



# Women's History Month

# Celebrating Women's Stories



HUMBOLDT HEROES — The Clarke Historical Museum in Eureka is collecting names and photos of women who have made a difference in Humboldt County, . . . Continued on Page 4

# **Women in Charge**

By Patty Berg

Would this be a better world, a better country, if women were in charge? Absolutely! No doubt about it. But we are not in charge at any level, even though we represent 51% of the population.

Globally, 24 countries currently have a woman as national leader — president or prime minister. Only three countries boast female majorities in government. Rwanda tops the list, with women holding 61.4% of parliamentary seats, followed by Cuba at 53.2% and Bolivia at 53.1%.

The United States ranks 87th. Astounding and embarrassing. Women are more than half of the U.S. population, but hold just 118 out of 435 seats in Congress (27%) and 24 seats out of 100 in the Senate (24%).

Throughout U.S. history, only 55 women have held Cabinet-level appointments, although if all of President Biden's nominees are confirmed, half of his Cabinet will be women. A good start!

Nationwide, only nine states have a woman governor (California has never had one). Only 30.8% of state legislators are women; California is at 30%-37 out of 120 members are women. California does not even rank in the top 10 of U.S. states with women legislators.

Some countries (the U.S. is not among them) have passed legislation to directly address gender underrepresentation through some type of quota, which I support. However, U.S. politics focuses mainly on fundraising, which becomes a disincentive to run for office because you have to raise such a hefty amount not just to run, but to win at both the state and federal levels.

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# **TED**talks: Step By Step

ny teacher will tell you that there's Anothing like the feeling of pride that comes when a former student goes out into the world and makes a mark.

Two such students sent a copy of their new book recently, a nice coincidence for this issue of Senior News celebrating women and National Women's History Month.

Lindsay and Lexie Kite were 20-something identical twins from a small town in Idaho when they showed up in the media literacy class that my wife, Brenda Cooper, and I co-taught at Utah State University. "Media Smarts" was designed to help students navigate what was then quaintly called "the information superhighway."

One of the most challenging — and rewarding — aspects of the class was getting students to think critically about how women are portrayed in news, entertainment and, especially, advertising. This was Brenda's specialty area; rumors that she was a "radical feminist" made some students suspicious and, a few, intrigued (see page 4).

For the Kites, the class lit a fuse. They both went on for master's degrees and then Ph.D.s that expanded their understanding of how media objectify and minimize women. They also created a nonprofit, Beauty Redefined, "which helps women recognize and reject harmful messages about their bodies."

Their new book, "More Than a Body,"

seeks to "cut through the empty promises sold by media, advertisers and the beauty and weight-loss industries."

Teachers can't take credit for what their students become, but it sure is gratifying to watch their trajectories. It's impossible not to cheer as Lexie and Lindsay push back for women.

Media treatment of women (e.g., "You've come a long way, baby!" Hello?) is a critical part of the centuries-old conversation about women in society. As we celebrate the 110<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day this month, we sigh: gender equality is painfully slow in coming.

The world would be a better place if women were in charge, argues former state Assemblymember Patty Berg (page 1). Sure, Kamala Harris is vice president of the United States (and about time!), but U.S. government is still 75% male.

Even so, women quietly and steadily create change in Humboldt every day — whether in local theater (pages 3 & 7), as "Humboldt Heroes" (page 1), as innovators and leaders (page 6), as mothers (page 13) or "Unwed Den Mothers" (page 18) or in facing down loggers (page 15) or nations (page 22) a century ago. Brava!

> Ted Pease is editor of Senior News and former journalism department chair at Utah State University.

Page 1 top illustration: (From left), Ida B. Wells in ~1890, and Susan B. Anthony and Alice Paul (page 22); Laura Perrott Mahan (page 15), all in the early 1900s. Note: President Trump "pardoned" Susan B. Anthony in August 2020 for her arrest for voting in 1872.

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**COMING NEXT MONTH Foolishness** 



# Seeing Theater – and Life – Through a Gender Lens

By Pat Bitton

Humboldt County is blessed with many talented theater folks, and I am fortunate to number three of the most versatile and experienced women among them as friends.

These three amigas are Joan Schirle, founding artistic director at Dell'Arte International, Jane Hill, Dell'Arte's co-founder and owner of artSMART (an arts consultancy), and Jackie Dandeneau, co-founder and artistic director of the Arcata Playhouse.

This is not to minimize in any way the many other talented women engaged in theater in Humboldt — far from it, since I have written about many of them in the pages of the North Coast Journal over the years. They all bring value and honor to the profession, but these 600 words only go so far!

For Joan and Jackie, gender influences all their work. Growing up, Jackie didn't fit into any convenient "boxes" and was continually frustrated by male directors telling her how to portray a woman performing lines written by male playwrights. For Joan, this gender inequity continues today — there are still fewer roles for women, fewer women playwrights, fewer women directors, fewer women in production crews than men.

Jane's recollections of her early years are dominated by the "very demeaning process called 'the audition," which she left behind as soon as she could; for her, gender was less of a factor than just plain getting work.

When it comes to interpretation, Joan is also very conscious of the frustrations Jackie experienced, along with her share of #metoo moments with male directors. She recalls the first woman director she ever worked with as an actor, Anne Bogart in her 1992 production of "The Women."

"Her way of working was different than any

of the male directors I'd worked with," Joan said.
"She made the cast feel like we were all essential to
the process and that our creativity was what made
the piece."

Jane and Jackie agree that they see this more nurturing, holistic approach in their own work.

When it comes to interpreting the work of women playwrights, none of the three feels they need to take a different approach than with plays written





THREE Js OF HUMBOLDT THEATER — Joan Schirle (upper left), Jane Hill and Jackie Dandeneau — talk about giving voice to women and their perspectives. Submitted photos.

by men. In that sense, gender is no different than ethnicity, race or any other lens through which to see the world — all require careful study and sensitive interpretation to communicate accurately to the audience what the play is trying to say.

All three women also have a common strong sense of self that goes beyond gender. They took early ownership of their careers, creating and frequently chasing down funding for their own

opportunities. Jane and Joan were instrumental in creating the theater of place that is Dell'Arte, where artists are always part of an ensemble and everyone has a part in their own creative choices.

Beyond Dell'Arte, both women have also had wide-ranging independent careers in and around theater — Joan as a writer, actor, director and teacher, Jane in management, direction, teaching, writing and, most recently, stage design (hiding behind a pseudonym until she was sure she wasn't making a complete mess of things!).

Jackie left the mainstream for feminist theater, reveling in the freedom of women creating their own work; those years on the road with women have found their culmination in the annual Zero to Fierce Festival [see page 7], although it is her fervent hope that one day there will be no need for a separate women's festival in theater or anywhere else.

Three strong women, grasping theater with both hands and taking it where they want it to go, can only bring benefit to all of us. Men have been doing this for centuries. It's about time the balance tipped in women's favor for a while.

**Pat Bitton**, 69, of Eureka has written widely about theater and performing arts in Humboldt and beyond.

"Theater has an incredible capacity to move people to social change, to address issues, to inspire social revolution."

