



An Unsettling Spring

Making Sense of a COVID World

By Gina Belton

How do we make sense of the world in a time of COVID-19?

Big question, right? Big thinkers have tackled the question of making sense of human existence long before I ever did.

In my line of work as a thanatologist (the study of death and loss) who does grief support, I seem to grapple with this question nearly every day in ways that often surprise me — in reading my doctoral students' psychology papers, or when helping someone navigate the loss of a beloved after a long illness.

The question arises when I am being a witness to a 20-something grappling with choices of how to live a purposeful, joyful life, or an 80-year-old whose greatest desire is to live into a meaningful and conscious death.

To ask ourselves “how do we make sense of it all?” is to openly embrace the possibility of terror in the face of the unknown. Fear is a common human experience, and every single one of us experiences it.

The crisis challenges us with a very real terror of the unknown. As I write this, we are still early in the pandemic, and the local and national and global implications are yet to be determined. More serious problems are surely ahead, and we

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WORTH THE WALK — Spectacular views abound from Bear River Ridge Road near the intersection of Bear River Road. Rees Hughes photo.

Enjoy Humboldt's Great Outdoors

By Rees Hughes

Even though it feels like it has been spring for weeks on the North Coast, our local flora is less confused than I have been. Roadside expanses of wild mustard and radish have been visible for weeks, trillium are blooming in the redwoods, and the azalea and lupine are on their way.

There is no better time of the year to get out for a drive or a walk to appreciate the beauty in our own backyard. It's a perfect social distancing.

Let me suggest four drives and walks for a sunny spring day. Allow yourself plenty of time so that you stop and smell the flowers, and don't feel rushed.

Bald Hills Road to Lyons Ranch and Schoolhouse Peak. It is impossible to predict when the lupine fields along Bald Hills Road will be at their peak, but it's generally in late April or early May.

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ASK THE DOC

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TEDtalks: Strange Times

By Ted Pease

When we first planned a “Spring Fever!” issue of Senior News, we had no idea how much the “spring” part would be infected by the “fever” part.

But this is our new reality — staying home and practicing social distancing and isolation, as government and public health officials struggle to come to grips with the depth and severity of the coronavirus crisis, and as we try to figure out the shape and pace of our individual lives.

I predict that the 2020 Word of the Year will be “social distancing.”

But however essential it is for public health, staying away from others is an unhappy concept. What gets people through a crisis is not isolation, but coming together to help one another.

In this month's issue, we help the community discuss its fears, and also feature reminders of the joys of the spring season — greenery, rebirth and new growth — even though this has become “An Unsettling Spring.”

One Senior News reader recently emailed, “Thank you so much for what you do for the community.”

It was a reminder why newspapers are designated as essential resources in this crisis — alongside groceries and clinics. Newspapers not only provide an essential service by communicating important accurate information, but are a place where neighbors can come together and talk. Helping maintain community connectedness is our goal at Senior News

every month, not only during crisis times.

By the way — that kind of connection is the focus of next month's Senior News, in observance of May as Older Americans' Month, whose national theme is “Make Your Mark.” While you're sheltering at home, how about writing to us about your friends and neighbors who are making a difference? Send your stories and ideas to me at tpease@humsenior.org.

If Senior News is an essential resource, you readers are equally essential to us. And so are our advertising partners. As you page through this month's issue, look at all the local businesses that have stuck with us even in these times of economic uncertainty.

Please join us in thanking our loyal advertisers, and do business with them if you can to help them survive along with the rest of us. Without them — and without our partners at the Times-Standard and the Mad River Union — we couldn't stay connected.

Thanks, too, to all our volunteer writers, columnists, proofreaders and newspaper distributors. This truly is a community effort.

By pulling together, reaching out to help each other, and maintaining our sense of humor and community, we will make it through these strange times.

Be safe and well out there.

Ted Pease, Senior News editor, is sheltering at home with his wife and dogs in Trinidad.

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How Do We Cope?

By Ted Pease

Life completely changed in mid-March, both here in Humboldt and around the globe, as a flu-like virus no one had heard of spread from a distant city in China to become a worldwide threat.

Knowing how to respond is difficult, as talk has evolved from jokes about hoarding and toilet paper to projections for illness and death that are impossible to get your head around.

“All I know is how glad I am to live in Humboldt County,” said Fran Morris, 72, of Arcata in an email. “Fortunately, I like my house and my garden, and I have plenty of supplies — for now!”

In quick succession, government orders evolved from maintaining 6-foot social distance space from others to directives affecting those over 65 to a stay-at-home order for all of California.

The one unifying factor in the pandemic is that people everywhere share the same fears and challenges — How do we cope with social isolation, getting groceries, filling time when everything is canceled?

Since the stay-at-home order on March 19 (which was the first day of spring), many Humboldters have noted what great therapy lies just out the door.

“I like the idea of a long walk,” said Joanne Fornes of McKinleyville. “As a movement teacher, I feel moving and breathing are the best preventatives we can do to keep ourselves healthy in the simplest of ways.

“We are so lucky to live in an area which provides beautiful nature walks,” she said, “a chance to cleanse our lungs by the ocean or in a forest.”

Michele McKeegan of Eureka

agreed. “It’s so strange to feel our lives closing in upon us,” she said. “But I’m looking forward to getting huge amounts of work done in my yard and to taking the dog on extra long walks.”

One man who asked not to be identified emailed early on about lowering his expectations: “I’m hunkering down,” he said. “But I went out at 7 a.m. today and scored two 12-packs of Scott TP. That this counts as a major accomplishment these days says more than I’d like to think about.”

The lock-down order was especially hard on those with loved ones in assisted care facilities. Dave Rosso of Eureka and his siblings planned to celebrate their mother’s 95th birthday until the stay-at-home orders came down.

“One of my brothers let us know that Sunset Senior announced nobody is being allowed in or out for a while,” he said. “Birthday gathering canceled.”

Although many of us are “freaking out,” Humboldters — particularly those of a “certain age” — have enough experience to take things with a sense of humor.

“Based on advice from a total stranger on Facebook,” said John Meyers, 71, of Trinidad, “I have built a protective fort out of rolls of toilet paper on our living room floor, and we are hunkered down. In other words, I am keeping my sense of humor about this whole thing while still taking it seriously.”

Storyteller Paul Woodland, 65, of Eureka, has lost a lot of work because schools are closed, but he takes it all in stride.

“I know the sky is falling — make

Humboldt Still Has Birds



Birding on the Arcata Marsh. Beth Deibert photo.

Neither rain nor snow nor coronavirus can keep Humboldt County’s birds from their annual spring migrations, so a trip to the shore, to the South Bay or to the Arcata Marsh is still a good outdoor option, even during a pandemic.

Sadly, the crisis has forced postponement of the 25th annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Birding Festival in Arcata, which had been planned for mid-April, to next fall. Go to godwitdays.org for updates.

The deadline for two student contests associated with Godwit Days and sponsored by Friends of Arcata Marsh and the Redwood Region Audubon Society — the

Student Bird Art Contest and Student Nature Writing Contest — has been extended to Monday, April 13, so students unable to attend school can work on their submissions. Email Sue Leskiw at sueleskiw1@gmail.com, or go to the Audubon Society at rras.org for info.

Although social distancing requirements won’t permit birding groups like the one in the photo, friends can still get out there to look at the flocks of shorebirds that populate local wetlands. Make sure you maintain a safe 6-foot social distance from one another as you enjoy the Humboldt outdoors.

“All we have to do to save the world is stay home, lay around on the couch, watching movies and eating snacks. Let’s not screw this up.”

—Anonymous, on Facebook.

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Foreign Exchange Students Fill Arcata Empty Nest

By John Barstow

Three teenagers brought an extra bit of joy into my life last night.

After we shared a meal of homemade pizza, the kids happily collaborated on washing up the dishes. Then the German boy went to his room to study, the Thai girl taught the French girl some words in Thai, and the French girl taught the Thai girl some French. I heard lots of laughter and sounds of good cheer throughout the evening.

We have been hosting foreign exchange students in our home for more than 10 years, and I can assure you that we benefit from the experience just as much as the students do.

It is wonderful to have the opportunity to be a major part of one of the most significant experiences in a young person's life. For teenagers, spending a school year in another country can be broadening and transformative. They are exposed to a culture that might be very different from their own, and they meet local kids and make friends with other exchange students. New ways of looking at things and new possibilities open up for them.

As seniors, some of us have resources that make us good candidates for hosting a student: an "empty nest" and plenty of spare time. Some of the benefits we gain are learning about

the foreign student's culture, country and language, meeting other local host families we might not otherwise have known, and in general being active and engaged in life.

Nothing keeps you feeling vital and young like being around young people.

Now is the time of year that hosting opportunities are being offered by student exchange programs like American Field Service (AFS), Rotary Youth Exchange, Pax, and others. The goal of the exchange programs is to foster worldwide peace and mutual understanding.

