



All You Need Is Love

Overworked Word

By John Barstow

We have a problem: We love our spouse, we love our parents, we love our children, we love our country, we love our friends and we love our neighbors. We English speakers have just one word — *love* — and our problem is that we have so many different ways to love.

We talk about love, we sing about love, we read about love, and we tell each other, “Love ya!” We use the word so often and in so many ways that begins to lose its meaning.

Other languages and cultures have words that the English language lacks to name some of the many forms of love. The Greeks had *agape*, selfless love; *philia*, love between friends, or Platonic love; and *eros*, romantic or physical love. The Chinese value *xiao*, familial love and respect. The French give us *amour fou*, foolish love. Sanskrit speaks of *maitri*, loving kindness.

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, as in other faiths, we are enjoined to love our neighbor. But who is our neighbor? Is it the person who lives next door? Down the street? In the same town? A coreligionist? The Danish philosopher Kierkegaard asserts that our neighbor is each and every human. If this is so, with what kind of love are we to love our neighbor?

We notice that most varieties of love make reference to the specific characteristics of the loved one, and in that way, most varieties of love become exclusionary. When we love romantically, we love a person whose characteristics appeal to us, and we

Continued on Page 12



TWO TWINKLETOES — Donna Landry-Rehling and Bryan Rehling show off some of the moves that first attracted them to each other. Ted Pease photo.

A Love Story, Cha-Cha-Cha

By Ted Pease

One of Donna Landry-Rehling’s pet peeves is that she doesn’t get to dance enough with her husband of 16 years, Bryan Rehling.

Donna is an in-demand and (until the pandemic) busy Humboldt County singer and entertainer.

Continued on Page 12

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ASK THE DOC

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HUMBOLDT SENIOR RESOURCE CENTER

Think It Through

Page 5

Seniors Zooming

Page 11

Letters

Page 22



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TEDtalks: 'What If' Moments

Have you ever thought about how life turns on a dime? You know — if I hadn't gone there, this wouldn't have happened. Or if I hadn't met so-and-so right then, I wouldn't be here today.

It can be quite a rabbit hole, if you start following those "what if?" threads through your life. Heck, I could've been president . . . (No, thanks.)

I do know that my life turned on a dime 34 years ago last Dec. 15 in front of a refrigerator during an office Christmas party in Dayton, Ohio. I married that girl. My life would have been completely different, and oh, so much poorer.

So it is with love and relationships — a sudden connection across a crowded dance floor, as was the case with singer Donna Landry and her husband, Bryan Rehling (page 1). Sue Blick's blind date with an Army guy (page 3). Or Pat Thomas's note from an exotic stranger in a diner in Wisconsin, and her real "find" years later (page 6).

Life turns on a dime.

...

Not a Fan: I had an interesting voicemail message from a woman who identified herself as an HSU alum in history and journalism. She criticized Senior News for "combining" with the Times-Standard (we pay the Times-Standard to be inserted on the last Sunday of the month to reach 6,600 of our 11,000 readers). She said that "putting all the news about seniors" in a separate publication reduces seniors to a "subset," and means the Times-Standard doesn't have to include any

useful news for seniors.

For decades, news organizations have worried about how to best to include information for and about various marginalized groups — people of color, immigrants, women, seniors, etc. Called "mainstreaming," the goal is not only to serve those readers, but to inform all audiences in a community about each other. That is the role of local journalism.

Senior News is an independent, free-standing newspaper dedicated specifically to news for and about people 50+ in Humboldt County that also communicates issues on aging to younger readers (who probably know people over 50 or plan to be one of them someday).

We can't answer for the Times-Standard, which has its own mission. The T-S does include articles aimed at seniors — its weekly "Boomers" page, for example — and I would argue that the rest of its content is just as relevant to senior readers as to anyone.

As for the caller's parting comment that the Senior News "is not very good. Sorry." — there's no accounting for taste, as my mother used to say. Senior News is free for anyone who wants it. As author Shirley Jackson once told a critic of her books, "If you don't like my peaches, don't shake my tree."

Finally, alert readers may have noticed that Senior News was founded 40 years ago. The newspaper has evolved since our first issue in April 1981, and we will document that throughout the year. Stay tuned.

Ted Pease is editor of Senior News.

IN THIS ISSUE

LOVE STORIES FEATURES

An Overworked Word.....	1
Cha-Cha-Cha.....	1
Still Smitten.....	3
A Second Chance.....	3
Joy & Devotion.....	6
Jake, My Heartthrob.....	7
Old Friends.....	9
'My Heart Still Melts'....	15
A 60-Year Affair.....	16
Old Cats.....	17

COLUMNISTS

TEDtalks: <i>What If?</i>	2
The Doc: <i>Think</i>	5
Fulkerson: <i>The Odds</i>	6
Kellermann: <i>Love</i>	8
Heckel: <i>Care Homes</i>	10

HSRC NEWS

Zooming Seniors.....	11
Program Status.....	14

& ETC. . . .

Unused Baby Shoes.....	4
9 Tips for Health.....	5
Our Dark Sides.....	9
Black History Month.....	18
Crossword.....	21
Letters.....	22
Self-Care Tips.....	23

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Still Smitten, 53 Years After That First Date

By Sue Blick

After our high school graduation in 1966, my girlfriend, Janis, and I were uncertain of a career path or college. So we joined the ranks at New Jersey Bell Telephone as Lily Tomlin impersonators.

When the Christmas party information was posted, it created a question of whom would we ask as our dates. The guys we knew had left town for either college or the military service.



1967

My mom's friend, Erica, got wind of our dilemma. She lived next door to a rental house where some Fort Dix Army officers lived. She invited two of her favorite fellows over one evening to make introductions.

Jim and John were their names, and the four of us hit it off right away. But Janis and I had no idea who we were going to be paired with for the party.

Jim showed up at my front door to be my date, and we then drove to Janis's house for John to escort Janis for the evening. The four of us had a gala evening of dinner, dancing and champagne.

The four of us continued to hang out together until May 1967, when Jim and John received orders for their service in Vietnam.

Jim had a few weeks to spend at home in Wisconsin before leaving the country, so we arranged that I would fly to visit him and meet his family.

His departure was difficult due to the fact we were falling in love. We exchanged letters regularly, or as best as Jim could manage from Vietnam. I'll never forget his letter that arrived in July — it included a proposal to get married. I actually have all of his letters packed away in a special storage.

On his R&R in December 1967, we met in Hawaii to pick out our wedding rings together and plan for our future, which was one of uncertainty. By the will of God, Jim came home in May 1968, and we were married that October.

This past Dec. 10, we celebrated our first date with reflections of our blessings — three daughters, five grandchildren and 52 years of marriage.

Sue and Jim Blick live in McKinleyville, close to two daughters and their families.



2020

High School Friends Find a Second Chance

By Jane Moore

When the love bug bites, you're a goner. That's how I felt when I fell in love and married Jimmie Moore.

We had a long, loving life together until an automobile accident left him a quadriplegic. Having sustained minor injuries myself, I was his caregiver for the next year and a half. With untold hours of help by our children, it was a labor of love to care for him. We celebrated our 54th anniversary before he passed away.

That same love bug bit Jim and Mary Alice

Snyder, friends of ours from high school. They, too, enjoyed a long, loving life until several serious health issues bombarded Mary Alice.

The worst was ALS, which gradually wore her down and took her life at 76. Jim was disconsolate. He mourned deeply. They had been married for 57 years.

Fate — and the need for a place to sleep — stepped in when I went back to our hometown for a high school class reunion in 2015. Jim offered to let me stay at his house. As we emailed prior to the

event, it became evident that there was a mutual attraction. Courting began, engagement ensued, and we were married a short seven months later.

We both thank the good Lord for bringing us together to make our lives more meaningful. We've just celebrated our sixth anniversary.

Jane Moore and Jim Snyder are Senior News regulars who split their time between their homes in Delaware, Ohio, and Morgantown, West Virginia.