**—Eve Ensler,** *feminist activist and performer.* 

# Students Open Mind, Save Program at 'Barbie Bash'

By Brenda Cooper

"Oh my gosh, Professor Cooper. I think I might be a feminist," one student emailed me early in my career at Utah State University, where I directed the Women & Gender Studies Program (WGS).

Identifying as a feminist — or even taking courses about feminism — often took courage among my students. Some parents threatened to stop paying tuition if their daughters took a WGS course.

Other students reluctantly took a WGS course to meet general education requirements. One of these said she was concerned about my Introduction to Gender Studies class because I had the reputation as a "radical feminist."

"Really?" I said, surprised. "Why?"

Because I had kept my maiden name when I married, she said.

But many of these same students who worried that the professor was too "radical," or who thought the course material conflicted with their religious upbringing, learned to be unapologetic feminists, earning degrees in Women & Gender Studies. Ultimately, they helped save the program.

When a new (woman) dean proposed eliminating the WGS program, four students — Katie, Jessica, Amy and Katie Jo — went to work, organizing events to publicize Women & Gender Studies, getting the university administration's attention. They met with the president, provost and dean, ran a retro 1950s-themed bake sale, and went on a media blitz — newspaper articles, radio interviews and flyers for Women's History Month events across campus. They started a WGS student club, and made t-shirts promoting the program.

The campaign to save Women & Gender Studies

culminated in the "Reinventing Barbie Bash" to celebrate Women's History Month. Students and the community submitted reinvented Barbie dolls that challenged the stereotypes of women embodied in the perpetually high-heeled dolls. They found a 3-foot-tall Barbie doll, dressed her in Utah State sports gear and paraded her around campus, raising \$2,000 in donations for the program.

The Barbie Bash drew more than 200 reinvented Barbie and Ken dolls, which were displayed in the campus library throughout Women's History Month. Among my favorites were a pregnant Ken titled "Transgender Ken," Barbie dressed in robes called "God as a Woman,"

and "Madame President, Midol and All" — Barbie in a three-piece suit at her desk in the Oval office.

One of the most poignant submissions was from a teenager who attended a local educational center for pregnant teens. Her entry featured Barbie's head and dismembered body parts floating in a lake of blue paper, with the caption, "Truth About Teen Pregnancy for Me." This was how she had felt since her boyfriend changed his cell number the day after she told him she was pregnant, she said.

The "Reinventing Barbie Bash" was standing-room-only, with the university president and his wife in the audience, surrounded by current and



THREE BARBIES — Katie Jo and Amy got all dolled up to reinvent Barbie for her 50th birthday in 2009. Ted Pease photo.

former students who returned to campus to support the WGS program.

Katie, Jessica, Amy, Katie Jo and all the students who participated helped save our small WGS program, which persists and thrives at Utah State. Little did I expect to find some of my most-admired feminist heroes in Utah. But those students were hungry to explore issues of gender in their lives and beyond. Coming from a patriarchal culture, their enthusiasm was inspiring. Still is.

**Brenda Cooper, Ph.D.**, 73, of Trinidad, stays in touch with her former students.

#### **HUMBOLDT HEROES...** From Page 1

including these nine. "Notable Women of Humboldt County" now numbers more than 100 women ranging from commercial fishing boat captain Minnie Florence Anderson to former Eureka school principal Catherine Zane.

The project, in conjunction with last summer's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment extend-

ing the vote to women, honors "a diverse swath of women" whose roles and lives make them notable, said Clarke executive director Caitlyn Buesch.

The nine randomly selected women on Page 1 are (from upper left): Wiyot Tribal chair Cheryl Seidner (Mark Larson photo), Ferndale photographer Abigail Cardozo, Samoa civic leader Elma

McArthur, pilot Kay Gott Chaffey, former state Assemblymember Patty Berg, author Harriet Weaver, former Arcata Mayor Connie Stewart, photographer Ruth Mountaingrove, and Ink People Center for the Arts founder Libby Maynard.

Photos courtesy of the Clarke Historical Museum in Eureka. Visit "Notable Women" at clarkemuseum. org.

#### **ASK THE DOCTOR**

# **Equal Time**

By Jennifer Heidmann, M.D.



Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman in this country to earn a medical degree. Her medical school — Geneva College in upstate New York — accepted her as a practical joke, and treated her as a pariah.

Apparently, she earned the respect of her colleagues and graduated first in her class in 1849, continuing her training at hospitals in London and Paris.

My mother had hoped to become a doctor, but was told it was im-

proper (though marrying one would've been encouraged). She pursued her degree in nursing and eventually taught at a college, going on to complete a master's

'Perhaps this month can make us think about standing up for our own rights and the rights of others.'

degree while working fulltime and raising kids. She was first in her class. This was the 1980s.

Today, more than 52% of U.S. medical students are women. These are predominantly white women — Black women make up less than 5% of all medical students in 2020-21; about 2% of all physicians in practice today identify as Black.

Women are many years away from having any kind of equal leadership presence in the world of academic and community medicine. I hear gender-based discriminatory remarks about once a month. This is the 21st century.

We designate one month a year

to celebrate women's history. It is the month after we celebrate Black history. I am glad we have a way to acknowledge those who have long been ignored, but wonder when history lessons can be inclusive of everyone year-round, and not just dominated by stories of white and powerful men.

Why does this matter? Traditionally, women and people of color have been underrepresented not only in the history books, but in scientific

studies regarding health. And when women see a physician, they are more likely to have their concerns dismissed, and are at higher risk for worse outcomes (in-

cluding death) because of this.

Dr. Susan Moore, a 52-year-old Black woman family physician in Indianapolis, died in December from COVID-19 after what appeared to be substandard and racist care. It did not seem to matter that she was a physician — assumptions were made about her as a woman of color.

Studies show that women have a considerably lower survival rate than men in the year after a heart attack. Often, women present with symptoms that might not be taken seriously, and therefore do not receive the aggressive care offered to the typical white man.

Continued on Page 19

# **Things Are Looking Up**

By Jim Slade

I got my second COVID shot this week. I feel much better. I still have to wear a mask and keep my distance, but now I do it with much more confidence.

Has isolation taught us anything about ourselves? Well, it may turn out that we are more closely related to hibernating, burrowing animals than to monkeys.

Is working from home less stressful than working at the office? The trouble with working at home is you

never know when to quit and you have to clean your own wastebasket.

Who pays for office supplies? And when you dip into your home supply of paper clips and pencils, do you take more or fewer items than you would downtown?

By the way: Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.

**Jim Slade**, 84, counts his paper clips in Morgantown, West Virginia.

# 'Pandemic Fatigue'

"I don't know," a friend said recently. "I just don't feel like myself."

Feeling down? Low-energy? Worried and depressed? You're not alone, say psychologists and health experts, and it's not just wintertime blues. California's first lockdown orders came one year ago this month, and many are feeling the effects of COVID fatigue.

Boom! you've hit the pandemic wall. After a year of COVID limbo with no end in sight, it is completely understandable.

"So much of 2020 has been filled with uncertainty, and our brains do not like uncertainty," one doctor said.

The body's response to uncertainty may be an adrenaline rush, but no one can maintain fight-or-flight mode for months without the batteries running down.