The students often learn that stereotypes of the American people are not accurate, and we gain familiarity with the students' culture and country.

If you are interested in hosting an exchange student — and I highly recommend that you consider it — you can find contact information for the various programs online. AFS (af-susa.org) and Arcata Sunrise Rotary (arcatasunrise.org) have particularly active programs in Humboldt.

John Barstow, 75, of Arcata, and his wife **Joanne** have hosted nine high school-age students from Germany, China, India, France and Thailand since 2007.



GLOBAL FAMILY — John and Joanne Barstow of Arcata find their lives are enriched when they open their home to foreign exchange high school students. This year's crop — seated between John (left) and Joanne is Ines Guinaudeau from France, who lives with the McHaney family next door; Wannusorn "Safety" Eiamanupong from Thailand is standing behind, and Vincent Oleschkewitz from Germany is kneeling in front. Photo courtesy of John Barstow.

AFS Study Program Teaches World to 'Live Without Borders'

The American Field Service got its start in 1914 as a ragtag group of volunteer ambulance drivers who cruised the battlefield during World War I and transported casualties to the American Hospital in Paris.

Now known as AFS, the program

has morphed into one of the world's most prominent international student exchange programs, building on the spirit that prompted young volunteers to step up during two world wars.

The goal, thought the wartime founders, was to foster better world

understanding and prevent future wars through international and intercultural learning experiences.

Today, AFS study-abroad programs bring more than 2,200 high school-age students from 90 countries each year to live with U.S. families and

immerse themselves in American culture.

"By hosting an AFS Exchange Student in your home, you will start seeing the world from fresh perspectives," says the AFS website.

ASK THE DOCTOR**Distancing***By Jennifer Heidmann, M.D.*

At the time of this writing, we have been directed to stay home due to the pandemic of a novel coronavirus. “Novel” means it is not something our immune systems will recognize, so we are more susceptible to infection.

Staying home is a powerful public health tool that can slow the spread of illness. It is especially important because some people can carry the virus without symptoms, and thus are at risk for spreading it without being aware. It is best to assume everyone is contagious in order to reduce risk of rapid spread.

Why does it matter if we slow the spread? The main reason is to allow our healthcare system a chance to treat people. If there is a huge spike of cases, healthcare resources will be stretched, and hospital staff will be at higher risk of getting sick themselves. There won’t be enough ventilators, protective equipment or people to do the work.

If we can control how fast cases come in, we can sustain our supplies and better protect those on the front lines.

There are many downsides to social distancing. We can feel lonely, and in some cases even lonelier than usual (such as those in nursing homes or homebound who have already felt isolated and now cannot have visitors). We worry about the economy, both our personal financ-

es and the financial security of the nation. We miss our friends, our sports, our gatherings, our normal lives. Long-scheduled medical visits that are considered non-emergency may be canceled, as is long-planned travel.

It is important to acknowledge this is not easy. As a physician, however, I want to be very clear about how crucial it is that people follow the recommendations of social distancing. It will literally save lives.

Even if you feel fine, you could be carrying the infection. Older people are at higher risk for severe illness but there are also cases of young, healthy people becoming critically ill.

This is a good time to remember the importance of science. As a nation, we need to direct funding to science in the good times so we are better prepared for things like this. Researchers can develop a vaccine, and may be able to find treatments, but this takes time, support and funding.

Our culture tends to make fun of the scientifically minded, starting in school, where it is considered nerdy to be smart in that way. Our infrastructure, our health, our economy and our lives depend on people who dedicate their lives to science, so I hope that when this pandemic is over and things normalize, we will not go back to these ways of think-

‘This is a good time to remember the importance of science.’

the recommendations of social distancing. It will literally save lives. Even if you feel fine, you could be

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Keep Your Immune System Healthy and Strong

Even without worries about the coronavirus, it makes sense to develop good practices to keep your immune system healthy and strong. These practices are especially important now.

Studies show that although immune systems are influenced by genetics, lifestyle and experiential factors are more important in protecting ourselves from infection, says award-winning New York Times health editor Tara Parker-Pope.

The strength of our body’s immune system is partly determined by the germs we have been exposed to over a lifetime, but also by lifestyle practices, she says (search online for “Can I Boost My Immune System?”).

“There is no magic pill or a specific food guaranteed to bolster your immune system and protect you from a new coronavirus,” she writes. “But there are real ways you can take care of yourself.”

Parker-Pope lists five important factors: Stress, sleep, vitamin D, alcohol, and diet and exercise.

Stress: “We know that stress can make you more susceptible to respiratory disease,” she says, citing a series of studies over 20 years that found that people who reported less stress in their lives were less likely to catch a cold. After being exposed to a cold virus, volunteers who were more anxious or stressed in their lives were more likely to get sick. Same with

couples who argued more.

Sleep: “A sleep-deprived immune system doesn’t work as well” in fending off illness, researchers have found. In one study, “short sleepers” who regularly got less than six hours a night were more than four times more likely to catch colds.

Vitamin D: The data aren’t conclusive, but it appears that vitamin D can reduce respiratory illness, because the vitamin produces antimicrobial proteins that kill viruses and bacteria, particularly in the respiratory tract. We get vitamin D naturally through sunlight, milk and fatty fish like salmon. Your doctor can tell you if a supplement makes sense for you.

Alcohol: Numerous studies have found links between excessive alcohol consumption and immune function. Heavy drinkers are more susceptible to respiratory illness and pneumonia. So monitor your response to the COVID-19 crisis accordingly.

Diet and Exercise have long been proven important in maintaining a healthy immune system and overall health. We all know that. During this crisis, we’ll see many claims about the amazing benefits of this or that, but physicians say there’s little scientific evidence.

Eat your leafy greens and other proven parts of a healthy diet, wash your hands, and get outside for regular exercise. Stay well.

—Ted Pease

“Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him.”

—Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), author.

One of These Days

By George Ingraham

It is the season of the couch, it is the hour of the refrigerator. It is the moon of Netflix, the afternoon of naps, the dawn of I'll-get-up-when-I-damn-please, and the time of cabin fever.

For a plague is upon the land, and in contrast to all those tearful times we have been banished *from* our homes by angry parents, roommates, landlords, or spouses, we are now banished *to* them by fuzzy-cheeked municipal bureaucrats, who fear that we'll overcrowd their hospitals and then their graveyards, and then... (horrors!) pay our taxes no longer.

They're looking out for our welfare, bless their hearts.

It is also the season of the introvert, the hour of the reader and the afternoon nappist. But after a few days, we realize that it's also finally One of These Days — as in, “One of these days I'm going to . . .” A time to get the kitchen cabinets rearranged (good grief, the prices in those old newspapers!) and investigate that dark corner of the closet (Hey, are those

dinosaur tracks?).

How about the glove compartment in the car? Not a glove in sight since forever, but it's even money the flashlight won't work.

And do you really want to keep those polyester bellbottoms? They won't even make good cleaning rags.

Homes with at least one female occupant will likely require a relocation of major furnishings, and many of us will spend a horrible moment facing the storeroom, shed or garage with no excuse in sight for not cleaning them out.

Bad news indeed, for “One of these days” is finally upon us. Couldn't they quarantine somebody else? We've got things to not do!

—
George Ingraham, M.D., 84, is serving his voluntary isolation during the coronavirus crisis at home in Eureka. He would paint the front room, but isn't allowed out to the hardware store.

Here Comes the Sun

By Patty Holbrook

We are accosted every day by anxiety triggers. Why is my car's engine light flashing? Suddenlink has raised rates again? PG&E, too! Why haven't I received my mammogram results? Are they lost? Why is my computer screen blank? Windows 7 no longer works? My doctor is closing his practice?

One morning, I awake and decide to plant that herb garden after all.

Clean out my closet. Start working on my novel again.

Then I realize . . . the sun! The beautiful sun has returned, after all those days of gray. The leaves of the trees are sparkling, the sea is deep blue, everything is cast in a golden glow.

And so is my spirit.

—
Patty Holbrook is soaking in the sun (when she can get it) in Eureka.

How ‘Loveliest Trees’ Age

By Gail Slaughter

I can't tell one flowering fruit tree from another; they all seem beautiful to me. But when I see blossoming trees each spring, I find myself chanting A.E. Housman's poem about cherry trees:

*Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
 Is hung with bloom along the bough,
 And stands about the woodland ride
 Wearing white for Eastertide.*

I've never walked a “woodland ride” (bridle path), but blooming trees line roads and gardens everywhere as Easter nears. The poem continues:

*Now, of my threescore years and ten,
 Twenty will not come again,
 And take from seventy springs a score,
 It only leaves me fifty more.*

*And since to look at things in bloom
 Fifty springs are little room,
 About the woodlands I will go
 To see the cherry hung with snow.*

I learned this poem in high school, when 20 hadn't yet arrived, and the “threescore years and ten” assigned us by the Bible were distant and incomprehensible. My decades passed, of course, but as they did, I'd add 10 or 20 to one line, subtract from another, squeeze in extra syllables for half-score milestones. (At 50, I'd “take from seventy 10-and-two-score.”)