Unused Baby Shoes: Capturing Life in Six Words

By Ted Pease

An Ernest Hemingway legend tells of a challenge thrown down at the famed Algonquin Roundtable, where writers and other New York City glitterati lunched during the 1920s.

The bet: \$10 if Hemingway could write a complete story in six words. The result: *“For sale: Baby shoes, never worn.”*

It’s a good yarn, even if it never happened, but the heart-wrenching story about baby shoes endures as a challenge to writers. It also spawned Smith magazine in 2006, and several books based on the six-word memoir (such as *“Not quite what I was planning.”* See sixwordmemoirs.com).

Senior News invited its alert and creative readers to submit their own pithy six-word reflections. Here are (some) of the responses.

“My six-word piece came to me in an instant after doing the daily walk with my dog,” said Catherine Mace. *Climb high, breathe deeply, sit quietly.*

It was love at first sight. —Marna Powell

Coulda, woulda, shoulda: said too often.

—Bob Doran

Bought it. Rehabbed it. Sold it. —Alex Stillman

Medicare for ALL: Dying for it. —Patty Harvey

Zoom Pilates: Inhale. Exhale. YES! Next?

—Joanne Fornes

Selling: Electric discoball, trade for lawnmower.

—George Ingraham

Can’t get worse, will get better. —Annie Kassof

For many, once they got started they couldn’t stop. John Meyers sent at least a dozen, including:

The spider slipped under the covers.

Lost my keys; already checked refrigerator.

And this, inspired by his mother: *Clean your plate or go without!*

From Patti Stammer and her McKinleyville Wednesday Writers Group — Audrey, Sheila and Connie:

Promises made, not kept. Still waiting.

Old or indispensable. You tell me.

Dumped the guy. Got a dog.

New Phone. Smarter than I am.

One bullet. Who do we shoot?

She brought tequila and limes. Happy.

Sydney Larson was not amused. “So, you evil person,” she emailed, “I was dreaming all night about six-word memoirs. I woke up with these: *Brilliant dreams. Gone in the morning. And, Swing dance class. Happily ever after.*”



For sale: Baby shoes, never worn.

Old age: bad surprise. Not ready.

—Kathryn Corbett

Lost brother, lost dog, lost myself.

—Brenda Cooper

I’m socially doomed. Can’t fathom Zoom.

—Patty Holbrook

They said that it was safe.

—Pat Bitton

Covidiot in ICU: “I can’t breathe!”

—John Wiebe

Bravely walk in beauty, practicing gratitude.

—Seabury Gould

I crashed my airplane and survived!

—Suzanne Simpson

Games, fun, food, friends, consciousness, time.

—Bob Fornes

Journey: the roadmap on my face.

—Sharon Winnett

Stood by my man. He ran. —Patty Holbrook

Loved, married, divorced, reunited.

Love forgives. —Loré Snell

Shipwrecked woman learning to love herself.

—Susan Wells

At eighty-one, still peeling the onion.

—Kathryn Corbett

Learn the birds. And their songs. —Tom Leskiw

More books. No room. Build bookcases.

—Milt Phegley

“Too tall,” amusingly, becomes my superpower.

—Jeanne Sapunor

Beautiful garden. Left-open gate. Deer.

—Julie McDowell

Home from mountains, better life ahead?

—Carol Woods

January twentieth is a new day.

—Marianne Morse

Bravo Ted, another Ted MasterPease.

—Carol Wiebe

I was. I am. I will be.

—Anne Weiss

Darling daughter would have been 12.

—G. Essen

•••

Or, if you’re like Lena, maybe five words are enough:

Lena went to the local newspaper. “I want to put a notice in the paper, Ole died.”

“That is terrible,” said the editor, “but don’t you want the full obituary?”

“No, no,” said Lena, “just a notice, ‘Ole died.’”

“Fine,” said the editor, “but there is a five-word minimum, so you need three more words. Is there anything else you would like to say?”

“OK,” Lena said, “make it, ‘Ole died, boat for sale.’”

—

Ted Pease counts his words in Trinidad.

ASK THE DOCTOR**Think It Through***By Jennifer Heidmann, M.D.*

Picture a time in the far future when people who did not live through or remember the COVID-19 pandemic will have to Google it for homework assignments (or by then, maybe there will be a direct computer link to our brains?).

I have often wished over the past year (almost) that we could talk with people who lived during the 1918 influenza pandemic, and glean from them some wisdom about how to cope, and also to hear about what that first day the pandemic was declared offi-

cially over was like. (The Spanish flu pandemic lasted from February 1918 to April 1920 and infected some 500 million people worldwide.)

We can get beyond this pandemic, too. It will happen only if enough people get vaccinated. This will allow for reopening of businesses and schools, family gatherings, concerts and restaurant-going. The vaccine protects each individual from getting COVID-19, as well as reducing the risk of spreading it to others. It will allow our hospitals to function more normally again, and for people to be able to visit family or friends

in the hospital.

I hope people will accept the vaccine when offered, and that the distribution of the vaccine will pick up in coming days, weeks and months.

**Ina Harris**

to get the vaccine.

As a front-line healthcare worker, I have received the vaccine myself. Aside from a sore arm and some fatigue during the day after, it was easy. The side effects are a good sign — they mean the immune system is taking note and readying itself in case it meets the actual coronavirus.

Since some might think I'm biased as a member of the scientific community and medical establishment, I decided to reach out to a member of our community who chose to have her children receive

As a doctor, I have done a lot of reading, research and listening to lectures by expert scientists about this vaccine. It is safe, effective, and cannot give you the virus. The science used to develop the vaccines is solid. I will whole-heartedly encourage my loved ones

Continued on Page 19**9 Tips for Better Health***By Ted Pease*

Let's resolve during the dark and damp winter months to take a few proactive steps to stay healthy (and avoid growing mildew). Here are some suggestions.

• **Lift Weights:** Beginning in our 30s, we all start to lose muscle mass, about 10% per decade, accelerating to 15% after 50. Sarcopenia — loss of muscle mass — contributes to falls and broken bones after your 70s, so think about regular weightlifting in a class or with a coach three to four times a week.

• **Good Balance:** Falls are one of the leading causes of injury and death in seniors. In addition to working your muscles, you also need to remind your body how to keep its balance. Ask a coach for simple balance exercises, or contact Senior News's personal trainer Joan Rainwater-Gish at jrainwatergish@gmail.com. (Also, see Bart Rankin, "A Few Simple Suggestions to Help Avoid Falling," November Senior News, page 11.)

• **Live Longer:** No surprise, a recent Swedish study confirms that physical activity is the No. 1 contributor to living longer, and being happier doing it. And a Norwegian study found elderly men who exercised three times a week lived about five years longer than those who didn't.

• **You Are What You Eat:** Like everything else as we age, the digestive system slows down as we get older. So high-fiber foods — fruits and vegetables, whole grains, dark leafy greens, etc. — are important. Also, plenty of water to stay hydrated.

• **An Ounce of Prevention:** Avoiding illness is a lot more fun than curing it, so get regular wellness checks and health screenings for cholesterol, cancer, heart disease,

etc. Medicare covers annual wellness checks and vaccinations for flu and pneumonia (and COVID-19, once that's available!). When you can, see your dentist.

• **There's a Pill for That — Not!** Ask your physician regularly about the medications you're taking. Many seniors accumulate a variety of meds, some of which may not interact well with others. Review your meds with your doctor once a year, and consult your pharmacist.

• **Go Outside!** Just getting out of doors has been shown to improve mental and physical health; studies find that spending regular time in green spaces reduces depression, anxiety and stress, helps the immune system, lowers blood pressure and provides many benefits. Take the dog for a walk. Don't have a dog? Get one!

• **Call a Friend:** No man is an island, nor woman. Many of us are content with solitude, but it's a good thing to call a friend or family member from time to time. Loneliness can contribute to depression and dementia. Even if you're not feeling down, regular interaction with others as a volunteer or in social settings perks up your brain and keeps you engaged.