Home isolation may prompt feelings of loss, counselors say, especially since we can't do the kinds of activities — the gym, social gatherings, a night on the town — that can help us de-stress and recharge our batteries.

Two results of the pandemic have been a rise in self-reported mental health problems — depression, anxiety, fatigue —and a decline in behavior that can protect public health.

"There has been a lot of talk about 'pandemic fatigue,' and this study clearly shows that people are less willing to take precautions to limit the risk of infection and slow the spread of the virus," wrote researcher John Romley in JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Such trends worry public health officials, especially as new COVID variants pop up. "Vaccines are here but vaccination takes time," Romley said. "In the meantime, we need to stay focused on protecting one another."

To battle pandemic fatigue, experts advise getting help from a therapist to develop COVID coping skills. And limit activities that stress you out the most — like "doom scrolling" through the news, or spending too much time in front of a computer or the TV.

-Ted Pease



#### HOMEGROWN BY JULIE FULKERSON

# **A Virgin Mother**

thought my mother was part an-**■**gel. She resembled those golden cherubs dangling from pillars in Catholic churches I had visited. She was petite, round and had blonde curls. She sang lullabies to me as I fell asleep. She loved me unconditionally.

I also thought she was a virgin.

This takes some explanation, with a little backstory.

When I was a senior in high school, I had my first real boyfriend. We had great political

'OK, so my mother was not a virgin, but I thought she was perfect.'

debates. He was a Barry Goldwater conservative and I was a staunch Adlai Stevenson liberal. I felt that it was our job to do everything we could for others because we had advantages and needed to share. He argued that each of us needed to take care of ourselves, not worry about anyone else and it would all balance out in the end.

We had that argument throughout our adult lives. As adults, he worked for a Republican congressman in Washington, D.C.; I served on the Arcata City Council. Nevertheless, he always promised he would run my campaign for president.

He was Catholic and I had literally no religious education except for what I picked up from the nativity story in "Amahl and the Night Visitors" and "The Ten Commandments." I knew what it meant to be good.

One day, I told him that my mother was a virgin. He laughed. "So you think you are the immaculate conception!"

At this moment, my lack of religion and sex education smacked me right in the face. I argued that my mother was just as good as Mary. You see, I didn't realize that Mary and Joseph had not had sex. I assumed they had and that was how Baby Jesus came to be. I thought

> "virgin" was an adjective to describe a special, loving woman. My mother was just as much a vir-

gin as Mary.

OK, so my mother was not a virgin, but she was loving, encouraging, forgiving and gave her life to others. As a fine professional cellist, she often sat with the newest player in the back of the symphony to help them get up to speed. She supported my father through difficult illnesses. She baked 20 quiches at a time for fundraisers until her cancer treatments kept her from standing.

She carried all the burdens that women of her generation faced, but her wisdom, sense of humor, courage and gentle honesty gave her strength. I thought she was perfect.

Julie Fulkerson, Humboldt-grown and seasoned, tackles the tough political, biological, musical and religious questions from her home in Eureka. Contact: juliefulkerson@mac.com.

# **Arriving Just in Time**

By Judy Webb

When I look back on the early 1970s, I like to point out that quite a few women moved to Humboldt County because their husbands had found jobs here.

The universities were hiring, and there was a real need for new professionals. Outside of the colleges, however, there were few job opportunities for these new women immigrants. The lumber industry was beginning to cool off, and the unemployment rate was very high. There were many needs not being met.

A number of us got to know each other well. We invited a psychologist to spend a day with us to try to help us figure out what we wanted to do for the next 30 years of our lives. Then we all took off in different directions.

The result has been that Humboldt County now has a wide range of services that had not been available.

Back then, Public Health nurses were overwhelmed by a need for family planning, and today we have Planned Parenthood of Humboldt County, as well as other reproductive and education programs.

We can also thank those then-unemployed women who started services for seniors, ways to find referrals to family doctors, and the means to receive family planning services. We can also all appreciate the beautiful Humboldt County Main Library in Eureka and its many branch libraries. And we can read the weekly North Coast Journal, also thanks to another one of those women.

Women have tried to fill the community's many needs in many different ways — eventually some of us even got paying jobs! Many of us still volunteer for Hospice of Humboldt, Open Door Community Clinics, Food for People, Humboldt Senior Resource Center and CASA, as retired teachers in public schools, in politics and government, and to Keep Eureka Beautiful.

It makes me proud to look back all these years later at the early '70s, the slumping economy and the women who arrived at just the right time.

**Judy Webb**, 80, of McKinleyville is a co-founder of Planned Parenthood of Humboldt County.

# Amelia, Amanda & Greta

One of my first heroes when I was an early teenager happened to be a woman.

She was Amelia Earhart, the famed aviator who disappeared somewhere over the Pacific six years before I was born.

I learned about this amazing pilot in my early years and put her above everybody else I was learning about. She said something that caught my attention: "Women must try to do things as men have tried. When they fail, their failure must be but a challenge to others."

Today, she is still my hero, but two others recently have joined her: Amanda Gorman, the 22-year-old National Youth Poet Laureate who read her poem at Joe Biden's presidential inauguration, and 18-year-old Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg.

-Dave Rosso

# 5<sup>th</sup> Womxn's Fest Online

As with so much else during the pandemic, this year's Zero to Fierce Womxn's Festival has had to adapt.

One look at the lineup of the 5<sup>th</sup> annual week-long festival of women's art and activism tells you that Zoom means there's no slowing down for this celebration. "Zero to Fierce" is a play on the expression, "Zero to 60," said festival spokesperson Haley Davis. "This means that womxn go fast in no time at all," she said.

The theme of the free online festival is "Womxn as Activists," and it runs from Monday, March 8 — International Women's Day — until Sunday, March 14. The festival brings together performing and visual artists as well as chefs, faith leaders, scholars and social activists to celebrate the power

of love, community and womxn, all through magic of Zoom, which will allow participants to stream all day, or drop in to individual events.

photo.

**LUNCHBOX SERIES of** 

presenters will include Judge

Abby Abinanti, chief judge of

the Yurok Tribal Court. Submitted

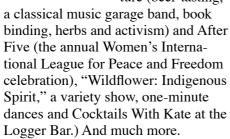
Jacqueline Dandeneau, executive of festival sponsor the Arcata Playhouse, said the theme showcases the activism of women whether they lead protests or raise children. The festival has plenty to interest men, she said, "but it really celebrates women-led events and artistry and activism."

"The role of woman as activist is not necessarily the person at the protest, or the person doing the legislation," Dandeneau said. "There are a lot of women who are activists through their children, through their

food, through their quiet, steady writing and exploration of their roles within their communities."

One of the dozens of presenters who fits all those categories is Judge Abby Abinanti, the chief judge of the Yurok Tribal Court and the first indigenous woman admitted to the California State Bar. She will be part of the Lunchbox Series from noon to 1 p.m. (Participants may preorder \$10 lunches from local chefs.)

The festival is organized into five daily segments: Morning Movement (including a sunrise Arcata Marsh walk, yoga and dance), the Lunchbox Series (discussions of books, film and social issues), Family Time (crafts, storytelling and movies), Afternoon Adventure (beer-tasting,



"I want to talk with others and be challenged to find loving solutions," Dandeneau said. "Fierce, loving solutions. And laugh. And sing. And eat good food. This is what the festival does for many people."