And so I blithely continued every spring.

Then, somehow, I reached 70 — and then surpassed it. I needed new lines, to acknowledge that my path was shorter, but to declare that I could still seize the day, like a young Housman.

So I reworked the last two verses. I wonder if Housman, who lived to be 77, ever did the same.

*I've lived my threescore years and ten,
 And yet this spring I'm here again.
 Perhaps I'll get a few springs more,
 Or — dare I say? — another score!*

*But since the years go by so fast
 And every spring may be my last,
 About the woodlands I will go
 To see the cherry hung with snow.*

—
Gail Slaughter, still youthful at 75, wanders through the cherry trees in McKinleyville.

Life Care Humboldt

By Ann Lindsay, M.D.

For the last year, a group of Humboldt County residents has been meeting informally to discuss the possibility of establishing a life plan community for seniors here.

Life plan communities offer a continuum of living arrangements — independent living, assisted living, memory care and advanced nursing care — in one location to permit people to age in place.

There is no such option within 200 miles, and Humboldters have been forced to leave their community connections behind and move away in search of supportive living situations.

Life Care Humboldt became a non-profit corporation in January, and held its first board meeting in late February, electing officers and adopting bylaws.

The organization's values include being inclusive, actively engaged in the broader community, engaging in sustainable practices that improve our environments, fostering a culture of generosity, and being a good employer.

An initial feasibility study last August confirmed that there is a sufficient population base and potential demand for new services to support a nonprofit senior life plan community in Humboldt. The initial vision is for approximately 150 independent residences, a 36-unit assisted living facility, and memory care and advanced nursing care for 36.

Response to the plan has been enthusiastic.

“Life Care Humboldt is like the answer to a prayer for those of us who love the beauty of Humboldt County, consider it our home, and do not want to leave as we grow older simply because supportive housing with universal design is not available,” said Patty Berg, former state assemblymember and part of the Life Care Humboldt Board of Directors.

Photographer Mark Chaton and his wife agree. They aren't ready to retire, but when they are, “we want to live out our days in Humboldt County, our home for the last 40 years,” he said. “The idea of creating an intentional community with a chosen family of friends is very appealing.”

The next steps are to secure an option on property for a Life Care Humboldt facility, conduct fundraising for further planning, and start to solicit social investment funds to move the project ahead.

For more information on Life Care Humboldt, its organizers and vision for a living community to help Humboldters age in place closer to home, go to lifecarehumboldt.org and join the mailing list for updates.

—
Ann Lindsay is an Arcata family practice doctor and founding president of the Life Care Humboldt Board of Directors.

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—Jean Cocteau (1889-1963), French writer and filmmaker.

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PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

A Listening List

This month I'm reading what I would call a modern classic on listening. Aptly titled *The Listening Book*, by composer W. A. Mathieu, it's my favorite kind of nonfiction. Its words, like musical chords, cascade after one another, making a long song.

The book's short chapters let me breathe. It's as if at each chapter's end, Mathieu has penciled in a birds-eye mark in sheet music.

Our high school conductor told us, "That's a *caesura*, meaning: pause for an unspecified amount of time."

I couldn't believe my ears. An orchestra taking an indefinite breath together? Cool.

In one chapter, Mathieu lists everything he's hearing in real time. That's the whole chapter: a list of listening. Listening is one of my favorite words. Listening has a dash of onomatopoeia; meaning and sound are reunited in a word.

I decided to try my own listening list . . . right now. Here goes:

Sudden wind bangs against front door. Wind chimes go crazy on porch with high, middle, low tones, like flutes used as cymbals. Luke shuffles in, dogtags jingling, nails clicking on floor, settles down, groaning. Kitchen windows rattle. Wind chimes settle into low tones; wind dies. Growling trucks slink by. Car beep-beeps. Wind picks up again, stronger. Luke stretches, tags jingling, pads away.

Door slams next door. Bang-crash-boom: stomping down stairs from porch next door, accompanied by unintelligible chatter. This wind is music itself, with or without chimes. Roadster rockets away. On sidewalk, someone is soothing someone small who says in so many snuffles that she's been slighted. The older one: "Heyyyy, shhhhhh, it's okay."

Strong wind not roaring exactly. Wind saying "Wowww" at every-

'I couldn't catch the tune of the wind and everything else in my ears.'

thing that's astonishing, "I'm here," singing to me, "I'm heeere."

I used to think that a

pure 4 a.m. kind of silence was my ideal. Exceptions: sounds of nature like wolves and waves, sounds of loved ones like my young grandchildren asking if I'm awake yet. Also, songs that catch at the heart, resonating like chimes. The first time you hear them, you could almost sing along.

Mostly, I thought pure silence was best. Too many noises at once would get tangled in my head. Now I understand the problem. Before today, I couldn't catch the tune of the wind and everything else in my ears. The tune is called, "I'm Here."

—
Margaret Kellermann is an artist, musician, author and avid fan of listening to the natural world.
Contact: bluelakestudio.net.

Ah, Spring Is in the Air!

By John Meyers

Have you noticed? The daffodils are up and smiling at everyone. Lawns are waking up after a long winter's slumber and turning green. Trees are busily budding out.

Yes, it's allergy season. As the famous poet wrote;

*I think that I shall never see
a Kleenex very far from me.*

As a young man . . . whoops, pardon me while I sneeze. HEY ya! Sorry, where was I?

Oh, yes. As a young man, I was blessed with no allergies. I could haul hay in from the fields all day with the best of them. But now just a picture of freshly mown grass sends me running to the medicine cabinet.

I talked to my doctor about how this has only started for me in the last few years, and he figured that my 12 years as a firefighter in an earlier life was finally catching up to me. That happens a lot to old firefighters . . . all kinds of things catch up with us. Maybe I'm just a late bloomer. Get it?

However, I refuse to give in. With the nice weather we've been having, I've already started pulling weeds and mowing our small law...nmn... Oops, sorry, my eyes are all watery. I can't even see the keyboard.

Where was I? Oh, yes: Not giving in . . . As I age, it's important to stay busy with activities that force me to stretch all of my muscles. My chest muscles are in pretty good shape from

all the coughing I do, but everything else needs a good stretch once in a while. There's nothing like a little yard work to find every one of those hibernating devils.

Every. Darned. One.

I must point out that it isn't only springtime when my allergies bother me. They're just super-sized in the spring. As much as I look forward to getting out and puttering in the yard after being closed indoors all winter, my excitement is tempered by the knowledge that I . . . Oh, dang it. Hold on. How can one nose hold so much mucus?

Springtime is a time of renewal and . . . oh, geeze. Hold on again. Ah, good. Phlegm is such an attractive word. Is it possible to cough up a lung?

Did I mention that I hate spring? Who invented it anyway? Someone with no allergies, that's for sure. Flowers and lawn grass and trees are the problem. They are not good for you! If I were king . . .

I know. Springtime is a time of renewal and pretty flowers and budding trees and . . . and . . . oh, man, I'm gonna sneeze again. HEY ya! Okay, I'm done. I can't do this. Forget the wimpy tissues, where's my handkerchief?

—
John Meyers, 71, and his allergies fight it out in Trinidad.



HUMBOLDT'S GREAT OUTDOORS . . . From Page 1

The drive east on Bald Hills Road from the Highway 101 junction north of Orick takes you past the Lady Bird Johnson Grove, the Redwood Creek Overlook, and along a high ridge that climbs 3,000 feet above Redwood Creek to the Lyons Ranch trailhead. That's about 16.8 miles from 101.

Another .8 mile on eastward is the access road to Schoolhouse Peak Lookout and the short but steep walk up to its 360-degree view. Although the drive alone is worthwhile, there are several nice walks in this area, including the 3.5 mile out-and-back walk to the old ranch site. Picnic tables are available there and near the lookout.

Kneeland to Bridgeville Road. The 90-mile drive from Humboldt Bay to Kneeland and on to Bridgeville and back via CA 36 and US 101 offers delightful views west to the Pacific and east to South Fork Mountain, the Lassics, and beyond.

The 24 miles from Kneeland School to Bridgeville needs to be done slowly to fully appreciate the jumbled landscape and scenic ridgelines. Consider parking at Kneeland Airport and walking along Mountain View Road, or stroll along a section of Redwood House Road (about 8.5 miles north of Bridgeville).

If you bring a dog, use a leash. Much of this area is open range with private land on both sides of the coun-

ty roads.