• **Relax:** Yoga and tai chi aren't just for trendy 20-somethings. Not only can they help maintain or improve flexibility and balance, but both are forms of meditation that reduce stress and promote positive thinking and energy. Search online for free yoga or tai chi instruction for seniors (try Adriene Yoga for Seniors).

—
Ted Pease is a Ph.D., not an M.D., but you can trust him.



HOMEGROWN BY JULIE FULKERSON

Against All Odds

What are the odds that you are here right now?

The best number I can suggest is 1 in 400 trillion-plus. To start, men produce 30 to 300 million sperm in a lifetime. Add 197 million square miles of planet that we move about . . . and infinite time. I am terrible at math, so there is a margin of error here, but you get the idea.

I know the story of my father in the orchestral flute section, who saw my mother playing the cello across the room and knew she was “the one.” Generations before that moment of love at first sight, quintillions of other moments or choice points passed.

Sometimes, we choose, and other times, stuff happens. Each of us comes here from the same crazy soup of odds. And here we are at this moment in Humboldt, resulting from a series of privileged circumstances. By *chance* and by *choice*, we are reading the Senior News, in English, at this moment.

Humboldt County has been the incubator for my entire life. I am deeply grateful for the immeasurable odds that brought me here. I was fortunate to have been born in this place. All the decision points of my parents and the generations before brought me here . . . not somewhere else.

I learn from this place where we live and the people around me. This

place has deep meaning for all of us. The view from our various watersheds around Humboldt Bay is a mind-expanding experience. I love to find a cove on the Pacific where I cannot see any signs of civilization . . . no roads, no cell towers, no billboards. I can imagine a million years in the past and, hopefully, a million years in the future. The same minerals still exist. Many rock formations remain as part of the landscape; the essence of the salt

water certainly does. On clear nights, we have stars and planets reminding us that (perhaps) we are not

alone or the only ones. What could be better than that?

We all balance the past and the future to come be living in this very moment. Enormous odds brought us to this time and place.

I am fully aware — and know you are as well — that we are very fortunate. My choices in my life at this time are based on the awareness that have received so much from this place and the people here. What do we do now with that good fortune and privilege?

Julie Fulkerson was born in Arcata and has lived in Trinidad, Marin, Vienna and now Eureka. She knows that people may reject facts, but questions remain.
Contact: juliefulkerson@mac.com.

‘We all balance the past and the future to come be living in this very moment.’

Joy & Devotion

By Pat Thomas

On a dreary Wisconsin late winter day in 1973, my fiancé and I stopped at a diner for a bite after a weekend at his parents’ home. I was feeling as dreary as the weather, and his company wasn’t helping.

We seemed to have run out of things to say, and that was not a new thing. We took a booth, ordered lunch, and just stared past each other.

In another booth down the aisle, I locked eyes with a man sitting alone. He had dark curly hair and very piercing eyes — an exotic looking man for this rural part of Wisconsin.

I looked away. So did he. I looked up again. So did he. Still silence at my table as our lack of conversation continued.

During one of my furtive glances, I saw the man write a note and put it at the edge of his table. He caught my eye and smiled. It was a *most* engaging smile. I took a breath, excused myself to the restroom, walked past his table and picked up the note. I continued to the restroom and, with shaking hands, opened the note.

It read, “A son of Greece is full of joy and devotion to his lady.” There was a phone number and some little heart drawings.

When I returned to the dining room, the man’s table was empty.

I never called the man . . . but I did break up with my fiancé not long afterward.



From Pat Thomas & John Kulstad’s scrapbook. Submitted photo.

I kept the note for years in a drawer in my jewelry chest and chuckled from time to time about its message and that memory.

And one day, I did find a man full of joy and devotion, and we have been married for 25 years.

—
Pat Thomas is a retired labor union organizer, and lives in McKinleyville with her husband, John Kulstad (not Greek, no dark, curly hair — but joyful and devoted).

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

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

Jake, My Heartthrob

By Penny Whitehead

Just hearing his name brings sweet memories to my mind.

Jake was my heartthrob, my everything. His humor always made me smile or burst out in total gut laughter. He was wild and crazy, very smart (and a smartass at times). And handsome? Oh, yes!

I met Jake one rainy cold, windy night in Long Beach. I was lounging on my couch, just floating around in my head, when the “what if’s” were interrupted by a light tap on the door. I see nothing in the window in the door. Must have been the wind.

I return to scrunching my pillow, and the knock comes again. “Who’s there?” No answer.

I get up and peer through the window — nothing visible — then slowly crack the door open.

WHAM! The door bangs wide open and in bounds the cutest furball. He gags, throws up on the living room carpet, bounces some more, then squats and pees a huge puddle.

I have to grin (I never liked that carpet).

Other than scared, he looks like a healthy 3- or 4-month-old Airedale with some possible Australian Shepherd in the mix, something that Dr.



Seuss might have drawn. What a doll!

I pat his wiry hair and scratch behind his perky ears. “It’s about time you got here,” I tell him. “I’ve been waiting for you forever. I must say, you are a foxy one and a smart pup — you came to the right house.”

It was love at first sight — for both of us. I look down at my new sidekick, patted my leg, and he followed

me into the kitchen to fetch the paper towels and carpet spray. We opened the fridge and looked in it for a yummy tidbit, and he followed me into my bedroom, where I opened a dresser drawer, pulled out a red kerchief and tied it around his neck.

I gave him a kiss on the top of his fuzzy head and we looked at each other. “I believe that you are a Jake kinda guy,” I told him.

Jake barked that he liked his name and his red scarf.

Jake and I lived in three countries and had many great adventures. We moved to Humboldt 27 years ago.

Jake lived to be 14. He was my heartthrob and will always be (don’t tell Pelé the cat!).

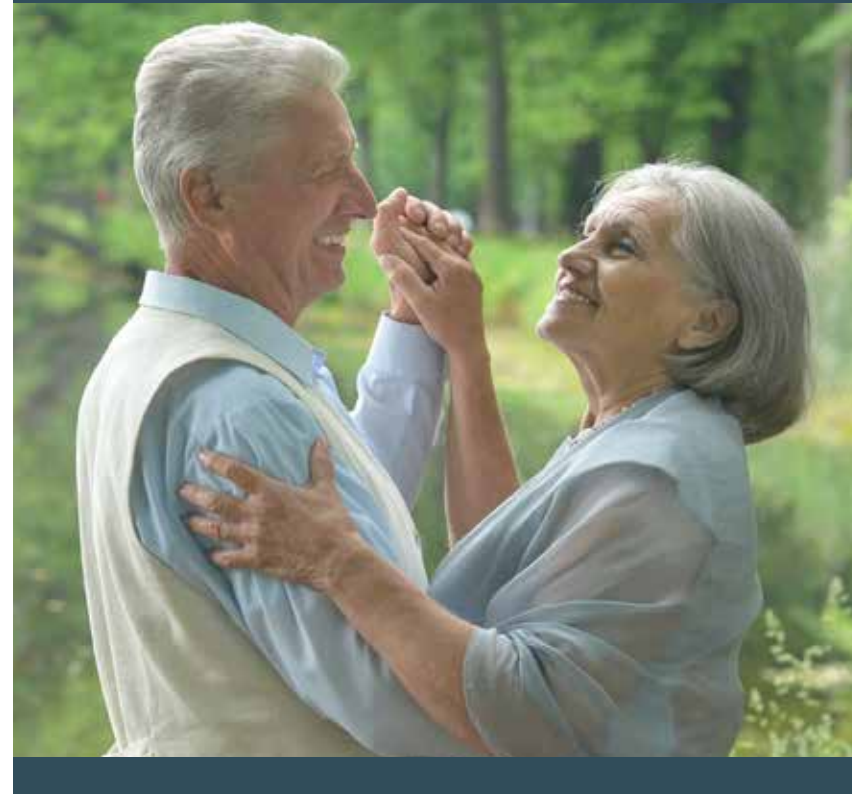
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Penny Whitehead and *Pelé the cat live in Rio Dell.*

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PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

Things I Love

Various things I love can be lumped into one category: they're beautiful to me. No matter how they may seem to others, they grow in value for me as years go on.