For a full schedule and more information, go to zerotofierce.org.

-Ted Pease

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#### PAINTING THE OCEAN

By Margaret Kellermann

## My Heroes

Ilike the word hero to describe both men and women. The word heroine — like poetess — sounds like a pale, laced-up secondary character. No such word as superheroine, eh? For me, a superhero describes a person who wears a cape and yet isn't too proud to wash and dry it.

Here are two women in my life who have worn and washed that cape with distinction.

The first hero I met was Great-

Aunt Sarah McCracken. I was 9, spending a week one sum-

'They beamed love.'

mer at her home in Durham, North Carolina. Even though she was 60 years older, Aunt Sarah urged me to run around Duke University campus with her one evening, catching fireflies in Ball jars, then letting them go.

As a middle child, I hadn't received such individual attention ever. Sensing a trap at first, I kept politely declining, certain she couldn't mean to spill so much friendliness and love on one kid.

Fortunately, Aunt Sarah's encouraging laugh won me over. We made birdhouses, hanging them in her pear tree. We sang silly made-up songs. She took me to an old downtown pizzeria, where we watched pizzas being tossed. She showered me with perfect gifts: fruit-shaped erasers, a brainteaser book.

Later, my second hero. At Seattle Pacific University, when my new English professor-poet, Rose Reynoldson, handed back my poem in class, I was amazed she'd written

"Marvelous!" in lovely green ink.

After that course ended, Rose offered me a one-credit independent study course if I simply came to her office and shared a new poem with her every week. For my college graduation present, she set up a poetry reading for me, with only English professors in attendance. Two years later, we published a book of poems together, "The Rose and the Pearl." I was 23; she was my elder by 40 years.

For many years after that, Rose invited me to teach poet-

ry workshops at an annual writers conference she had created. And one summer, she cruised all the way up the Inland Passage to spend a week at my house in Juneau before turning for home.

What connects these two women? Both were elders when I met them, while I was a quiet, insecure youngster. They didn't view me as less capable or less interesting. No, they perpetually beamed love at me, though I could never figure out why. They invited me to share joy, food and gifts.

These companions of mine were fully integrated: body, soul, mind and spirit. Whatever they said to me, I knew, was true. I could trust them with my life, lean on them for support, love them without reservation.

My heroes.

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



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"Well-behaved women seldom make history."

— Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, historian.

# **Finding Live-In Support**

By JoAnn Schuch

For decades to come, women will make up the majority of the elder population in this country. Most of us want to continue living in our own homes as we age. As long as we are active and healthy, living in our own places works well, but the picture gets a little cloudy when you visualize needing some help.

When an older person starts to need more assistance, friends and family might step up, and organizations like Redwood Coast Village coordinate a community of volunteers who help each other, but what happens when you need more?

As much as I wish there was a robust safety net for seniors, there is not. Many people say, "I'm going to have someone move into my house to take care of me." They point to their extra bedrooms, attached apartments and mother-in-law units.

Their vision is to find someone who can be there, night and day, to fill in and do things an older person might require. Help out around the house? Provide rides to shopping and appointments? Be there overnight in case of emergency?

These are all reasonable needs, but can you picture finding someone, right now, who could do that for you? Who among the people you know would want that job? Who in the larger population? Maybe a nursing student or a retired person would like to move in, maybe in exchange for rent?

How would you find that stranger, and how would you know you can trust them? Do they have the training to help as a caregiver? Would your insurance cover them if they are hurt working at your house?

I've been that full-time, live-in person for my mother and father, and I've been asked many times to advise others who are facing these questions.

The first thing to recognize is that someone who lives in your home helping you is doing a job. They will need a job description and a clear understanding of what their tasks are. As convenient as it is to pay people under the table, by law, the home helper should have a paycheck like any employee, and state law actually says that home caregivers are under the same restrictions as other employees, including overtime for working more than eight hours a day.

Please recognize that although a loving family member who takes on this job might be more flexible, they are giving up years of their working life, and their future Social Security will be affected by low-income or "free" caregiving. Since this situation has unpredictable hours, few people can continue to work other jobs even part time, and forgoing a paycheck is a choice many are unable to make.

So what can we do? First, acknowledge the realities of what kind of assistance you might need. Learn about the different volunteer or professional resources available in the community, and plan how you might combine them as your support structure. Empower yourself so that you can stay independent, and in the future, be glad that you looked at reality with a clear eye.

**JoAnn Schuch** of Arcata is a kitchen designer and a volunteer for Redwood Coast Village and Life Care Humboldt.

# AREA 1 Agency on Aging HICAP

is the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program, a program of the Area One Agency on Aging.

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Registered HICAP volunteer counselors help senior and disabled Medicare beneficiaries understand their Medicare and health insurance benefits and choices.

HICAP volunteers advocate for Medicare beneficiaries regarding problems with Medicare or a Medicare provider. Volunteers counsel individual clients on a variety of Medicare and insurance issues and inform low-income Medicare beneficiaries about programs that can help pay for Medicare costs.

To volunteer for HICAP please call (707) 444-3000.

HERE'S 10
Strong Women

MAY WE KNOW THEM.

MAY WE BE THEM.

MAY WE RAISE THEM.



The production of this document was supported, in part by grant number CFLM 93.924 from the U.S Administration for Community Livinia (ACL), DHHS, Washington, DC. 20201. antees under taking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions on out, therefore, exessanly expresent official Administration of Community Living policy." Its contents are solely the responsibility of IAIAHICAP and do not necessarily regree ent the official views of ACL





#### AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

# My Mother's Chair

Every year, March is designated National Women's History Month.

In 1978, a Sonoma County educational task force on the status of women initiated a "Women's History Week." The following year, the movement gained nationwide popular support, and communities across the country initiated their own women's history week celebrations.

Between 1988 and 1994, Congress passed resolutions requesting and authorizing presidents to proclaim March Women's History Month. What started out as a local Santa Rosa celebration has, since 1995, taken on national significance.

As we celebrate the role that women have had in the formation of our culture, and as we discover all the women no one ever introduced us to in high school (or university, for that matter), let us also take some time out to look at our participation in the aging process from a more nuanced feminist perspective.

If anything, such a feminist gerontology should ask us to examine our own life's gender-based journey. What a Women's History Month can do is expose gender-based power relationships, help us understand how they work, examine women's lives from their own perspectives, and honor their ways of knowing.

It is a sad truth, but I do not think I ever honored my mother's way of knowing.

I never asked. I was never introduced. I imagine that I am not alone in this.

I accepted my father's masculine perspective as representative of a universal knowing. At dinner, promptly at 6 each evening, we all sat in our self-designated places around a circular dining room table. My mother sat in the chair closest to the kitchen. She served, cooked and cleaned while my father, brother and I discussed world affairs. She sat mostly in silence.

I still have that dining room table.

Approaching my mid-70s, I have developed this gut-level, instinctual belief that women's knowing would help better facilitate my own aging process.

I hope I am not alone in this.