Bear River Ridge Road. This windy ridge offers views west to the ocean and north across the Eel River delta and Table Bluff. This narrow county road connects Mattole Road, six miles south of Ferndale, with Monument Road and Rio Dell. Although often buffeted by spring storms, on a well-chosen day this is a spectacular drive or walk.

Again, this narrow county road has open range, private land on either side.

Humboldt Botanical Garden. In late April, there is no better place to see a concentration of azaleas and rhododendron, dogwood and many other flowers, along a walk of a couple of miles. There is an admission fee (seniors \$5); the Garden is open Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For free access to azaleas, the Stagecoach Azalea Preserve off of Kane Road just north of Big Lagoon, and Azalea Park Natural Reserve above North Bank Road in McKinleyville, can produce beautiful floral displays.

Of course, there are many, many more ways to get out and celebrate spring. Most important, just do it!

—
Rees Hughes of Arcata is author of "Hiking Humboldt: 101 Shorter Day Hikes, Urban and Road Walks."

All I Got Was a T-shirt

By Brenda Cooper

A very cool T-shirt, but I'd rather have seen the Stones concert.

It was fall 1989, and my son and I were both college students in Ohio; he was an undergraduate, and I was working on a Ph.D.

When the phone rang, Bryan excitedly told me that he and his buddies had gotten up before dawn to buy tickets to the Rolling Stones concert in Cincinnati.

"Cool," I replied. "I'm so excited! When is it, and where are our seats?"

Deafening silence
"Bryan . . . ?"
"I'm sorry, Mom, but I didn't think to buy tickets for you and Ted."

"You forgot me?! I raised you on the Rolling Stones."

The day after the concert, Bryan stopped by my office and handed me an apology bag. Inside was the coolest T-shirt: The front featured an American flag with 50 of the Stones' iconic tongues replacing the 50 stars.

It was immediately my favorite. Every time I wore it, someone remarked on it; a colleague at an academic conference offered to buy it. Over 10+ years, the Stones T-shirt moved with me from Ohio to Vermont to New Jersey and to Utah.

Then my brother's house in Arizona burned to the ground. Bobby, his wife and two children were safe, but they'd lost everything. When I told my students about it, they made quilts to send, friends donated clothes and toys. One colleague dropped off his Rolling Stones concert posters.

The generosity of friends and students who didn't even know my brother soon began to haunt me.

There was no bigger Rolling Stones fan on the planet than Bobby, and I knew he'd love my 1989 Stones Steel Wheels Tour shirt. But it was my favorite — I didn't want to give it to anyone! I told myself that I couldn't

give it to Bob because it had been a gift from my son. A lame excuse, I finally admitted, and packed it up to take to Arizona.

When Bob saw it, he teared up, and I knew I'd made the right decision. He'd lost his 30-year collection of Stones music and memorabilia in the fire, and immediately put the T-shirt on.

Over the years, I looked online for another one, but never found it. Then, this winter, that T-shirt came back to me. My youngest daughter, Denise, was helping collect clothes for Ohio friends who'd suffered another fire, and I told her the story.

On Christmas Eve, a package arrived from Denise — an original 1989 Rolling Stones Steel Wheels concert tour T-shirt, worn and faded and smelling of fabric softener, but identical to the one Bryan gave me 30 years ago.

As Mick Jagger taught us, "You can't always get what you want. But if you try sometime, you just might find, you get what you need."

—
Brenda Cooper, 72, of Trinidad still has a thing for Mick Jagger, all these years later.



Nice T-shirt.



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AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

Can We Talk?

One of the agencies I currently give my energies to is Redwood Coast Village (RCV), a local volunteer-based membership organization. The Village “encourages neighbors helping neighbors and supports seniors being active, independent, and socially connected to their communities.”

Volunteers form the basis of what RCV does for its members. As a volunteer, I have fixed dysfunctional dishwashers, weeded stubborn lawns, assembled Ikea furniture (without the schematic instructions, I might add), and fixed nonfunctioning sliding glass doors. In many of these situations, I have found that the social interaction was every bit as important as the non-functioning dishwasher.

Village members don’t have to wait until they need a light bulb changed, or to get that area next to the driveway weeded, to have a meaningful social interaction. Redwood Coast Village has what they call an assistance category that covers “friendly visit, card games, neighborhood walks.” Those of us who volunteer would love a good card game or a slow but invigorating walk.

So don’t wait until the rain gutters need cleaning, if what you really want is some healthy social interaction. Call! I promise to walk slowly, and I play a mean hand of gin rummy.

I know this might be hard for some folks to understand, but our social interactions are just as rewarding for us as volunteers as we hope they are for you, the members. We are both enriched. The stories you share, trust me, are not forgotten.

I must admit, that “karma thing” also affects me — I know that what I put out there comes back twofold.

‘When the time comes that I need someone to come visit me, I want someone who is patient’

The Redwood Coast Village website recognizes this: “Volunteers provide a wide range of services

coordinated by our central office. They use their talents and skills to help others, knowing that some day each of us may need support.”

When the time comes that I need someone to come visit me, I want someone who is patient, willing to learn, and genuinely interested and curious about my life and what I have to offer. I volunteer to be that person for you.

Oh, yes, and by the way, I do a better job having a meaningful conversation if I am not bent over picking weeds. I am 73 and my back is not what it once was. A cup of tea and a comfortable chair would serve us both well.

Let the conversations begin.

John Heckel, 73, of Eureka is a retired HSU theater and film professor with a doctorate in psychology. And a pretty fair conversationalist.

New Book Release

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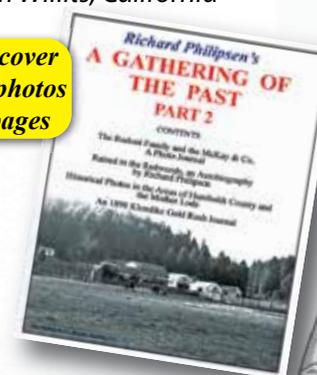
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HSRC News

Protect Your Health and the Health of Others

Information on the coronavirus (COVID-19) changes quickly and can feel alarming. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus. There are also everyday actions you can take to help prevent the spread of coronavirus and other respiratory diseases:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the restroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Coronavirus symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Call your doctor if:

- You develop symptoms, and have been in close contact with a person known to have coronavirus, or
- You experience symptoms and have recently traveled from an area with widespread or ongoing community spread of coronavirus.

- Avoid touching your face.
- Stay home when you are sick (those 65+ are urged to stay home until health officials say otherwise).
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Maintain at least six feet “social distance” from anyone not living with you.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) does not recommend that people who are well wear facemasks to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.

“Age does not protect you from love.

But love, to some extent, protects you from age.”

—Anais Nin (1903-1977), writer.

New CEO at HSRC

Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) looks ahead to a major change in top leadership this month as Melissa Hooven takes over as CEO of the 46-year-old agency after a year-long national search.

Hooven, 45, of McKinleyville, succeeds Joyce Hayes, who led HSRC since 2003, and previously was director of Nutrition.

A Humboldt native, Hooven says she is excited by the new challenges ahead once HSRC and the rest of the community navigate the coronavirus crisis.

“HSRC plays an important role in our community and an instrumental role in the health, wellness and success of our senior population,” she said. “The opportunity to lead one of our area’s most respected organizations is an exciting one.”

Dr. Jack Irvine, the chair of the HSRC Board of Directors, was enthusiastic about the agency’s new leader.

“The board is very pleased to welcome Melissa Hooven to the Humboldt Senior Resource Center,” he said. “Melissa brings enthusiasm, talent, vision and a wealth of experience in the nonprofit community. Humboldt County is her home, and she is very familiar with the special needs and unique characteristics of our community.

“The board eagerly looks forward to working together with Melissa to meet the expanding needs of our

senior community,” Irvine said.

Hooven comes to HSRC after 10 years at Vector Rehabilitation, a Eureka nonprofit physical therapy center, where she has been CEO since 2016. Previously, she was Vector’s director of fund development. She also teaches fundraising classes through Humboldt State University’s College of Extended Education.

Earlier she ran a fundraising campaign for the Redwood Coast Community Action Agency Youth Service Bureau, and worked in product development and sales.

Hooven said she loves working with programs that build and support the Humboldt community, and she is looking forward to the new opportunities ahead for herself and for HSRC.

“Change within any organization is difficult, and stepping into a role being vacated by such a beloved member of our nonprofit community is a tad daunting,” she said.

“But it’s also an opportunity — one of growth, of future community partnerships and a tremendous opportunity to build upon the foundation that’s already in place.”

As everyone copes with the coronavirus crisis, Hooven says it’s important for the community to pull together.

“We are fortunate to live here behind the Redwood Curtain,” she said.

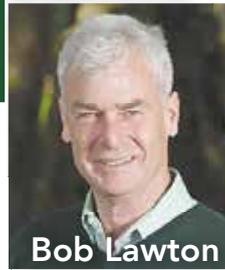
—Ted Pease



Melissa Hooven. Amelia Hooven photo.