Wild birds are a great love, from hummingbirds mobbing a feeder in Tijuana to bald eagles wrestling with sockeye salmon in Juneau.

Barn swallows, falcons, white herons, toucans: how these birds know what to do next is a miracle. Even in New England winters, with blizzards blowing around them, birds scratching for seed manage to stay well groomed and chipper, trusting their next meal will arrive, though there's no saying exactly where it will come from.

Improvised conversations on street corners, porch steps and gardens make any afternoon glow. Locally made pottery with a small mistake only the potter would see makes it dear.

For one week, exceptionally kind servers at an oceanside cafe in Manzanillo brought me cafe con leche. I watched dolphins and smiled. The last day, they all gathered. I bowed: "Gracias por todo." Blessings and tears as we tore away from each other.

And I love County Clare's quintessential Irish pub, Manley's, where I dropped in on what's called a singsong. Anyone who was called upon had to come up with a limerick or sing a song or what-have-you. When I was called on, I could remember only this limerick — or more like an un-limerick — by W.S. Gilbert:

*There was an Old Man of St.
Bees*

*Who was stung in the arm by a
wasp.*

When asked, "Does it hurt?"

*He replied, "No, it doesn't,
But I thought all the while 'twas a
hornet."*

Wild applause. That was followed by a young trio singing and playing guitar to a quiet, hauntingly lovely version of an Appalachian song, of all things, by the Monroe Brothers:

*Brother afar from the Savior
today,*

*Risk not your soul on the things
that decay.*

*For if today God should call you
away*

*What would you give in exchange
for your soul?*

Never a problem in Ireland to whisk from one emotion to another. When I asked the lead singer if she'd teach me that song, she said, "Of course."

We withdrew to the women's room to let the echoes resound. I asked what the song was called. "What Would You Give?" she replied. We sang it through four times, and she said, "Now you've got it." Passing it on to me.

Yes, I loved that. There are other things and places and people I love, but let this be enough for the time.

Margaret Kellermann can be found at bluelakestudio.net/contact.



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“However rare true love may be, it is less so than true friendship.”

— Albert Einstein (1879-1955), physicist.

Confronting Our Dark Sides — Not Easy, but Necessary

By Steve Pence

It is always a challenge to understand an affliction we do not suffer from. Especially when one believes the condition has been largely vanquished.

Years ago, when Mike, a fellow lawyer, asked me to join his practice, financial terms were easily arrived at. But I had a concern.

“Mike, you are a conservative. You think my politics are too left-wing. And, Joe, your senior partner, seems ultra-conservative. How will this work?”

“Well, you’re no longer the prosecutor,” Mike said. “and Joe and I are no longer serving on the township board, so none of us will speak or write publicly on political matters without the approval of all.”

“Excellent,” I said.

Things went well in our Upper Michigan law practice. After leaving public service, I had been underemployed. Now, I had a full caseload of civil matters set for jury trials — my joy as a lawyer. Mike was pleasant, if anxious. Joe, dealing with cancer, seldom came in.

One day, Cecelia, my legal assistant, said I had a call from B’nai B’rith. “Who are they?” she asked.

The Jewish Anti-Defamation League. I figured they were seeking a donation.

“Mr. Pence,” the caller said, “I’m with B’Nai B’rith. I’m about to contact your corporate clients to inform them that your firm is a white supremacist organization.”

“This is a joke?”

“Mr. Pence, do you read the Detroit Free Press?”

“Every day,” I said. “It arrives at about 11:30. I grab one before lunch.”

“Read today’s issue. Then call me.”

Soon enough, I read about Joe on page 1, proclaiming his support for presidential candidate David Duke. In an expository burst, Joe explained why Mr. Duke is not a racist. Yeah right, I thought, because former KKK Grand Dragons seldom are.

Joe was a decade or more older than I, from the City of Hamtramck, a historically Polish enclave completely surrounded by Detroit. Because Joe was out ill, I still had not gotten to know him. As I got ready to dial B’nai B’rith, however, I did recall him telling me, “By 2040, whites will be a minority in this country.”

Dismissively, and completely unaware that this was a concern to anyone, I had remarked, “I wish it were sooner.”

It was easy to get B’nai B’rith to back off a public denouncement of the firm. Joe, I explained, would be bought out or I would leave. His support of Mr. Duke was a shock to me.

When confronted, Joe gave an unconvincing denial of being racist and accepted our buy-out proposal. Our relief was palpable.

My forgiving, now-wife often says, “No one is just one thing.” I agree, but with less conviction.

Nevertheless, a few years after the David Duke episode, I visited Joe after he reached out, dying of

cancer and mostly alone.

Joe owned a high-powered telescope, affixed to a computer. He would invite people to stargaze at his remote farm, away from light pollution. Few were asked and fewer accepted his invitations. He was a cold and distant man.

The night I went out, the sky was brilliant. I knew little about astronomy and found Joe’s pedantic nature worth the knowledge I gained.

After an hour outdoors, he invited me in for a glass of wine, then excused himself and went upstairs. I could hear him rummaging around, as if getting something from underneath a bed. When he came down he presented me with a pile of pamphlets and books, proclaiming, “Steven, I’m going take an hour of your time and explain to you why the Holocaust never happened.”

“Joseph,” I said, “I’m going to thank you for what, until now, has been a great evening, and I’m going to take my leave.”

Joe died soon after. I did not see him again or attend his funeral. I needed no more clues as to his peculiar heart of darkness.

As for my loving wife’s generous view of human nature, she informed me of the “Nazi Exemption” to her First Rule of Non-Judgmental Living.

—

Steve Pence, 70, of Arcata tries not to be judgmental . . . up to a point.

Confusing: All My Old Friends Are Getting Older

By John Meyers

I’ve noticed lately is that most of my friends are getting older . . . which gives new meaning to the phrase “old friends.”

It turns out that phrase no longer has a double meaning for me. It used to mean either “people I have known for a long time” or “people I know who are old.” Now it seems that the meanings have run together.

If I’ve known you for a long time, you’re old, just like me. If you’re young, then I haven’t known you long enough to consider you an “old friend.”

If you’re old and we’ve just become friends, then I guess you qualify as an “old” friend even if we aren’t “old friends.” The older I get, the more confusing it gets.

I haven’t decided if this is a sad state of affairs or not. I have lots of old friends and I treasure their friendships dearly. I have a number of young friends and I love their boundless energy. I guess my fear is that my young friends will outnumber my old friends before long.

What will I do without my old friends? I have friends I’ve known since childhood — 60 to 70 years. That’s a long time to be friends with someone.

On the bright side, as long as I have any friends at all, I’m doing well. I think I’ll take a nap and quit worrying about it. My old friends will understand.

—

John Meyers, 70, lives in Trinidad, a town of friendly people, some of them old.



AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

Care Facility Mess

If and when I ever need the services of one of our local skilled nursing facilities, I do not want the Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) who takes care of me making only \$15 an hour.

There is something very wrong with a culture that minimally values those charged with the care of our elderly and infirm. Like it or not, we live in a culture that demonstrates its values with dollars, and, as I age, it has become abundantly clear that the world I live in does not value those who might have to take care of me.

Our local situation is so convoluted and egregious that it drew the attention of the Washington Post. The Post's Dec. 31 article, "Profit and Pain: How California's Largest Nursing Home Chain Amassed Millions as Scrutiny Mounted," was demoralizing.

The article documents the world of accusations and counter-accusations between our local facilities owned by Shlomo Rechnitz/Brius Healthcare and government inspectors charged with protecting us. Reading through the responses of Brius Healthcare invokes the world of former Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway's use of the phrase "alternative facts."

At the Brius Windsor Redding Care Center, inspectors maintained that CNAs were forced to work without masks, even after testing positive for COVID-19. The inspectors cite the testimony of a CNA who had a cough and had lost her sense of taste, one of the telltale

symptoms of the virus. She reported being told to come to work anyway, and later tested positive. Brius denied all such allegations, claiming they had followed COVID-19 guidance protocols.