At dinner, now in my own home, I sit in my mother's seat, closest to the kitchen, in the hope some of her knowing will help guide me through this last phase of my life.

So, while during this month we learn about the lives, insights, and discoveries of women like Grace Hopper, Naomi Parker, Miriam Makeba, Benazir Bhutto and countless others, let's take some time out to reflect on how our own lives and aging processes intersect with gender-based power relationships.

My mother would have liked that.

John Heckel, Ph.D., 73, is a retired HSU theater and film professor with a doctorate in psychology who thinks while eating at home in Eureka.

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Senior News • March 2021 Page 11

# **HSRC** News

# New Program Addresses Seniors' Behavioral Health

By Janet Ruprecht

The Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) will soon be launching a new program, Behavioral Health Services, which will be the only local behavioral health program specifically designed to meet the needs of adults 55 and older.

"HSRC's behavioral health program will take a holistic approach to wellness that incorporates how social, emotional and physical functioning interact with factors such as family, health care, housing and nutrition," said Samantha Day, HSRC director of Social Services. "These are issues that may change or intensify with age."

Behavioral Health Services will include individual and group therapy, substance use counseling, case management and other supportive services, Day said. Behavioral health providers will partner with each participant to formulate a tailored plan of care to achieve each individual's goals.

Participants will learn relevant skills, identify and develop social connections, and be linked to community supports.

In Humboldt County, no other community organizations offer behavioral health programs designed specifically to meet the needs of older adults. The county's Department of Health & Human Services provides a counseling program specifically for older adults, but if the case is not severe and the individual doesn't qualify for Medi-Cal, there hasn't been a place for local residents to turn.

HSRC's program will serve people 55 and older of all income levels and with a broad range of insurance coverage options.

"Our program will fill the gap in older adult counseling services by accepting individuals with varying levels of need," Day said. For people without insurance, she said, the cost for services will be on a sliding scale.

In the first phase of the launch, Behavioral Health Services will be extended to the participants of HSRC's Redwood Coast PACE and Adult Day Health programs.

"We have already hired our first behavioral health clinician who will, in addition to myself, provide counseling sessions," said Day. Plans call for hiring of three more clinicians, two case managers and a substance-abuse counselor.

The services will be opened to the community during the second phase of the program launch, planned for this summer.

For more information, contact HSRC at 707-443-9747 or watch the website, humsenior.org, for updates.

**Janet Ruprecht** is the HSRC Development Coordinator.



**COUNSELOR Samantha Day with a client.** Photo by René Arché.

# Hungry? Order Lunch To Go, Delivered\*

Feel like some lunch? Get a sandwich or salad delivered to your door, Monday through Friday, for just 12 bucks starting Monday, March 1.

Humboldt Senior Resource Center's Nutrition Program is bringing back its "Catering for a Cause" box lunches this month to support Home Delivered Meals and congregate dining programs.

Just call 707-443-9747, x1264, before noon to order your box lunch for next-day delivery. Or find the online order form on HSRC's website, humsenior.org — click on the Nutrition tab and find "Catering for a Cause" for the box lunch order form. You may also email catering@humsenior.org with your order.

The cost is \$12 plus tax. Pay with a credit card when you order (preferred) or pay the delivery driver with cash.

Call by Friday to receive Monday's box lunch. A three-day notice is required for orders more than 10. You may order up to a month in advance. \*Eureka delivery is free; in Arcata, minimum 10-meal order plus \$12 delivery fee; minimum 15 meals plus \$12 fee to Fortuna and McKinleyville.

Ask us about our gift certificates, and call for info about HSRC's other catering services.

-Tasha Romo

#### Sandwich & Salad Selections

- Turkey Ranch Club
- Asian Pulled Pork
- Vegetarian Mediterranean Mushroom Melt
- Chicken Caesar Salad (meal-sized)
- Featured Sandwich of the Month
  Selections come with a cookie & fresh fruit.

# **HSRC Programs & Services Update**

All HSRC programs are open and operating as follows:

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: 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 takeout 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**

#### **Eureka**

Wednesday, March 17

Humboldt Senior Resource Center, 1910 California Street

#### **Arcata**

Thursday, March 18 10:30-11a.m.

Arcata Community Center, 321 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway

#### **HSRC Activities Go Online**

Humboldt Senior Resource Center's Nutrition & Activities
Department is pleased to announce its new online activities program.

We're starting small — our first offerings will be social opportunities where participants can "gather" virtually to chat. As the program expands, we hope to add a variety of online activities ranging from educational to artistic to exercise-based.

Your suggestions for program offerings are welcome. Check our website at humsenior.org for schedules and links.

Questions? Call 707-443-9747.



Nutrition & Activities Program

# REDWOOD caregiver resource center

# **CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS**

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**ZOOM** Video Teleconferencing or **Call-in** via Telephone **(Open to everyone)**1st & 3rd Wednesdays
March 3rd & 17th, 1pm-2:30 pm

#### **MUGS & VIRTUAL HUGS**

**ZOOM** Video Teleconferencing or **Call-in** via Telephone (**Open to everyone**)

1st & 3rd Fridays

March 5th & 19th, 8:30 am-10 am

Attend groups for a chance to win prizes

For link to join or more info contact: Erin McCann, MSW, Family Consultant office: 707-443-9747 x3220 mobile: 707-230-4046

Email: exm@redwoodcrc.org

# My Mom Was My Hero

By Jane Parks-McKay

Mom, aka Betsy Barbara McMillan Parks, was a hero to me. I'm not sure she knew it when she was alive. I wish I'd told her.

When Dad, elderly and frail, grew tired taking care of our ailing Mom, I stepped in to help. It was a special time for me, getting to know them as fellow human beings instead of only as parents. In 2002, Mom moved into a nursing home for less than three weeks. I was there when she took her last peaceful breath.

Mom gave up a lot when she married. Graduating from a private Baptist women's college magna cum laude, she was a career woman before women were going up the corporate ladder. A cub reporter for a daily newspaper and editor of two magazines in North Carolina, Mom met Dad on a blind date. They fell in love and married not long after.

Gone was Mom's journalism career when they moved to Georgia for Dad's work. Then my brother and I were born. It wasn't until we were out of the house did she get back to writing.

She's a hero to me for the sacrifices she made, and for sticking with her passion even after all those years. No, she didn't win a Pulitzer or get on a bestseller list, but she worked on her writing every day in a room overlooking a beautiful county park. She loved "her time."

Mom was mostly a religious historian, and published her first book in the early 1980s. She was shy and didn't want to go out and promote

her books; she thought maybe the local PTA would buy them.

Instead, I ran the book's publicity campaign and, while we sold a few, we mostly offered them to anyone who wanted them, and we had a lot of takers. To this day 18 years later, we hear from people from all faiths saying how much they loved her books.

After she passed away — too soon — at 78, Dad found two unpublished book manuscripts in her office, and worked tirelessly to get both published. He sat at the kitchen counter for hours checking and rechecking sources with various versions of the Bible to make sure everything was accurate. Dad died in 2021.

Heroes come in many forms. The quiet and steady work that Mom did, never giving up even through the hard days of her advancing cancer, is heroic to me. She died doing what she loved best.