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Status of HSRC Programs as of March 26

HSRC programs and services are operating as follows:

Administrative services and main phone line: Open as usual, but please call 707-443-8747 before coming to our Eureka campus so we can assist you remotely if possible. In an abundance of caution, doors of our buildings are locked. Staff are available to answer the doors for those who need on-site assistance.

Activities: The Eureka Senior Services Office is closed. Please call 707-443-9747 x1240 for information about how to purchase Dial-a-Ride tickets through the mail. All other activities are temporarily suspended.

Adult Day Health & Alzheimer's Services: The Day Center is closed to facilitate social distancing. Staff can be contacted by phone if needed.

MSSP (Multipurpose Senior Services Program): MSSP services will continue, but contact with clients will be primarily via phone. Staff are available by phone during normally scheduled hours.

Nutrition Program: Home Delivered Meal service continues. All participants will be notified of delivery schedule adjustments. Packets of five frozen meals will be available at Senior Dining Centers via drive-by pickup only for people 60 and older and their spouse. The usual menu has been suspended for the duration of the stay-at-home order, but meals will be well balanced and tasty as always. **Reservations are required.**

- **Arcata:** Pick-up Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., at the Senior Room entrance on the east side of the Arcata Community Center building, where staff will bring the meals to you. 707-825-2027.
- **Eureka:** Pick-up Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., in the parking lot at the back (west) door of HSRC, 1910 California St. Staff will bring the meals to you. 707-442-1181.
- **Fortuna** Pick-up Thursdays, noon-12:30 p.m., in front of the Fortuna Senior Center; staff will bring the meals to you. 707-725-6245.

Redwood Coast PACE: The program remains open, but the Day Center is closed.

Senior News: Operating as usual. See page 2 for email contact.

For questions regarding any program, call HSRC at 707-443-9747. We thank the members of our community for your understanding and cooperation with our modified services and programming during this time.

With CalFresh, 'I'll Have Plenty'

Many seniors face crisis even during "normal" times, when their income simply can't cover all their needs. It's hard to choose between rent, medications, and food at the end of the month.

That's what makes CalFresh such a welcome and even life-saving benefit for many.

"I can't say enough about the difference that CalFresh benefits make to our seniors, who are on very tight budgets," said Lena Park-Segura, a social worker who works with Humboldt Senior Resource Center's (HSRC) CalFresh participants.

Eureka CalFresh recipient Ed Musgrave, 72, couldn't agree more. "CalFresh gives me extra income every month — \$100," he said.

It makes all the difference for Musgrave at the end of the month, so he doesn't have to depend on the Eureka food bank, Food for People.

"This assures that I'll have plenty," the former community college physics teacher said.

In fact, Musgrave said he had just gone shopping with his CalFresh benefits, which appear each month on an electronic balance transfer (EBT) card, like a credit card.

What did he buy? "Oranges, bananas, yogurt, spinach grapefruit, cheese, frozen salmon and chicken — the usual things," he

said. "I like to eat healthy," Musgrave said.

"The nicest thing is that I don't run out of food at the end of the month."

This is a common concern, said Park-Segura. Now that CalFresh benefits have been extended to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients, more HSRC participants are eligible, she said.

For people on fixed income — SSI income is now \$943 per month — the stipends make a big difference, she said, and also permit seniors to eat healthier foods.

The cash amount of CalFresh benefits varies depending on income, household size and expenses and other factors, said Ap-

polonia Coan, CalFresh community outreach liaison with the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Monthly awards range from \$16 to as much as \$190 for use in local grocery stores, farmers' markets and other food providers.

To apply for CalFresh benefits, go online to GetCalFresh.org, call 877-410-8809, or go to the DHHS CalFresh office at 929 Koster St. in Eureka. Agencies including Humboldt Senior Resource Center, Food For People and Open Door clinics can also assist.

—Ted Pease



A message from HSRC Nutrition & Activities

Thank you to everyone as we work to adapt to our current "normal" during this COVID-19 pandemic and the 'stay in place' order from the state. Our intent is to continue providing meals and to adapt to the ever-changing situation. We will continue to provide well-balanced, tasty meals during this time. It is our pleasure and goal to support the older adults in our community.

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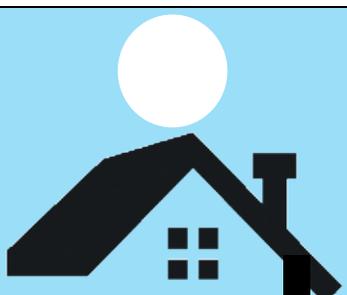
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Holding on to Reality in Trying Times

By John Heckel

It all seems unreal, as if I am participating in some interactive movie, or — better yet — a video game. I watch the screen and, at lightning speed, events demand I make decisions. Everything seems beyond my control.

I understand why all those people emptied the toilet paper shelves. It is about control. Buying 100 rolls of toilet paper provides the illusion of control. Surreal, maybe, but real? I don't think so. This new reality is beyond my grasp.

"Social distancing" is our new social reality, but reducing close contact with other people isn't natural — we are social animals!

Another term, "social isolation," describes the absence of social contact, which can lead to loneliness. It is a state of being cut off from our normal social networks.

"Cutting, suspending, canceling, postponing and discontinuing" — this has become the language of protecting not only the most vulnerable among us from the virus, but all of us — it is the reality of social distancing.

"Shelter in place!" Does that mean me? Does that mean I have to self-isolate? Not leave the house? That's the new reality, too.

And with that emphatic "Yes!" comes the realization of my own vulnerability and age. The difficulty and absurdity of this video game just increased a notch.

When my world seems unreal — and there have been a few such moments in my 73 years — what helps is accurate, reliable and trustworthy information. But that's not part of this new reality, at least not so far; our national leaders seem to be contradicting each other at every turn.

Our local senior organizations are working overtime to mitigate the effects of social isolation, understanding the vital role they play in the daily lives of vulnerable elders, especially now. They are reevaluating hourly how best to serve Humboldt County's aging population.

They say that stepping outside of yourself and helping others in times like these is healing. It may be that, unlike hoarding toilet paper, checking in with my neighbors may help my sense of "reality unease."

So that is what I will do. I will make every effort to self-isolate, but I will balance that with actions that can help others. I will check in with the elderly couple down the road. I will volunteer in any way that is safe and responsible.

I will do this hoping it will help others, and knowing it will make all this a bit more real to me.

Be safe.

John Heckel, 73, of Eureka is chair of the Senior News

Community Advisory Council.

Contact: john.heckel@humboldt.edu.

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**Crossword Puzzle
on page 22**

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E	T	A	L	A	D	A	M	I	N	A	N	E
D	E	N	S	M	I	M	E	B	A	N	D	S

Seniors-Only Shopping

- **Costco**, 1006 W. Wabash, Eureka (707-441-8750) Senior hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8-9 a.m., including the pharmacy. Online ordering and delivery of many items at Costco.com.
- **Eureka Natural Foods**, 1450 Broadway, Eureka (707-442-6325) and 2165 Central Ave., McKinleyville (707-839-3636). Senior hours: Daily 7-8 a.m. General public: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Miller Farms Nursery**, 1828 Central Ave., McKinleyville (707 839-1571) Senior Hours: Tuesay-Saturday, 9 - 10 a.m General public: 10 a.m.- noon & 1 -5 p.m.
- **North Coast Co-op**, 8th & I Streets, Arcata (707-822-5947), 4th & B Streets, Eureka (707-443-6027). Senior hours: Daily 7-8 a.m. General public: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Safeway**, 2555 Harris St., Eureka (707-269-0133); 600 F St. (Union Town Shopping Center), Arcata (707-822-5217); 1503 City Center Road, McKinleyville (707-840-9770). Senior hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 6-9 a.m.
- **Target**, 2525 4th St., Eureka (707-442-0201). Senior hours: Wednesdays 8-9 a.m. Otherwise, open 8 a.m.-9 p.m. daily.
- **Walmart**, Bayshore Mall, Eureka (707-832-5269). Senior hours: Tuesdays, 6-7 a.m. General public: 7 a.m.-8:30 p.m.
- **Wildberries**, 747 13th St., Arcata (707-822-0095). Daily "Elder hour" from 6-7 a.m. with 10% off for seniors during this time, and all day Wednesday. General public: 7 a.m. to midnight.



CO-OPERATIVE QUEUE — Customers line up and keep their distance as they wait to enter the North Coast Co-op in Arcata, part of the store's efforts to limit crowding during the coronavirus crisis. Mark Larson photo.



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For more information or to join W4W, contact Rebekah at the Foundation office: (707) 269-4200, or Rebekah.Harmon@stjoe.org.