State inspectors claimed foul, and fined Brius \$150,000. Brius Healthcare claims otherwise, and has appealed the fine. For every inspector's finding, Brius Healthcare has an alternative-reality explanation.

What is not part of Brius Healthcare's world of "alternative facts" is that during this pandemic, Humboldt County skilled nursing facilities are understaffed, and the staff that does exist is overworked. Many hard-working and compassionate CNAs are forced to work double shifts to make ends meet.

It is not an "alternative fact" that, if I should I fall and break something, I may very well be discharged from the hospital to one of our local Brius-owned facilities.

Once in that facility, I will be cared for by a CNA whose value, determined by the culture I live in, is set at \$15 an hour.

That is unacceptable.

John Heckel, Ph.D., 74, of Eureka was a Long-Term Care Ombudsman assigned to monitor Seaview Rehabilitation and Wellness Center in Eureka, which is owned by Brius Healthcare. To become a volunteer ombudsman, contact program director Suzi Fregeau, SFregeau@alaa.org or 707-269-1330.

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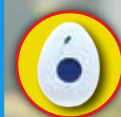
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HSRC News

Zoom Programs Help Seniors Overcome Isolation

By Ted Pease

The world got a lot smaller when the coronavirus hit last March, and seniors were asked to stay home to stay healthy.

Participants in the various Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) programs in Eureka, Arcata and Fortuna could no longer gather regularly for activities, meals, exercise and socializing with friends and staff.

“I loved going in to that center,” said Vanta Schuetzle of Fortuna, “because we had lunch and played games and did our exercises and talked to each other. I do miss that.”

Vanta had moved to Fortuna from Carlotta less than a year before HSRC finished construction on its new center on Newburg Road. She got to enjoy the new Adult Day Health Center and Redwood Coast PACE facilities for only a few weeks before the pandemic forced on-site programs to close.

But over recent months, with the help of technology that was new to many of them, seniors like Vanta are coming back together via Zoom to pick up where their in-person interaction ended. HSRC landed grants to purchase 200 tablets for participants to use to connect both for activities and with their care providers.

Both PACE and Adult Day Health are growing schedules of online programs ranging from bingo to games to virtual tours of world cities, as well as opportunities for participants to chat and socialize from their homes.

“It’s working great,” Vanta said, “except my tablet doesn’t always work. I don’t know if it’s the tablet or it’s me. It’s probably me.”

“Us old people, we’re not used to these new-fangled things,” she said, but she’s learning. “It’s all new to me. The [cell]phone is new to me, too.”

Vanta said she tries to Zoom every day. “It’s great for exercising. It’s really great,” she said. She also uses the tablet to attend church services and Bible study via Zoom. “And I order books on it and used it for reading. I have an eye problem, and I can make the print bigger.”

Bobbi Crocker, a former Eureka Police Depart-

ment officer, is an enthusiastic PACE Zoomer. She’s a big fan of physical therapist Bart Rankin and occupational therapist Rhonda Rankin, who run many of the PACE Zoom sessions.

“Bart and Rhonda are totally amazing,” Bobbi said. “But I told them I am NOT a bingo person — nobody can make me do it.”

Bobbi said she used to be pretty computer-savvy. “But my stroke five years ago took away all my technology. Now I’m having to learn it all again.”

At 10:30 on any given weekday morning, you can find a big computer monitor in the PACE activities room showing the faces of seniors like Bobbi and Vanta Zooming in to participate in 30-minute exercise classes — “sweatin’ to the oldies” as staff leads routines to the Beatles or disco.

Alicia Rusyn is the activities coordinator for Eureka’s Adult Day Health Center, which prepares weekly activities packets for participants, and Zoom sessions several times a week. “Our Zoom groups have been a big hit,” she said. “Participants and staff come together and chat about the week, the world and the weather.”

In addition to exercise and craft sessions, she said the most popular Zoom activity is “Chat with Friends,” which permits participants to get together and talk with each other twice a week.

For both participants and staff, “Zoom took some getting used to at first,” acknowledges Bart Rankin. The technology creates a “layer of distance,” he said, between participants and him as the therapist, but that is balanced out by “the ease of having a person right in front of you with the click of a link . . . no driving, preparing to leave your home, etc.”



PACE staff members (from left) Bart Rankin, Rhonda Rankin and Remi Chavez take participants through their paces on Zoom.
Ted Pease photo.

“Practically everything we need to communicate via language, postural changes, etc, that we rely on in face to face translates just fine on Zoom for me as the healthcare provider,” he said. “And reaching folks from Trinidad to Scotia, easily and quickly in their homes, is a positive, for sure.”

One of the most valuable things about the Zoom sessions, Bobbi and Vanta agree, is how it connects HSRC program participants to each other.

“We used to do a lot of socializing and visiting, and we miss that,” Bobbi said. “We’re curious about each other. We want to know how everyone’s doing — is so-and-so still alive? People don’t understand sometimes how close we get with each other.”

—

Ted Pease is editor of *Senior News*.



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CHA-CHA-CHA . . . From Page 1

When she is performing at music festivals, “many other ladies enjoy the opportunity to dance with Bryan” as Donna provides the vocals and watches from the stage.

It was across a crowded dance floor in 2000 at the Red Lion in Eureka that Donna spotted Bryan trying to teach someone to do the cha-cha. “I could see he had some dance skills,” she said, and she asked him for the next dance. The rest is history.

Since then — and especially since literally waltzing down the aisle at their wedding in 2004 — the couple has danced at music festivals where Donna has performed up and down the West Coast. They also share a love of Harleys, and take regular motorcycle trips throughout the West.

“We believe that when you do what you love, you just might meet your soul-mate,” Donna said.

On a recent sunny Monday on the Eureka waterfront, Donna and Bryan demonstrated their dance skills for a video by local media producer Rick St. Charles, dancing at the foot of C Street for an upcoming online talent showcase.

The talent showcase, being put together by the Eureka Center for Spiritual Living, will be a platform for local people to express and demonstrate their creativity, Donna said, from quilting to art and music.

The program will be posted online on Feb. 13 — do a search for Youtube Eureka Spiritual Learning to find it.

OVERWORKED WORD . . . From Page 1

exclude others from our love. Likewise, when we love our friends or our work or our town, we also exclude others.

It might seem an overwhelming task to try to love all humans when we are acquainted with just a tiny fraction of all who exist. To love all humans, to love our family, our friends and the people we meet on the street, to love even those we think of as enemies — this requires selfless love, *agape*.

Even if we achieve selfless love,

such love might not make itself evident in the course of day-to-day life. A practical way we can show selfless love is to treat our neighbor (which is every human being) with loving kindness. This is where the rubber meets the road, where we have the opportunity in everyday life to demonstrate selfless love.

Perhaps loving kindness is the greatest love that we humans can express.

John Barstow of Arcata is a retiree who is happy just to be here.



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Free Income Tax Preparation

By Larry Noe

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA) will help Humboldt residents prepare their taxes through the Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) this tax season.

VITA has provided these free tax services at sites across Humboldt County for over 50 years.

The service is provided to help low- to moderate-income individuals, families and seniors get all the deductions and credits that are available to them. Basic tax return preparation is provided by IRS-certified volunteers, and includes federal and state returns and electronic filing.

To qualify for the service, participant annual income must be less than \$66,000, and they may not own residential rental property; those who are self-employed are eligible only if they have no employees, depreciation or inventory.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, HSRC will be using a drop-off procedure for the tax service this year. All clients will need to pick

up an information and forms packet. When they have collected all their tax documents and completed the forms in the packet, they will call for an appointment to return the packet and have it reviewed. Clients will leave the packet with the tax preparer, who will call them to pick up the completed return in one week or less.

Packets will be available for drive-through pick-up at the SW corner of the HSRC building Thursdays in February (4th, 11th, 18th & 25th) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Masks are required. Call (707) 443-9747, x1240 for more information.

