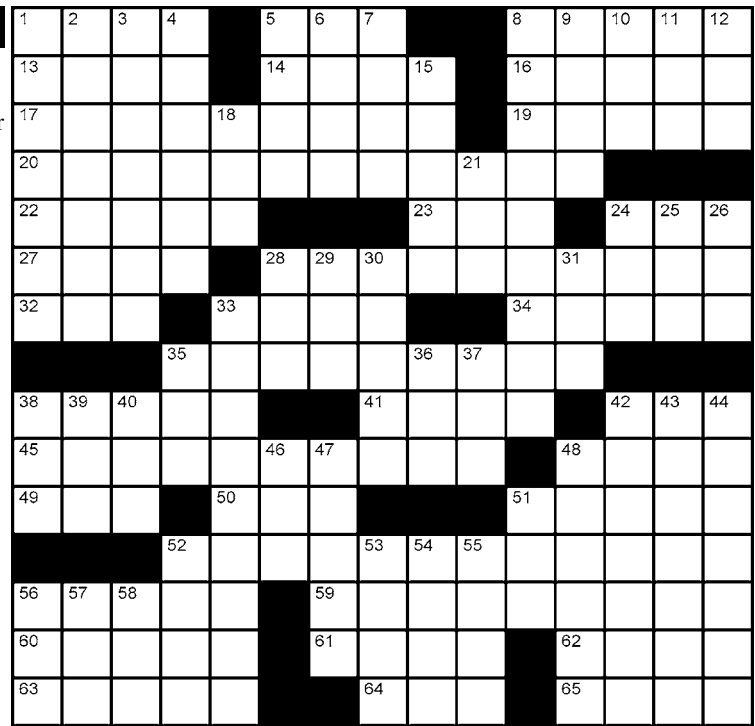
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Crossword Puzzle *Folks Quartet by Mark Feldman, Edited by David Steinburg*

- ACROSS**
- 1 Part of a car's inside
 - 5 Pollution meas. hidden in "Lippmann"
 - 8 Collect
 - 13 Part of a car's underside
 - 14 Memorable spans
 - 16 Majestic
 - 17 Postponed due to a downpour
 - 19 Sorrowful poem
 - 20 A job seeker might circle one (see letters 10-12)
 - 22 Not in port
 - 23 Campaign-funding org.
 - 24 Turner of American history
 - 27 Tournament ranking
 - 28 Parts of some Easter feasts (letters 4-6)
 - 32 Many "ER" characters
 - 33 Bird enclosure
 - 34 ___ queen (extremely emotional sort)
 - 35 Meaty brunch order (letters 3-5)
 - 38 Baking staple
 - 41 Dedicated poems
 - 42 Neon, e.g.
 - 45 Disagrees (letters 5-7)
 - 48 Word repeated after "que"
 - 49 Driller's deg.
 - 50 Prez before DDE
- DOWN**
- 1 Cutting wit
 - 2 Placed on a pedestal
 - 3 Other names
 - 4 Stiffened
 - 5 Mani-___
 - 6 College teacher, briefly
 - 7 Hawaiian island home to Kahului Airport
 - 8 They range from 201 to 989 in the U.S.
 - 9 Pinochle combo
 - 10 Mature
 - 11 Succumb to gravity
 - 12 Cunning
 - 15 Second part in a manual
 - 18 Spanish for "that"
 - 21 ___ es Salaam, Tanzania
- 24 "Snowden" org.
 - 25 Place to enter a PIN
 - 26 Org. that tells you to check your pockets
 - 28 On the ___ (fleeing)
 - 29 "That was some time ___"
 - 30 Office notes
 - 31 Word after "op" or "pop"
 - 33 Rents a vehicle by the hour, perhaps
 - 35 Color
 - 36 College email ending
 - 37 Author Harper
 - 38 1-800-Flowers competitor
 - 39 Young fellow
 - 40 Approves
 - 42 Mount
 - 43 Piqued, as curiosity
 - 44 Italian city where Nobel died
 - 46 Belief suffix
 - 47 Wasp attack
 - 48 Least risky
 - 51 Fave in your contacts list
 - 52 Gala
 - 53 Garish
 - 54 "Why not?" acronym
 - 55 Tax write-___
 - 56 One way to stand
 - 57 Emotionally distant
 - 58 Part of a litter



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- CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PAGE 14 -

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Driving Highway 36

By *Jessie Wheeler*

Recently, I have seen a number of posts online about driving on Highway 36. My experience on 36 is from mid-'40s through the early 1960s.

The road had no guardrails, no white line in the middle — never mind solid fog lines on the shoulders — and regular active, road-closing landslides every winter. It was not unusual for road closures of more than a day.

It was a time of courtesy and friendliness on the road. Nearly everyone waved as they passed. Folks always stopped to check on a parked car to be sure occupants were OK and, if not, either helped or fetched help. Often, if there was a problem, the first person who stopped would stay with car, and another passer-by would go for help.

Log truck drivers were outstanding. They would give people behind them the double brake light flash if it was OK to pass. It was a trusted signal. In return, if a weigh station was seen in operation, drivers would give truckers the high sign; at times, several trucks could be seen parked, waiting for the weigh station to close.