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LIVE VIGOROUSLY

BY JOAN RAINWATER-GISH

Moving Matters

I just finished reading “Successful Aging” by neuroscientist Daniel J. Levitin.

In it, he makes the case that, in some cases, the effects of aging can be reversible or at least delayed. This is under our control through diet, gut microbiota, social networks, sleep and regular doctor visits.

But the single most important thing we can do to help retain vibrant mental and physical health is to engage in physical activity. This is because inactivity raises risks for obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, deep-vein thrombosis and metabolic syndrome (increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat around the waist and abnormal cholesterol levels).

Too much sitting can increase pain in the lower body by tightening the hip flexor and hamstring muscles, which stiffens the joints. This can affect gait and balance, making activities like walking harder, and perhaps even setting you up for a fall. Plus, tight hip flexors and hamstrings can contribute to lower back pain and knee stiffness.

Also, know that the body and the brain are connected. Moving more gets the blood flowing throughout your body, which benefits all of your organs, but is most impactful on your brain.

Keeping the blood pumping helps the brain form new neural pathways, and strengthens existing ones — which helps with memory, reasoning and learning.

Moving also enhances brain health by releasing hormones. This will help you sleep better, lift your mood, increase your attention and focus, and reduce stress, all linked to a lower risk of chronic diseases including dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Research also shows that it’s never too late to start moving and gaining the benefits of doing so. But if you’re one of the sedentary types, it may be somewhat of a challenge to get off the couch.

So keep it simple. Do things that are easy. For example, park a little farther away from the store, climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator, do active chores such as yard and garden work, and house cleaning.

With all the benefits of moving more and the health risks if you don’t, you might want to take this article seriously — particularly if, like many people, your attitude about getting more physically active is, “Yeah, yeah. I’ll start tomorrow.”

Today, is the best time to get moving and to start reaping the benefits of physical activity. You’ll find it makes you feel better and more able to live vigorously.

—
Joan Rainwater-Gish, 77, is a personal trainer and senior group fitness instructor who lives vigorously in Eureka. Contact: jrainwatergish@gmail.com.

4th Annual Local Food Guide

Locally Delicious, the Arcata non-profit dedicated to sustainable local food, has released the fourth annual edition of its free Local Food Guide to Humboldt and Del Norte counties.

Inside, find lists and locations of farmers, ranches, farm stand, U-pick gardens and community gardens, markets, restaurants, supplies, events and more.

The annual guide illustrates the

Locally Delicious goal of nurturing and growing a strong, sustainable local food system that is healthy for both the North Coast’s residents and its environment.

The guide is available at businesses all over the North Coast. For details, call 707-633-5467, visit locally-delicious.org or email info@locally-delicious.org.

Senior Survey

A survey of seniors being conducted by Humboldt State University sociology students is now ready for distribution, and HSRC hopes you will participate.

The survey asks seniors about their involvement in senior centers, with the goal of improving services.

The survey is available online at surveymonkey.com/r/SrCenterSurvey2020.

vey2020. You also can print paper copies of the survey, fill it out by hand, and mail the completed forms to: Professor Chris Martinek, PhD., Department of Sociology, BSS 538, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521.

For further information, contact professor Martinek at 707-826-4445 or cam30@humboldt.edu.

Caregiver Services Available

Redwood Caregiver Resource Center (RCRC) has cancelled all in-person meetings and events, including all Caregiver Support Groups, until further notice, in compliance with statewide stay-at-home orders.

Caregiver family consultants will continue to work remotely with clients, however, to provide support and

consultation services via telephone, email and video conferencing.

RCRC will also work with eligible family caregivers to provide respite grants, as available. Contact RCRC family consultant Erin McCann at 707-443-9747 x3220 or via email at exm@redwoodcrc.org.

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HOW DO WE COPE? . . . From Page 3

that the stock market is crashing,” he said, “but I am still pretty loosey goosey about it. My hands are raw from the sanitizer. My hands are chafing! My hands are chafing!”

Ann King, 84, of Eureka is a self-described “hopeless introvert” and homebody, “so being sequestered just pushes my activity into artwork or gardening. I have already wrecked my back a couple of times, yanking weeds.”

She has also turned that energy into food for others.

“For some reason,” she said, “I’ve gone into a cooking frenzy. Fortunately, I have housebound friends with whom to share the results. It dawns on me that this is a dark-sided but vivid reminder that yes, folks, we are *all* in this together.”

Concern for neighbors, friends and even strangers in the community is a common thread.

“I am concerned about the isolation many may/will feel by staying home,” wrote Tina Mackenzie, “particularly if they live alone.”

One McKinleyville resident posted on Facebook, “I bought extra paper towels thinking someone would need them and, sure enough, a friend stopped, needed paper towels and off

she went with a gift and one less trip to a store.”

Family doctor Ann Lindsay suggests finding ways to reach out to others. “I have formed a ‘pod’ with a group of friends, sharing contact information and pledging to help out if any of us are quarantined and need groceries or something else.”

Looking out for each other is good therapy at any time, and especially now, says a Eureka reader who asked not to be identified.

“Around my neighborhood, young people have already found out who the elderly are, the best way to contact them, and have created care packages with Lysol, hand soap and supplies,” she wrote. “They leave the bag on the porch, ring the door bell and wait to wave to them.

“I saw a couple of kids playing tic-tac-toe through the window with an elderly woman,” she added.

“Trying times, yes indeed,” she said. “But I do believe we can inspire others to do good and make the most of a scary situation. That is what I am looking to do. It helps me not to worry if I am actively doing something for someone else.”

—
Ted Pease is editor of Senior News.

See Your Doc on Skype

As the coronavirus crisis deepened, the federal government acted in March to ease restrictions on “telehealth” services to treat patients electronically so don’t have to come to hospitals and doctors’ office in person.

Telehealth services use telecommunication technology — video chat apps such as Facetime or Skype, for example — to connect remote patients to healthcare providers.

“The expansion of telehealth services will help ease the rush of America’s hospitals as the number of COVID-19 cases is expected to dramatically increase in the coming days,” said the California Medical Association, which has long supported the use of these technologies.

Ask your healthcare provider whether telehealth services might be available and appropriate for you.

—Ted Pease

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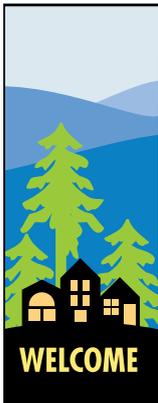
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Love Down on the Farm

By Sheila Donnelly

The snow had finally started to melt and love was in the air on our 160-acre farm near Blooming Prairie, Minnesota.

Our lone gander, Hansel, lost his love, Gretel, to a hungry fox on a starry night in January. Do we need to insert a year here? We had other birds — ducks, chickens and guineas — but Hansel had no interest in those foul fowl.

Rather, Hansel the gander fell head over his three webbed toes in love with my 5-foot-tall husband, Tom.

Hansel would stand sentry each morning at the kitchen door, waiting for Tom, waddling back and forth, honking softly, until Tom stepped outdoors. Hansel would then follow after, holding his regal head high on his neck. The love sick goose didn't leave my husband's side as he went about his daily chores.

As Tom adjusted a tine on the manure spreader, Hansel would stretch his neck under the machine, honking advice.

"That goose is right under my heels all day long," Tom complained. "I can't get away from him."

"Lovesick," I said. "Hansel needs a mate."

The wild Canada geese would fly

over the farm and land in our pond. Hansel stared longing at the flock. But as Tom walked across the yard, Hansel jumped on his back.

"Help!" Tom yells. "Get this randy goose off me."

Hansel had Tom spreadeagled on the ground, pinning him with his beak. I yelled at the gander and shooed him off with my broom.

The following morning, Hansel was not at sentry, but when Tom opened the door to the horse barn, the gander jumped him, knocked him to the ground and pinned him down again.

After that, Tom was ready, taking to carrying a stick to ward off Hansel's advances.

Finally, my dad came to the rescue, delivering an older-than-dirt goose with twisted, arthritic toes and feathers askew in three directions.

Good enough for fickle Hansel, who dumped Tom and mated with Old Mother Goose. She hatched three goslings, and if he could, Hansel would have handed out cigars to the barnyard.

—

Sheila Donnelly thinks back on her days on the farm from her gander-free home in Manila.



ASK THE DOCTOR . . . From Page 5

ing about science.

This is also a good time to remember the power of words, and the importance of access to accurate information. This virus is not the fault of any country or any ethnic group — shame on the those who are naming it incorrectly, which has led to violence and disgusting instances of racism against people based on their looks. Please do not add to the fear people are feeling by making assumptions based on misinformed bigots.

And please consider supporting the concept of an ongoing free press that allows reporters to ask hard questions, find out what the data show and share it with people in a coherent and measured way. It is not helpful to have unresearched, alarmist stories, rumors or tweets widely distributed. We as a people need to know that journalists have been given the chance to do their work in a way that allows free sharing of accurate and honest information.