AARP offers a similar service through the Fortuna Senior Center. Call (707) 726-9203 for more information. The McKinleyville Senior Center will not be providing tax service this year.

Larry Noe is the volunteer site coordinator for the HSRC and the Eureka Library VITA program.

Online COVID-19 Vaccine Signup

Humboldt County residents who want a COVID-19 vaccination can submit their contact information through an online interest form to be notified when doses are available for their tier.

The county Joint Information Center says the form takes about two minutes to complete and asks for basic information like name, email, zip code and willingness and ability to travel to a clinic in another part of the county.

Vaccine is currently available by appointment only due to limited supply, and priority is given

to frontline healthcare workers and people 75 and older. Vaccinations will be expanded to others in the coming days and weeks.

Completing the interest form will allow Humboldt County Public Health to contact residents directly when a clinic is scheduled for their priority group.

Find the "COVID-19 Vaccine Interest Form" at humboldt.gov/InterestForm.

For the most recent local COVID-19 information, visit humboldt.gov or email covidinfo@co.humboldt.ca.us or call 707-441-5000.

Arcata Plaza Improvements

Members of the newly constituted Arcata Plaza Improvement Task Force are requesting Arcata residents and students to submit ideas on how to improve the safety and use of the Arcata Plaza.

In particular, seniors and students seem hesitant to spend time there.

Any ideas on amenities we can add, or new ways to "occupy the Plaza" are welcome, including suggestions on what to put in place of the McKinley statue.

Please email ideas to janepwoodward@aol.com. Please put "Task Force" in the subject line.

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HSRC Programs & Services Update

Administrative Services: Open as usual, but please call 707-443-9747 before coming to our Eureka campus or Fortuna Center and we will assist you remotely if possible. We have locked the doors of our buildings, but staff are available for on-site assistance.

Activities Program: Free VITA income tax preparation services Thursday in February (see below and page 13). The firewood program has been discontinued. Senior Home Repair is now open for Eureka residents. Call the Senior Services Office at 707-443-9747, x1240, for information about Dial-a-Ride tickets. All other activities are suspended until further notice.

Adult Day Health & Alzheimer's Services: Modified services are offered; Day Centers are closed. Staff available by phone. New referrals are being accepted.

MSSP (Multipurpose Senior Services Program): Services continue, but contact with clients is primarily via phone. Staff are available by phone. New referrals are being accepted.

Redwood Coast PACE: Open in Eureka and Fortuna; Day Centers are closed. Staff are available by phone. New referrals are being accepted.

Senior News: Open as usual. Free copies available at some area groceries and businesses, but many regular distribution sites are closed. Available online at humsenior.org. Subscriptions, \$20/year. Call 707-443-9747 with credit card info, or mail a check to 1910 California St., Eureka CA 95501.

Nutrition Program: Status of HSRC Nutrition services:

Home Delivered Meals service continues.

Senior Dining Centers continue to provide take-out meals via weekly drive-by pickup only. Meals are available by **reservation only** for those 60 and older and their spouse. Reservations must be made no later than seven days prior to pick-up day. Call the Senior Dining Center of your choice below for reservations or for questions about menus.

Each package includes a variety of five meals. Pick-up schedules:

Arcata: Arcata Community Center, 321 Martin Luther King Parkway, Wednesdays 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Drive to the main entrance on the north side of the building; an Arcata city staff person will direct traffic, and provide directions for those on foot. **Reservations: 707-825-2027.**

Eureka: 1910 California St., Tuesdays 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Enter the parking lot from California Street and staff will direct you. **Reservations: 707-442-1181.**

Fortuna: Gene Lucas Community Center, 3000 Newburg Road, Thursdays from 12-12:30 p.m. in front of the Fortuna Senior Center wing; staff will bring the meals to you. **Reservations: 707-725-6245.**

Information may change without notice. For questions regarding any HSRC program, call **707-443-9747.**

We thank community members for their understanding and flexibility during this time.

Commodities Distribution

Arcata: Thursday, Feb.18, 10:30-11 a.m.
Arcata Community Center
321 Martin Luther King Parkway

Eureka: Wednesday, Feb.17, 10-11:30 a.m.,
Humboldt Senior Resource Center
1910 California Street

VITA Tax Preparation

THURSDAYS

Feb. 4	Tax Information and Form Pick-up	10 a.m.-2 p.m.
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Feb. 18	Tax Information and Form Pick-up	10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Feb. 25	Tax Information and Form Pick-up	10 a.m.-2 p.m.

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It Took Some Doing, but ‘My Heart Still Melts’

By Jane Parks-McKay

Dateline: 1970.

After high school, I attended the local junior college. All I remember about my first history class is a huge lecture hall with a very interesting teacher. He talked about the most way-out things, and this little Southern girl with her pink clothes and pearls and sensible shoes straight from Alabama was mortified.

One topic he got on was how he and his wife enjoyed pornography every night. So I spoke up, in front of everyone, and told him that was a sin and that he should be ashamed of himself. After all, I was the daughter of a good Southern Baptist.

Afterward, a group of girls came up to congratulate me for speaking up.

Those girls and I hung out together for four years, and not once did one of them say she had a brother. Finally, in 1974, on a trip with her to the wine country, she mentioned him. My ears perked up. I wanted to meet him.

When I did meet her brother, he was not my type. I don't think I was his type either.

The girls and I continued going out to parties and clubs looking for a good time. One night, they picked me up at my parents' house, and who was driving but this brother.

He looked a lot better to me. Bored at the party, the brother and I started talking. What a gentleman. By the end of the evening, he carried me out to the car and we stayed in the back seat kissing and hugging the entire way home while the sister drove.

After that, I thought for sure he'd ask for my



Jane Parks and Tim McKay tie the knot, 43 years ago. Submitted photo.

number. Nope. For days, I waited for the phone to ring. Finally, at 10:30 one night, he called, and we talked into the middle of the night. I was in love — this from someone who was never going to get married.

Our first date went great. Then he went off to Europe on a trip with his boss. I heard nothing. I was not happy. Only after he returned did I find out that he'd mailed tons of postcards that were not

forwarded to my new address.

We got engaged, broke up, got engaged, broke up, and tried to be “friends.” Not a chance. Finally, tired of this game, I wrote him a letter and told him either we really were going to be just friends or get married.

We went on a picnic on the 4th of July 1977. My dad had given him a bottle of his homemade wine; as a non-drinker, just a few sips sent me over. He proposed, and I raised the glass and — tipsy — said, “Why not?”

His parents were very traditional, and would have preferred to select their own daughter-in-law, so he didn't tell his family he had proposed. Less than six weeks before the date, he finally told his parents when we attended a Croatian dance together. I think he figured they wouldn't have a fit if in public.

After a simple home wedding, when we were finally alone, my new husband looked scared to death.

“We got married,” he said, slumping in his chair. “Oh, my God!”

It's been 43 years of what I would call learning experiences, but we made it. Every time my husband walks into the room, my heart still melts.

Jane Parks-McKay and her husband Tim McKay have been married so long they almost look alike. They live in Santa Cruz.



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A 60-Year Love Affair

By Suzanne Simpson

It was the spring of 1960, and I was going to graduate soon from my hometown's junior college and marry the man of my dreams.

"Not so fast!" Miss Fate wagged her finger at me.

My fiancé was in the Air Force. Six weeks before the wedding, he called and, in a somber voice, told me that the big wedding was off; he had gotten a girl pregnant and had just married her.

I collapsed in a heap, called my mother at work, and went to bed and cried for two months. I was inconsolable, and no one could get me out of my sorrow.

My mother, a Methodist church secretary, and our pastor put their heads together to see if they could find me something to get me out of town before I transferred to Sacramento State University in the fall.

They found the perfect project — they sent me to the St. Louis State Mental Hospital in Missouri. To work.

Twelve college students were needed to help an Ivy League doctoral student do research on a project she was doing with mental patients, they said. At the time, caring less, I shrugged, and said, "Perfect."