When my brother and I went through Mom and Dad's things, I asked for her desk. As we look to relocate to Humboldt, I envision sitting at her desk, carrying on her work with the same determination she had. And, hopefully, with just as great a view.

I will always be grateful for who she was and for what she taught me. Well done faithful servant. I will always love you.

**Jane Parks-McKay** of Santa Cruz loves Humboldt County, which she first visited with her parents on RV vacations.

# Women's Day 2021: #ChooseToChallenge

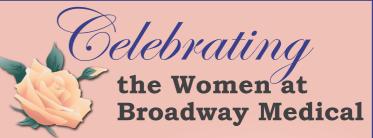
The first International Women's Day was declared in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1911 amidst growing social pressure against oppression and inequality of "the fairer sex."

More than 1 million women and men marched in rallies that year to end discrimination, and in support of women's rights to work, vote, and hold public office.

This year's International Women's Day on

Monday, March 8, celebrates women's social, economic, cultural and political achievements, and focuses on this theme for gender equality and opportunity: #ChooseToChallenge.

For a glimpse at 40 of the world's women leaders — presidents and prime ministers of nations from New Zealand to Germany, Bangladesh to Taiwan — check out this YouTube video (youtu.be/NouO7eoPFUs).



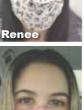






















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## The Determined Women Who Saved the Redwoods

By Laura and James Wasserman

Their names and their stories are largely lost to history. Yet they were leaders of the 1920s in Humboldt County — forceful, determined women who first began to preserve the great coastal redwood forests now enjoyed by millions of visitors from every corner of earth.

The great grandmothers of today's senior generation, they believed — in the 1913 words of their local Redwood Park Committee — "Civilization demands that the natural wonders of the world be preserved for future generations to study and enjoy." Collectively, they founded a campaign that evolved into a statewide and then national movement to save tens of thousands of acres of old-growth redwoods.

Women's History Month offers a moment to celebrate such Humboldt County women as Laura Perrott Mahan and thousands more who lived far from the redwoods. Whether members of the Humboldt County Women's Save the Redwoods League, the California Federation of Women's Clubs or the Garden Club of America, they publicized the plight of the redwoods, raised money, lobbied influen-

tial politicians and joined the highest leadership ranks of the new Save the Redwoods League.

"It is to the women we owe very largely the success that has thus far attended our efforts to establish the Humboldt Redwoods Park," said Save

the Redwoods League Chairman Joseph D. Grant in 1922.

A standout among them, Laura Perrott Mahan of Eureka, headed the 800-member **Humboldt County** Women's Save the Redwoods League. She is best known today for standing in the path of tree felling inside the Dyerville Flat redwoods near Weott, and forcing a logging crew to stop cutting trees for

a railroad corridor. Today, Dyerville Flat is home to the Founders Grove within Humboldt Redwoods State Park.

Born in 1867 to a pioneer ranching family near Ferndale and educated at Mills College, Laura Mahan was

part of a new generation of native-born Californians influenced by conservationists John Muir and President Theodore Roosevelt. From 1919 onward, she helped convince the California Legislature to budget \$300,000 to buy 1,600 acres of redwoods that became today's Avenue of the Giants.

She also persuaded 1,000 members of the California Federation of Women's Clubs to hold their 1923 convention in Eureka, after which the federation raised \$45,000 to buy its own 100-acre grove near Weott. (The Garden Club of America soon followed with fund raising to buy 5,000 acres of redwoods nearby).

Laura Mahan's leadership, including her famous November 1924 showdown with a Pacific Lumber logging crew, also rallied the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, Eureka Chamber of Commerce and the public to save the redwood forests that now make Humboldt Redwoods State Park the largest concentration of old-growth redwoods in California.

Upon her death in San Francisco in 1937, the Save the Redwoods League cited the important role she played in "saving a priceless possession of all our people." Though Laura Mahan and her compatriots are long gone, the trees they saved still stand to tell their story.

#### Laura and James Wasserman

of Clovis are coauthors of "Who Saved the Redwoods? The Unsung Heroines of the 1920s Who Fought for Our Redwood Forests" (2019).



Laura Perrott Mahan in early 1900s. Courtesy of the Humboldt Historical Society.

## North Coast Women's Passion for Our Trees

As Save the Redwoods League President Sam Hodder tells it, Humboldt County was well primed when League founders Madison Grant and Stephen Mather came to Eureka in 1919 to drum up support.

"To their great surprise," Hodder wrote, "they received a wildly enthusiastic response."

It was because of Humboldt women, who had already been working for years to preserve the old-growth trees, as Laura and James Wasserman describe above.

Humboldt women's clubs were pressuring Congress long before the Save the Redwoods League was born. In 1908, they gathered 2,000+ school-children's signatures on a petition asking President Teddy Roosevelt to create a national redwood park.

The day after Grant and Mather

came to Eureka in 1919, the women met and formed their own local Women's Save the Redwoods League, with Laura Mahan as president. Hodder said their efforts were instrumental in saving many old-growth groves, and in the eventual creation of Redwoods State and National Parks.

"Laura Mahan was a phenomenal leader," Hodder said. "They quite literally used their standing to defend the redwood trees, knowing the loggers — their friends, neighbors and family members — wouldn't dare to harm them." They also raised funds to purchase thousands of acres for conservation.

So the next time you take a walk through the redwoods, send a quiet thank you to the Humboldt women who helped save them.

-Ted Pease

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Page 16

# **Bearing Witness to Grief**

By Joe Rogers

Hospice of Humboldt chaplains are often called upon to support patients and families in their most difficult time as end of life draws near.

Our chaplains recently facilitated a memorial service for staff and residents at Eureka's Granada Rehabilitation and Wellness Center for those who had died of COVID-19 following an outbreak there in December.

Humboldt County's long-term care facilities such as Granada provide an essential and often very challenging service as part of the healthcare continuum. Residents of these facilities are typically elderly, with complicated health issues, making them the most vulnerable to the effects of the COVID virus. While less than 1% of the Humboldt population lives in long-term care facilities, they account for approximately 36% of the county's COVID-related deaths.

Granada administrator Alice
Brasier asked our chaplains — Harry
Wells, Pat Basham and Taylor Hagbo
— to conduct a memorial service for
the residents who had passed. Many
of these patients had been long-term
residents who were like family to the
staff and to other Granada residents.
Like a family, they all had individual
stories, talents, personalities and relationships.

The pandemic has been difficult enough for family members unable to see loved ones, and all the challenges to daily life, so the loss of these residents from the recent pandemic surge was devastating to everyone at Granada.

March 2021 • Senior News

In the midst of the ongoing crisis, the staff had not had time to grieve. Grief lingered in the facility like a loud hum or static crackling in the background. No one was talking about it, but staff and residents were all suffering in their own way.

Grief is not something to keep hidden as each of us goes on suffering individually. Each person's grief is unique, but what we have in common is a need for our grief to be witnessed and acknowledged.

Our chaplains' memorial service included song, prayer and reflection. Each resident's name was read aloud, followed by the chime of a bell. Granada's administrator said staff and residents who attended were grateful. Hospice chaplains had helped them name, witness and acknowledge their grief, and, perhaps, provided a start to closing this distressing time we all have been experiencing.