I believe we can make it through this time and come out stronger and wiser on the other end. In the meantime, there are some things that might help our community and loved ones.

This is a good time to write letters to those who cannot have visitors. It is a good time to donate blood (contact the Northern California Community Blood Bank or Red Cross for information on doing this during the shelter-at-home order).

It is a good time to check in on neighbors to make sure they have food and other essentials, especially those who cannot leave their home or are in a higher risk group.

As for self-care during this stressful time, we are blessed to live in a beautiful place with opportunities for being outside while still maintaining distance from each other. Walking, hiking and biking (alone or with those who live with you), gardening, taking a trip to the beach and other outdoor activities can help reduce anxiety and keep the body active. Remember to maintain a six-foot distance from others.

Using our devices to do virtual face-to-face visits with those who are lonely is a great way to keep in touch. Trying to maintain a balanced diet and not turning to alcohol for relief is another way to boost your immunity and maintain good health now and anytime.

Thank you to everyone for sacrificing and sheltering in place. May we find peace and solace in having a community that cares enough to take care of each other.

—
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.



SPRING SUNRISE — Puffy clouds adorn a blue sky as morning breaks over Trinidad Bay. Ted Pease photo.

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“Wisdom doesn’t necessarily come with age. Sometimes age just shows up by itself.”

—Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), 28th U.S. president.

MAKING SENSE OF A CRISIS . . . From Page 1

must hope that ways to make sense of our experience together will become easier to see.

Social science offers many frameworks for sense-making, lenses for understanding human behavior. One of these lenses is the psychological concept known as terror management theory (TMT). This complex theory, developed by social psychologists from the work of anthropologist Ernest Becker, describes the many unconscious ways we avoid death anxiety, and how fear of death informs our species' hardwiring when confronted by risk.

TMT, explains psychologist Jody Echegaray, "basically states that an underlying fear of death — either experienced directly or indirectly as loss of self-esteem . . . or personal value — causes people to embrace their chosen collective's beliefs as a way to help manage this fear."

The theory helps make sense of some perplexing human behavior — hoarding the Charmin during a crisis, for example.

When I am feeling troubled and bewildered by the Big Questions in life, I reach out to those wiser than I. One of those wise Elders is psychologist Charles Garfield.

"The saddest thing, perhaps," he said, "is that

unlike other calamities where people band together and manifest their best selves (hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.), this time other people are being labeled a threat to each other's safety, and viewed as dangerous.

"Compassion is a challenge when communion is portrayed as the wrong direction and inclination," he said.

For at-risk elders who already face challenges of health and aging, the imposition of solitary home quarantine exacerbates loneliness and social isolation. This challenges the rest of us to find ways to reach out humanely and compassionately, not only to the elderly, frail and vulnerable, but to every one of our neighbors.

How we reach out to our elders and others at risk during these times will require us to explore our creativity. This is also an aspect of TMT, the invitation to embrace our fear and see clearly to the benefits of connection.

"Humanity is not canceled," another wise colleague, psychology Professor Sunil Bhatia at Connecticut College, pointed out on social media. "When I scroll through my Facebook feed, I am noticing so many calls for solidarity, love for humanity, and many crucial messages asking people

to stay home."

Social media is an avenue of hope in a time of crisis, Bhatia said. "Seems to me that social media is enabling more connection, learning and thoughtful critique of failing systems."

"It seems like our entire life has moved online. People are reaching out to each other and sharing their vulnerabilities, anxieties and stories from being quarantined, uploading resources on how to deal with anxiety and fear, mobilizing support for the marginalized, the elderly and the poor," he said.

"People are sharing poetry, singing songs, dancing, giving cooking lessons, sharing photos of spring flowers, imparting wisdom, using humor, sharing tools for teaching, giving updates on the virus in real time and tips on how to deal with loneliness and this new social reality," he added.

As the crisis wears on, we have a choice. From the lens of terror management theory, and from the perspective of some wise Elders in psychology, we are reminded that we always have a choice.

I choose community.

—
Gina Belton, Ph.D., of Arcata practices
*existential medicine and teaches humanistic
existential psychology at Saybrook University.*

Letters to the Editor

A Few Bad Words

To the Editor:

Depressing: Had a doctor. He left and I got another doctor. He left and I got another doctor.

The third doctor ordered a test. I took the test and heard nothing for weeks. Then I got an 11:30 appointment and was told to check in at 11:15. I did and then waited in a little room until the doctor showed up at 12:45 p.m. and spent five minutes telling me he did not have test results and could not tell me anything. I was charged \$55 for the visit.

My mother used to tell me I could not say the words out loud that were in my head at the time.

Dave Rosso, Eureka

A New Routine

To the Editor:

"The universe, in its great wisdom, has canceled daily life as I knew it. For several years now, five days a week I have fallen out of bed at 5 a.m., had my coffee, walked the dog and met my old friend from the second grade at St. Bernard's at 6:30 a.m. for a swim.

We made the difficult decision to quit two days before the gym closed for the virus.

After a day in limbo, my daughter — whose volunteer job was shut down for the emergency and who lost her real job for same reason — and I

decided to meet in the early a.m. to walk ourselves and the dog. So a new schedule is born.

I have some wonderful young friends from my old community center days who have offered to be my dogsbody for my every whim. Redwood Coast Village, those wonderful folks, called to make sure I knew they were available.

I have learned how to Zoom, and have had calls from friends as far away as Costa Rica, concerned about my welfare. Altogether I feel so taken care of, it's almost embarrassing.

Jessie Wheeler, Cutten

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@hum senior.org or mail to Senior News, 1910 California St., Eureka, CA 95501.

New House, Unsettling Times

By Annie Kassof

I'm in the midst of buying a house.

In these unsettling times, just typing those words generates a mix of emotions — nostalgia, anticipation, gratitude and hope.

I bought my first house in the mid-'90s when I was in my 40s, a little Craftsman in Berkeley built at the turn of the century. I had it painted a shade of blue that I ended up disliking, paid a lot to repaint it a shade I adored. I lived in it nearly 20 years, changing from brown-haired and middle-aged to grey-haired and arthritic (in one hip).

After I became an empty-nester, I sold the house for nearly three times what I'd paid for it and moved to a cabin in the woods in Carlotta.

In Humboldt County, I got my hip replaced and bought a horse. I went on Social Security. When I take walks in the shady woods around my cabin, I see bear scat and deer, and I've listened to silence so complete I can practically hear myself blink. At night I've seen redwood tree branches a mile up, crisscrossing the face of the moon like ethereal lace.

I thought I'd end up living in my cabin in the woods for the rest of my life. But then one evening in January I was looking at real estate online and I found a house for sale in town that reminded me very much of my little blue Craftsman house back in Berkeley.



Illustration by Annie Kassof.

It didn't have enough space in the back yard for my horse, but she's happy enough at a Carlotta

ranch anyway. I contacted a realtor friend and, after she showed me the house, I made an offer. Now the house is in escrow.

Some of us have lives that are like rivers, and I'm one of them. We can't fathom what's around the next bend, so we go with the flow. Sometimes, when the current gets too strong, we have to fight to keep from drowning.

Buying a house, even if I don't move in right away, is helping lift my spirits in turbulent times. But I'll admit that there are moments when it feels frivolous and self-serving — especially at a time when the whole world is scrambling to escape a coronavirus pandemic and the ensuing fallout.

But I'm grateful and hopeful, too. Grateful that I have the wherewithal to buy a house in town in case I get too old to live safely on my own out in the boonies. Hopeful that none of my friends or family will get the coronavirus, and that the world will recover from its unprecedented threat.

I'm hopeful, too, that I'll pick the right color paint for my new-old Craftsman house on the first try this time.

—
Annie Kassof, 62, still lives in Carlotta, for now.
Her horse does, too.



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- Bottom right: "707-445-9911" and "www.geteasycall.com" with a button icon.

We'll Have Some Re-Learning To Do When This Is Over

By Jim Slade

Observation: The house is shrinking.

So far, it's not so bad. Everybody's forced into isolation, so it's kind of OK. But as it goes on, we will start to write on the walls.

Before long, there will be nose smudges on the windows and the dog will ignore us. Breakfast will become lunch, lunch will be dinner and the rest will

be snacks.

Some of us will fatten, the rest will have to drink muddy water to cast a shadow.

One day, it'll be over, and we will stumble out of our caves, squinting in natural light, hair down to our shoulders, pajamas at half-mast, afraid of other people.

Unaccustomed as we will be to the "old ways," we will walk in 12-foot imaginary boxes and cast our eyes to the ground as other boxes go by. We will be hermits finding the world again.

Jim Slade, 82, offers this kind of fare in his weekly *Gadfly*, a free online humor cooperative. Interested? Email sladejim@aol.com.