I had no idea what I had gotten into. In our first meet-and-greet, however, I perked up as I looked around and saw some interesting faces, including one young man who was tall and looked like a movie star. His

name was Peter. Things were looking up.

That summer turned out to be one of the most enjoyable of my life, 10 weeks being of service in a group that was interesting and dynamic.

After I returned home, comparing the St. Louis experience to the drab, boring Central Valley town I came from, I realized I was lucky. And so thankful I had not married.

My crush on Peter turned into a wonderful friendship that has lasted for 60+ years. He lived back East and, when we were both single, would come to California to see me.

At one point during that summer we met, we discussed whether it could work if we became lovers, but something held us both back. He was single for longer than I was, and after my divorce we often traveled together, which was always fun.

Now, in our late 70s, we have a friendship that has gone on for most of our lives. He comes to Arcata to visit at least once a year, and still has those rugged, Harrison Ford movie star looks.

It's always fun to talk with him about the old days and discuss what has happened in our lives, and enjoy that comfortable feeling of knowing we have been friends for so long.

—
Suzanne Simpson, 79, of Arcata
is an artist, writer, filmmaker, gardener and cook.

"A friend is someone who knows all about you and still loves you."

— **Elbert Hubbard (1856-1915), writer and philosopher.**

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Women Who Love Old Cats

By Patti Stammer

I have an old Siamese and a young Siamese look-alike, both with bright blue eyes.

I met my first Siamese in a neighborhood in Oaxaca, Mexico, when a little cat wandered into the posada where I had stayed many times over the years. The family thought it was a miracle that a cat with blue eyes wandered in on the same day I arrived — both of us blue-eyed and both unexpected. I sat for most of the afternoon in the courtyard, holding the little cat, while the neighborhood wandered in to see our matchineyes. *Que milagro!*

My old cat is now sneaking up to the end. She meows around the house, railing at growing old. I recognize our shared complaints. A sweet old gal who sheds enough hair to have recreated herself a dozen times, she is as big as a meatloaf and totally brown, with a caramel colored undercoat. Her Siameseness is hidden except for her blue eyes.

She was my first new kitten after the last two old kitty pals passed at 18 and 21.

She came from a box in front of the Walmart in Crescent City. There were four kittens in the box — black, ginger, tiger and a Siamese. A sad little girl was giving away kitties she obviously wanted to keep. They drew

me like a moth to a flame.

I looked at each one until the little Siamese with her amazing eyes and her lavender fur ran up my sleeve, curled up on my shoulder and nuzzled my neck. The kitten version of, “You’re mine.”

I told the little girl that I would take her home, but I had to go into the store first to get kitty stuff. I gave her my name and number to call me, or ask the store clerk to page me when she was ready to go home.

A half-hour later, I was in the pet department getting all the new kitten

accoutrements when I heard the loud-speaker, “Patty, your cat is ready at checkstand one.” A woman shopping in the same aisle turned to her friend, “I didn’t know they sold cats at Walmart! They just have everything, don’t they?”

Laughing all the way to the checkstand, I collected my new baby, and put her in a cat carrier in the back seat with a tiny litter box, kitty food, water and a soft baby blanket. Her cries soon found her wrapped in the blanket, fast asleep, snuggled into my cup holder for our long drive south.

On the way home I named her Wally.

Patti Stammer and her meatloaf-sized pal Wally keep each other company in McKinleyville.



Patti Stammer and her “meatloaf,” Wally. Submitted photo.

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Black History Is Now

The killing of George Floyd by a white Minneapolis police officer last May helped bring to the forefront of the general consciousness what Black people have known and lived with for generations: it is dangerous to be Black in America.

Floyd's killing (and others that promptly followed) helped prompt demonstrations worldwide with simple messages, often handwritten on cardboard signs: "Enough is enough." "Stop killing us." "Justice for George Floyd."

February is Black History Month, but the conversation about George Floyd's killing, systemic racism in America and how we all understand and talk about race must extend far beyond a holiday or annual observance.

Black Lives Matter was founded in 2013 after another killing — of black teenager Trayvon Martin — and in 2020 grew into a national movement to expand that conversation.

It's about time. In 1915, efforts began to recognize and promote achievements of Black Americans, and in 1926, the second week of February — coinciding with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass — was selected as national Black History Week. President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976.

This year's theme is "Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity," designed to explore the spread of Black families across the country and their roles and contributions in local communities.

For information about Humboldt events during Black History Month, check the Eureka chapter of the NAACP (eurekanaacp.org), Black Humboldt (blackhumboldt.com), and the African American Center for Academic Excellence (aacar.humboldt.edu) at Humboldt State University. PBS also has numerous special programs on its schedule.

"Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

—Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)

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ASK THE DOCTOR . . . From Page 5

some of the first available Sabin polio vaccines in the early 1960s.

Ina Harris is 98 and has lived in Eureka for 50 years. She was born in New York City and raised on a farm in New Jersey. When her daughter and son were 5 and 9, the oral polio vaccine came available.

“At the time, I was a young mother with two children,” Ina said. “I thought it over very seriously and decided

the consequence of the paralysis was so great, as was the possibility

of needing confinement in an iron lung. I made the decision, with the doctor.

“There was a lot of anxiety from my friends, who were going to let me go first,” she said. “I tried to be level-headed. I am glad I did (get my children vaccinated).”

At that time, runners were sent out with vaccine, which was administered in a lump of sugar or an ice cube, Ina recalled.

I asked Ina what she thinks about the COVID-19 vaccine, and if she plans to get one.

“Oh yes!” she said. She encourages each person to think it over and weigh the evidence. And “to consider what happens if you don’t take it — you might die.”

I agree that people should consider the evidence, but ask that people use sources that are scientifically valid. You can talk to your doctor, you can go to the CDC website (cdc.gov), which has a lot of information on COVID and the vaccines. You can listen to Dr. Anthony Fau-

ci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

There is an incredible amount of misinformation out there. What is factually true is that the vaccine is effective, cannot cause COVID-19, and is safer than getting the disease itself.

By some measures, Ina was brave when she was willing to have her children vaccinated against polio,

but what she did was to think through the consequences of her children getting a

serious and potentially life-threatening disease. Since Ina worked as a gym teacher, she took into consideration the importance of mobility and physical activity, and how polio would impact her children.

I admire her ability to take stock of the situation, and to set an example for those in her community. She is still doing that today.

May this year bring healing of all sorts to our community and nation. The COVID vaccine is one part of this, at least in terms of getting past this global pandemic. Please consider taking part and getting your vaccine as soon as it becomes available.

—
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.

‘May this year bring healing of all sorts to our community and nation.’



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Crossword Puzzle

High Numbers by Erik Agard, Edited by David Steinberg

ACROSS

- 1 Movie
- 6 Janitorial implements
- 10 Polluted air
- 14 Music medium
- 15 "What ___ is new?"
- 16 Terse summons
- 17 Modify
- 18 Capital of the Netherlands
- 20 Wizards and Grizzlies play in it: Abbr.
- 21 "Otherwise ..."
- 23 Turn suddenly
- 24 Southern potful
- 26 Shakespeare title king
- 27 ___ terrier
- 28 Disney's Ariel, for one
- 31 Popular Halloween costume the year after "Frozen" came out
- 34 French cheeses
- 36 Org. in JFK
- 37 Softball glove
- 38 Coatings for 34-Across
- 39 Arctic
- 40 "___ big fan of your work"
- 41 Break up
- 42 Miners' materials
- 43 Carrier made of cloth
- 46 "Moby-Dick" captain

DOWN

- 48 Group of elephants
- 49 Adjustable cap
- 53 Place to order an egg salad sandwich
- 54 Without company
- 55 Beans container
- 56 Genre that originated in Atlanta
- 58 Precision knife brand
- 60 Revert
- 61 Rolling in dough
- 62 Snowy heron
- 63 MVP part
- 64 One of many in Minnesota
- 65 Roebuck's partner
- 1 Swiss currency
- 2 Fancy Italian car, familiarly
- 3 Optimal
- 4 The Bengals, on scoreboards
- 5 Alaskan bear
- 6 Like a poorly paced plot
- 7 Actor Edward James ___
- 8 Under-the-breath "Hey!"
- 9 Word between "ready" and "go"
- 10 React to a horror movie, perhaps
- 11 Debate runner
- 12 "Queen Sugar" actor Dorsey