Hospice of Humboldt was proud and honored to partner with Granada to help in their time of great need. This is an illustration of how each and every day we can be examples to one another by pulling together and supporting each other as a community. Together, we will get through this.

Joe Rogers is CEO of Hospice of Humboldt. Contact: 707-445-8443; hospiceofhumboldt.org.

"Only people who are capable of loving strongly can also suffer great sorrow."

-Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), Russian writer.

#### WOMEN IN CHARGE ... From Page 1

According to the World Economic Forum, "The global gender gap across a range of areas will not close for another 108 years, and the gap in political participation won't close for another 99 years." We all will be long gone before that happens.

The main reason I focus on women in government leadership at the federal and state levels is because that is where laws are made that govern us all, and where money flows down to local jurisdictions that then have the ability to make a difference in people's lives. This is something I know about, having been your elected representative in the California State Assembly, where I focused on aging and women's policies that I believed make a difference.

I also believe that aging is a women's issue, and not only because we live longer than men. Back in 1980, I created and then for nearly 20 years ran the first Area Agency on Aging serving Humboldt and Del Norte.

When I moved to Sacramento in 2002, I chaired the Assembly Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care, developing two Master Plans on Aging.

I also chaired the Women's Legislative Caucus and worked to develop a bipartisan, first-ever family-focused legislative platform identifying legislation and the women authors who agreed to move the platform forward at state level.

I designed and team-taught a rigorous, meaningful training course for incoming women Assembly members so they could hit the ground running, and started a bipartisan group of woman legislators that met weekly for dinner, conversation and relationship-trust-building. It was well attended and lasted for over 10 years. I coordinated and led the campaign to elect the first woman speaker of the State Assembly, Karen Bass, who now has served in Congress for the past 10 years.

In 2014 -2015, I was hired to be the state Senate's principal consultant to a committee charged with restructuring California's Aging and Long-Term Care programs, and last year served on Gov. Gavin Newsom's committee to develop California's first-ever Master Plan for Aging, which he signed in January.

Why do I believe our state and country would be a better place if women were in charge? Because, as women, we care about humankind first and foremost. We care about the future of our children and grandchildren and the world they will inherit.

I believe women want to live in safe, healthy, clean and affordable communities where people of all ages and races can thrive and live with their dignity intact, wrapped in an atmosphere of kindness.

But in order for that to happen, we need more women at the helm. And, we, as women, have a responsibility and a vital role to play — starting with political involvement. We must identify new women leaders, encourage them to run for office, raise money for their campaigns, and work to get them elected.

I hope it happens sooner than 108 years from now.

Patty Berg, 78, of Eureka served in the California Assembly from 2002 to 2008. In 2002, she was just the 94th woman ever elected to the State Legislature since statehood in 1850.



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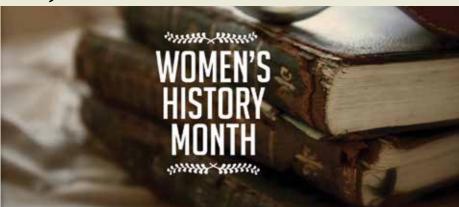
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# **Unwed Den Mothers**

By Patti Stammer

In 1965, I was working on a teaching credential in Art Education at Humboldt State College.

I don't remember how this curious subject came up in class, but my professor mentioned that his sons' Cub Scout pack didn't have a Den Mother for the coming year.

My roommate and I had been Brownies and Girl Scouts, so we thought, how hard could it be?

Surprise! Our wild little Cubs were a different kind of challenge than we imagined. The photo is of my roommate Susan and me (on the right), both in our early 20s, dressed in our uniforms with the boys in our lively pack.

That year, at the local Cub Scout Jamboree, the district supervisor showered us with thanks and then introduced us as Humboldt County's only Unwed Den Mothers.

Our professor gave us invaluable hands-on teaching experience, plus three credits of A toward our credentials.



HARD WORK — When college roommates Patti and Susan volunteered to be den mothers, they found out how much work Cub Scouts can be. Submitted photo.

I looked at this photo and wondered why we looked so tired. Then I looked at the boys and it all came back to me.

Patti Stammer drills her troops in McKinleyville.

# Enjoy the Crossword Puzzle

on page 23

Would your company or nonprofit like to sponsor the monthly **Crossword Puzzle**?

The crossword puzzle is a productive way to pass the time and helps keep the mind active.

Call Liz at 443-9747 ext 1227 or email ewhitley@humsenior.org.

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#### **ASK THE DOCTOR ...** From Page 5

Implicit bias is something I have discussed in other articles. It is well known that we all have this tendency to consciously or unconsciously make assumptions about people based on how they look, their gender, their sexual orientation or their ethnicity. It is *our* job to fix this, not the job of the people being treated differently. (Although I encourage people to advocate for themselves and for others to be heard and cared for appropriately in the world of health care.)

The first Black woman to earn a medical degree in this country was Rebecca Lee Crumpler, from the New England Female Medical College in Boston in 1864. After the Civil War, Dr. Crumpler moved from Boston to Virginia to treat former slaves.

In 2020, she finally had a proper headstone placed on her grave.

Imagine the strength and courage it took for her

to accomplish what she did, then move into the post-Civil War South to practice medicine. I don't suppose there are any statues erected in Virginia of Dr. Crumpler, but maybe there should be.

Dr. Miranda Stewart was a surgeon who graduated from the Edinburgh Medical School in 1812. However, she went by the name Dr. James Barry and hid her gender until after her death, when an autopsy showed her to be female. The first woman to be a surgeon in the United States was Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, graduating in 1855 from Syracuse Medical College. She was an Army surgeon during the Civil War.

Today, male primary care physicians earn on average 18% more than their female colleagues. Male sub-specialty physicians earn an average of 36% more than women in the same field. I am glad we no longer need to pose as men to be in our chosen profession, but when will gender- and

race-based pay gaps be considered wrong by our society?

Happy Women's History Month. Perhaps this month can make us think about how we treat each other, and how we should stand up for our own rights as well as for the rights of others. Eventually, perhaps, every month will be a chance to celebrate the achievements and contributions of all members of our society.

Resources: health.harvard.edu/heart-health/the-heart-attack-gender-gap; aamc.org/news-insights/closing-gender-pay-gap-medicine; washington-post.com/opinions/2020/12/26/say-her-name-dr-susan-moore/

**Dr. Jennifer Heidmann** is medical director and primary care provider at Redwood Coast PACE (707-443-9747). Send comments to seniornewseditor@humsenior.org.



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## Letters to the Editor

#### Care Facility Reform

To the Editor:

Editor's Note: Columnist John Heckel shares this reader feedback:

John, I really like your editorial ["Care Facility Mess," February Senior News, page 10] and agree with you.

Brius [Healthcare], along with other chains, have been terrible and are responsible for many unnecessary infections and deaths. I am glad you have been working with the ombudsman program, and thank you for all your advocacy work.

I have been working closely with California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform (CANHR) and it looks like they have two good bills that will be introduced on nursing home transparency and ownership.

Maybe you can organize support for the legislation after it comes out.