Driving behind log trucks wasn't a big problem, as they were high-ballin' it most of the time.

In other words, drivers shared the road in a much more civilized way than today.

Trees down, blocking the road, were also a common occurrence. There would be very little wait until

someone showed up with a chainsaw, which was almost standard equipment in everyone's pickup, and got the tree cleared.

Winters were very real and very wet, and rockslides were common, totally blocking the road on many occasions.

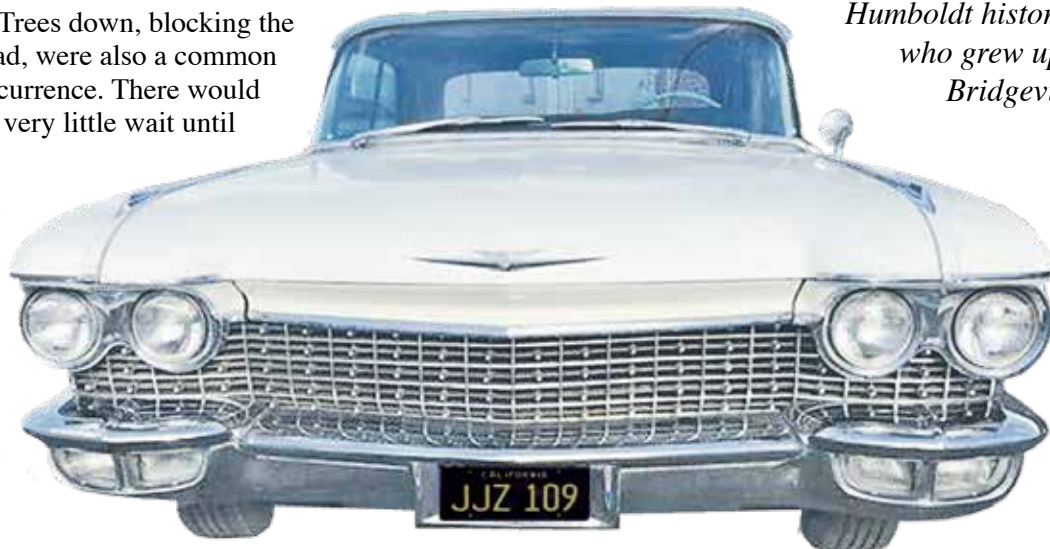
The California Division of Highways (Cal-Trans today) would leave a grader at the big slide during worst weather. Back then, most men were able to operate heavy equipment, and if they came driving through and the road was closed, they would climb into the grader and clear the slide.

I remember seeing my father do this one miserable stormy night on our way home to Bridgeville from Eureka. The road was full of boulders — no way to drive through. Dad got out and started the grader while we waited for him to clear the road.

My mother trained the headlights on the road and off he went. I will never forget those rocks bouncing off the grader while he was plowing through, and how my mother whizzed the car behind him the minute he was on the other side.

Last but not least, there are no serious curves on Highway 36 anymore, not like it was then.

—
Jessie Wheeler, 76, of Cutten is a Humboldt historian who grew up in Bridgeville.



Pearls of Wisdom

It's funny how things you haven't thought about for years just pop into your head.



Deborah Baskette remembered this story from her grandmother:

“Grandma was walking up the steps of a public building in Eureka, maybe the post office, with her mother when Great-Grandma Emma's drawstring gave out and her knickers fell down around her ankles.

“According to Grandma, Emma acted like absolutely nothing had happened, simply stepped out of them and continued up the stairs, leaving her underwear behind. From the pictures I've seen of her, they must have been of considerable size, and I've always wondered how long they stayed on the stairs.

“By all accounts, Emma was a strong-minded woman, and it probably didn't bother her for long. Grandma thought it was hilarious.”



In other wisdom, **Alex Stillman** writes: “Life is not a bowl full of cherries. My mother told me that more than once and it's stuck with me.”



And **Jim Lahman** chimes in: “My dad, who is 85 and failing, is a do-it-yourself kind of guy. He worked on his own car, added rooms to our house, fixed the washing machine.

“He taught me things that could make my life easier. Most of them stuck with me — simple things like, if you have to change a flat tire on the side of the road, never trust the jack, and always tighten the lug nuts gradually and in a pattern across from each other.

“And this: If you meet a stranger, listen to them, let them talk. You can find out all you need to know about someone by just listening and not interrupting.

Other advice from Jim's dad: “If you start something, finish it. Sleep overnight on an idea before making a major purchase. Start a savings account and put some in every month, whatever you can afford. Have a plan, draw or figure out what you want to accomplish before you start. Trust your gut, it will serve you well. Smile.

Jim concludes, “Thanks for the prompt to write these things down.”

Coming in Senior News

- **DECEMBER:** What traditions and rituals do you observe this time of year? What's your best (or worst) holiday memory, gag gift or seasonal tradition? Send in your "Holiday Traditions."
- **JANUARY:** As we head into 2020, it's time for a clear-eyed look at "New Beginnings." How do you bring a new year into focus? Send your stories to editor Ted Pease — tpease@humsenior.org or 707-443-9747, x1226.

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