- 13 Stone that's worth a lot
- 19 "Worst. Idea. ___!"
- 22 Crispy powwow fare
- 25 Exam for a future atty.
- 26 What "<" means
- 28 Cuban sandwich often eaten as a midnight snack (hence its name)
- 29 Bit of land in the water
- 30 Parents known for corny jokes
- 31 Radiate
- 32 Vehicle for VIPs
- 33 Data whizzes, and a hint to the starts of 6-, 11- and 28-Down
- 35 The Colts, on scoreboards
- 39 Salad with bacon and eggs
- 44 Device for catching slippery fish
- 45 Hat's edge
- 47 Highest points
- 49 Smooth-talking
- 50 Ghana's capital
- 51 Provide all the food for
- 52 Hair ties?
- 53 Early Bond villain
- 54 Tibet's place
- 56 Stomach, cutely
- 57 www.umd.edu, e.g.
- 59 18, for many college freshmen

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Crossword Puzzle answers on Page 12.

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Letters to the Editor

Horrorified

To the Editor:

Like all of us, my husband and I were horrified to see the reports about the attack on our Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. These weren't peaceniks protesting outside the Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1968 (and getting beaten up by Daley's cops). This wasn't people of all races protesting violence against Black people (and getting beaten up for it). These people were armed and violent and frightening. They reminded us of Nazi Germany, not the U.S. of A. Where were the police this time?

My husband and I have been both Republicans and Democrats through the years, but we are ashamed at what the Republican Party has become under this man.

I don't know if President Trump "incited" this particular mob to attack our lawmakers, but he has certainly incited more than enough violence and hatred and division in this country. We will all be so much better off when he is gone.

God bless America.

Chris Hunt, Eureka

Getting The Shot

To the Editor:

Here's an answer to Julie Fulker's question in "Homegrown" in the January 2021 Senior News ["Where Are You In Line?" page 6].

I certainly agree that, being toward the end of a long and happy life, and in a relatively safe, low-stress situation, I seem not to be high priority for COVID-19 vaccination compared to health workers and all others who work with the public or are at higher risk.

It's a matter of supply and demand. When seniors get sick, they are

MUCH more likely to end up in the hospital. We vaccinate health workers to ensure a supply of them, and seniors to reduce the demand for them. Our self-interest coincides with the public interest. Of course, EVERYONE should be vaccinated, and will be.

So I'm leaving it up to the experts to balance these considerations and come up with a priority list. I'll not mind where I am on the list, but when my turn comes, I'm going!

Dick LaForge, Eureka

Idiot Drivers

To the Editor:

I had to chuckle when I read Harold McArthur's story about driving off a mountain when he was a young man ["A Lesson That Changed My Life," Senior News, January, page 6].

Not chuckling because he almost killed himself, or because careless driving is funny, but because I have a memory of a car wreck, beer and a

similarly idiotic young man who is also lucky to be alive.

Now I am an old man who yells at idiot drivers and hopes they will be as lucky as Mr. McArthur and I were, that they walk away from their crashes and learn a lesson that might save their lives, or somebody else's.

Robert Jones, Fortuna

Boomers' Responsibility

To the Editor:

I really enjoyed the January issue and, most particularly, John Heckel's thought-provoking article ["Boomers' Legacy," page 10]. You could have a whole issue about the Legacy of the Boomer generation, and what we're now enjoying versus the heritage we're leaving for future generations.

It makes you ask yourself what, in your life of relative comfort and, perhaps, retirement, have you done to address problems of inequality, environmental destruction, climate change, corporate power and the threats to democracy, etc.

Are we actually entitled to feel like we deserve to rest after our decades of work and achievement? Or do we need to "keep truckin'" and actively work to address these issues in the years we have left? And, if so, how best to do so?

Is it enough simply to contribute to good causes with the wealth we've acquired, or do we need to become

boomer activists à la Jane Fonda and others?

I watched "Age of the Humans" on Access Humboldt yesterday, and then read the commentary on it by David Cobb in EcoNews. Both were illuminating. How do we go about addressing these systemic and institutional problems? How can we make meaningful change? We've lived in quite the golden age; what are our responsibilities as aging Boomers moving forward? We have the knowledge and skills — will we use them?

In any event, I'd love to see you challenge Senior News readers to actually address the questions posed in Heckel's article. It's something I don't think we take seriously enough, or perhaps want to look at at all. Few want to truly acknowledge their own carbon footprint if it gets in the way of their comfortable lifestyle.

Jane P. Woodward, Arcata

Trump's Second Term

To the Editor:

Re. Bruce Hitchko's letter to the editor ["The Path Forward," Senior News, January 2021]: I don't know how you could print such a vile letter.

Clearly, Mr. Hitchko suffers from Trump Derangement Syndrome from watching 24-hour FAKE NEWS, like the four-year "Russian Collusion Delusion."

I have bad news for you Trump haters: the only vote that counts is God's. President Trump is God's pick, therefore, he will serve a second term.

Happy New Year, Trump supporters.

Gloria Bosco, Eureka

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). Mail to Senior News, 1910 California Street, Eureka, CA 95501 or E-mail tpcase@humsenior.org.

Practical Self-Care Tips for a Hospital Stay

By Rachel Westlake

You probably practice self-care whether you know it or not. Choosing to exercise, read, watch a favorite show, spend time with loved ones, organize your closet, attend places of worship, or just being in nature can be self-care.

Originally a medical concept, self-care is now delineated into several types — emotional, mental, physical, practical, social and spiritual. Self-care is a positive, self-initiated behavior done with the intention of improving your well-being.

Self-care can be especially important as you prepare for a hospital stay. Regular self-care can help you be more mentally and emotionally ready for the hospital experience.

It is normal to be overwhelmed in times of crisis, so planning ahead contributes to better experiences and outcomes. The practical act of preparation can contribute to your peace of mind and reduce future stress.

Let's start with what to bring to the hospital. Assemble a bag of personal belongings: comfortable clothing, toiletries and regularly used electronics and chargers. In that same bag, include a file with multiple copies of important documents: your patient information summary, medication list, power of attorney documents, living will and advance care directives, completed POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) form, HIPAA release forms from your hospital's website or another reliable source, and a contact list of family members and close friends.

During your hospital stay you might have loved ones or caregivers helping you. Prepare for them so they can support you. On your fridge and in your wallet keep a list of emergency contacts and a list of those who depend on you (including pets) and your responsibilities to them. Also gather instructions on caring for your home, a list of passwords, funeral arrangements, and a copy of your will.

Prepare for your post-hospital experience. If you'll be coming home, have some food in the freezer, and perhaps a menu schedule. Set aside clean bedding, bathroom and medical supplies for your return.

Preparing for future challenges can create anticipatory stress, so balance thinking about hospitalization with other self-care activities that bring you comfort and ease. If you find it daunting, do a little at a time, or ask for help. Your medical care team, legal and financial advisors, loved ones, local senior agencies, and your professional health advocate all can help make this task easier. Asking for help is great self-care.

Rachel Westlake is a professional independent health advocate at Woven Health Advocacy, LLC. Contact: Wovenhealthadvocacy.com, info@wovenadvocacy.com and 707-345-1177.

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You Can Be in Senior News

- **MARCH** is National Women's History Month. Let's celebrate the accomplishments of the women in our lives and our communities. Because where would we be without them?
- **APRIL** is the month of foolishness, and Lord knows there's more than enough to go around. Who's your favorite fool, or the best joke or limerick you've heard? Make us laugh.

Contact SN editor Ted Pease: tpease@humsenior.org, or 707-443-9747, x1226.

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