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Crossword Puzzle

In-Group by Anna Gundlach
Edited by David Steinberg

~ ANSWERS ON PAGE 14 ~

ACROSS

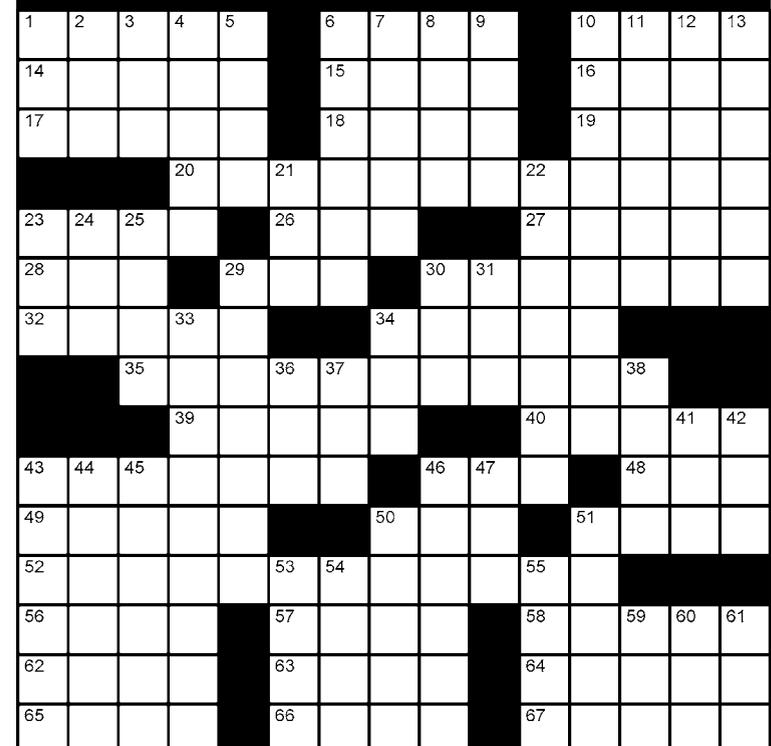
- 1 With 67-Across, musical acts that are a theme hint
6 Prosciutto and others
10 Exactly
14 "Golden needle" mushroom
15 Spoken
16 What's more
17 Home Depot alternative
18 Singer Del Rey
19 Highland skirt
20 "Poison" group playing "Whip It"? (see letters 8 to 11)
23 Like the Marx Brothers
26 Apple's mobile platform
27 Latish lunch hour
28 "___ gotta go!"
29 Dam
30 Makes a selection
32 Image Awards org.
34 Curling or squash
35 "You Can't Hurry Love" group playing "Losing My Religion"? (7 to 9)
39 Mournful work
40 Remark to the audience
43 Uninformative response to "What's new?"
46 Make a selection
- 48 "Milk" director Van Sant
49 Nasal spray brand
50 Barinholtz of "The Mindy Project"
51 Prepare, as an onion
52 "Paranoid" group playing "Waterloo"? (7 to 10)
56 Mexican peninsula
57 Nephew of Donald Duck
58 Uber, to Lyft
62 List-ending abbr.
63 No. 1 dad?
64 Totally goofy
65 Lairs for bears
66 Nonspeaking performer
67 See 1-Across

DOWN

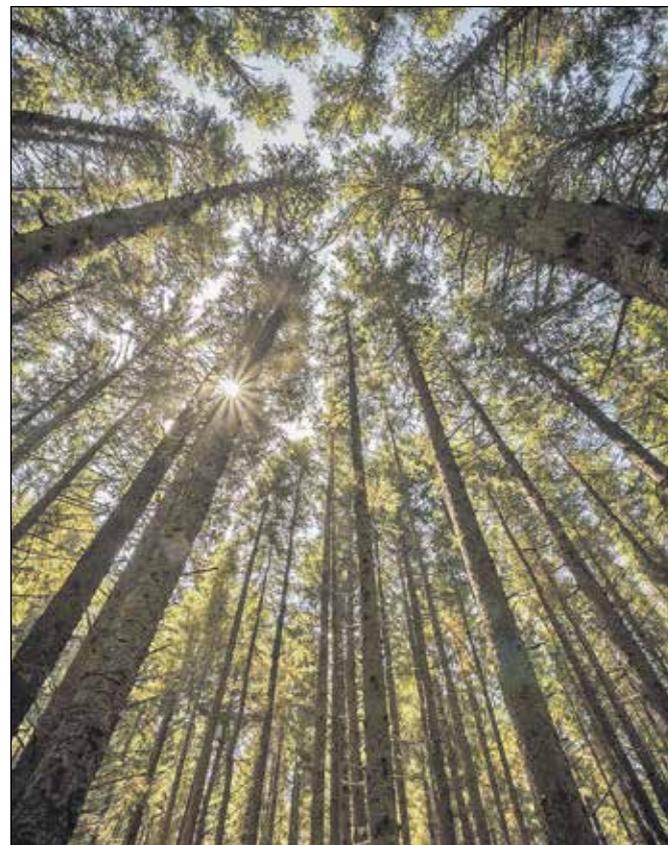
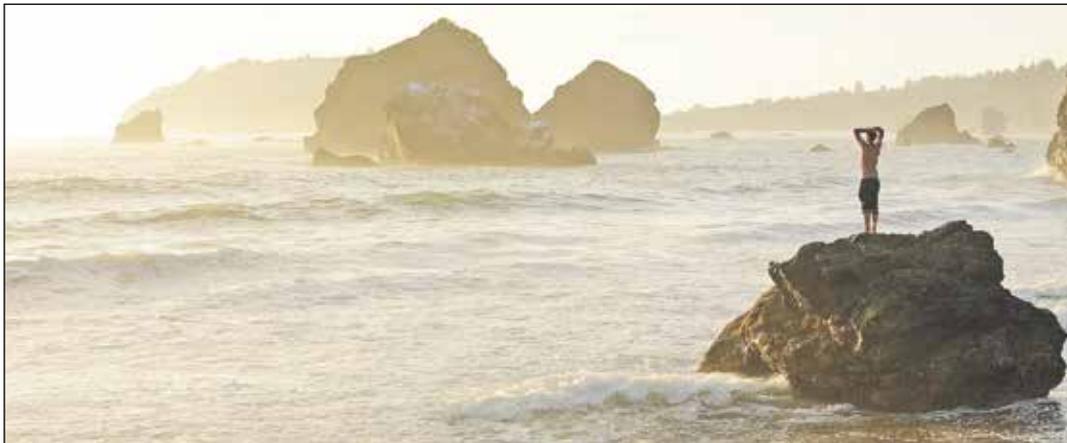
- 1 Goofy picture?
2 Yoko in "Isle of Dogs"
3 Pledge
4 Just manage
5 Get out of bed
6 Like a log you can look inside of
7 Many Middle Easterners
8 ___-pedi
9 Croat, e.g.
10 Be a diligent student
11 Mediterranean pizza morsels
12 At an angle
13 Symbols on tribal poles
- 21 "I didn't cheat," perhaps
22 Sort who gets walked all over
23 California wine, familiarly
24 Director DuVernay
25 Without ice
29 Go caving
30 EMT's technique
31 Garden tool
33 Compound components
34 Mata Hari, for one
36 "Just a ___!"
37 Sound of disgust
38 Sound of relief
41 Pair
42 Clairvoyant's power, briefly
43 Caught red-handed
44 In recent times
45 Emperor before Hadrian
46 "I'm cool with that"
47 Wasabi-coated legume
50 Girder shaped like a vowel
51 Fancy dinnerware
53 Counterfeit
54 Car with a four-ring logo
55 Chi-Town paper, with "The"
59 Delivery vehicle
60 Wheel-deal link
61 "___ Miserables"

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Springtime in Humboldt



WE LIVE IN A BEAUTIFUL PLACE Clockwise from above, Arcata photographer Mark Larson captures a perfect late afternoon at Luffenholtz Beach in Trinidad; some jewels glistening on a nasturtium leaf; sun peeking through the redwoods off Kane Road near Dry Lagoon ; and Sydney Larson getting up-close with lupine. At the bottom, wide-open beaches at the north end of Stone Lagoon (Ted Pease photo); a couple stroll down a lane at Redwood Roots Farm in Bayside (Matt Filar photo); and in the center, Brenda Cooper hikes the Rim Trail at Patrick's Point State Park (Ted Pease photo).



You Can Be in Senior News

- **MAY** is national Older Americans Month, so let's tell some stories about how Humboldt seniors give back to their communities. Who do you know who makes a difference in your neighborhood?
- **JUNE** marks the official start of summer. How are you planning to spend your easy-breezy days now that the virus has receded? **Contact** Ted Pease, Senior News editor, at tpease@humsenior.org or 707-443-9747, x1226.

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