#### Charlene Harrington, Ph.D,RN,

is an emerita professor at the University of California, San Francisco.

#### 'She's Wrong'

To the Editor:

I just finished reading the February Senior News and enjoyed it thoroughly.

I wanted to comment on your dissatisfied reader's remarks on page 2 ["TEDtalks: 'What If' Moments"]. She's wrong. It's a lively and interesting and well-written paper.

I used to be an English teacher and am an avid reader of the New York Times, the New Yorker and the Times-Standard, and I can say as something of an international authority that that lady was WAY out of bounds. Keep doing the good work you've been doing.

Michele McKeegan, Eureka

#### **Extreme Letters**

To the Editor:

The two most recent editions of the Senior News contained pointed political letters. The January letter [Bruce Hitchko, "The Path Forward"] strongly praised the results of the recent presidential election while disparaging the previous administration. The February letter, in response [Gloria Bosco, "Trump's Second Term"], questioned you for printing the former, labeled the writer negatively, and followed that by praise for the election loser.

I think it's time for the Senior News to reconsider its letters policy. Because I believe the Humboldt Senior Resource Center should be a welcoming place for individuals of all political flavors, its monthly paper should reflect the same and not print letters that express extreme political opinions.

As you note in your February column ["TEDtalks: 'What If' Moments"], Senior News is dedicated to present news about issues relating to the 50+ generation. Therefore, letters should stick to facts such as an explanation of a point of view without using hyperbole or condemning the opposite. Letters that directly attack previous writers by name, regardless of the topic, should be excluded as

There is already enough division and animosity in the world, so there's no need for the Senior News to help propagate more. People who wish to express such strong opinions should be writing to the local newspapers instead, just as I do.

Sherman Schapiro, Eureka

Continued on Page 21

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ... From Page 20 'Fern' Takes a Trip

To the Editor:

My name is Eleanor Swanson and I was born in Eureka in 1931 and lived most of my life in Blue Lake.

I read with much interest the story of "Grandma's Cactus" in the January issue of Senior News [Brenda Cooper, "'Grandma's Cactus' Connects Family Over Years and Distance," page 12]. I too, have a story to tell about my plant born long ago in Blue Lake.

When my son was in the second grade in Blue Lake Elementary School, I attended his Parent Teacher Conference. His teacher's name was Mrs. Haley. I admired a beautiful fern growing in a container in her classroom. Several days later, my son came home from school with a baby from this plant.

The baby "Fern" grew and produced many more babies. Over the years, many offspring from this plant were shared with family and friends.

In 2017, I sold my home in Blue Lake and purchased a home in Twin Falls, Idaho. What was I to do with "Fern?" My daughter, who lives in Eureka, took it to her home to stay with "Fern's" relatives.

A few months later, that same little 7-year-old boy who long ago brought his mother the plant from the original fern in Blue Lake transported my "Fern" in his RV to its new home. Sixty-one years later, "Fern" is alive and well in Twin Falls, Idaho.

Eleanor Swanson, Twin Falls, Idaho

#### 'This Is Not OK'

To the Editor:

John Heckel's "Care Facility Mess" [February Senior News, page 10] reminded me of my own experience.

Six years ago, after being in the hospital for a week with pneumonia, my 90-year-old mother was discharged to a Eureka skilled nursing facility. Her lungs were so bad she could only breathe sitting up at a 90-degree angle, and had spent 24 hours a day in the recliner chair at the hospital.

The skilled nursing facility had no available recliner chair, so the first day I ordered one from a medical supply company, paid for it and had it delivered to her room while I waited with her, helping her sit on the edge of the bed. The next day she was OK until the afternoon, when she started crying.

"It's going to be night soon, and they can't help me get up to the bathroom in the night," she said. "They holler from down the hall that there's only two of them at night and they have others to help first. Last night it took them four hours to get to me."

That was when I went home, got her wheelchair, and took her home. They tried to tell me I could not do this, but as an RN, I know better.

This is not OK. Not for anyone, not for anyone's mother. Skilled nursing is hard enough and expensive enough for everyone involved without someone sucking all the money out as profits and putting very little back in staff and supplies.

There should be a law . . . .

Cynthia Packard, Eureka



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# Just a Few of My Many Suffrage Heroes

By Anne Hartline

Alice Paul in 1915

The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified on Aug. 26, 1920. Its wording is short but critically important: "The right of citizens of the United States shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex."

With these few words, the American political landscape was changed forever.

It had taken activists and reformers nearly 100 years to

win that right, and the campaign was never smooth or easy. Numerous books have been written about these heroes, but here I will focus on a few of my favorite suffragists and their stories.

Most people begin the suffrage story with the first Women's Rights Convention, organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott in 1848 in Seneca Falls, N.Y.

Delegates passed the "Declaration of Sentiments," modeled after the Declaration of Independence. Frederick Douglass, the most famous Black man of his time, was there,

and when a resolution calling for women suffrage was met with shock and strong resistance, Douglass argued persuasively about the importance of female enfranchisement. As a result of his efforts and eloquence, the resolution was passed.

Douglass' support for woman suffrage never wavered. When Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony spoke out angrily (and with clearly racist overtones) because the 15th Amendment gave Black men the right to vote and excluded women, Douglass argued that prejudice and extreme violence against Black men made their need for the franchise more pressing. Despite this disagreement, Douglass' support for woman suffrage remained strong and unwavering throughout his lifetime.

Fast forward to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and Alice Paul. Paul was in her early 20s when she traveled to England and encountered the famous militant suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst and joined the cause. Though she was jailed multiple times and was force-fed during a hunger strike, Paul was undeterred. She met fellow American Lucy Burns in a British jail, and they returned to the U.S. in 1910 inspired to bring the new radical strategies to the suffrage movement.

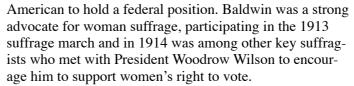
Back home, Paul and Burns joined the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) and helped

organize the 1913 Woman Suffrage Parade in Washington, D.C. The huge parade brought woman suffrage (and the crowd violence endured by the female marchers) to newspaper front pages around the nation.

Though the 1913 Woman Suffrage Parade is sometimes called the first peaceful march on Washington, it was marred by the nation's underlying issues of racism and

segregation. Black journalist Ida B. Wells, famous for her advocacy for anti-lynching legislation, was justifiably outraged by the organizers' demand that Black women march at the back. Undeterred, Wells quietly joined her Illinois delegation once the march began. She remained a lifelong suffragist.

A lesser-known figure in the march was Marie Louise Bottineau Baldwin, a North Dakota Turtle Mountain Chippewa attorney and rights activist. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed her as a clerk in the Office of Indian Affairs, the first Native



After the 1913 parade, Alice Paul continued to advocate for a constitutional amendment to enfranchise women. She was arrested and jailed three times (and force-fed again) with other suffragists because of their "Silent Sentinel" protests in front of the Wilson White House.

After passage of the 19th Amendment, Paul continued to pursue the rights of all women, authoring the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923. She spent the next 50 years trying to get it passed.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was not perfect — for many years after its passage in 1920, women in Puerto Rico, those of Asian descent, women living in Washington, D.C., and Native American women (and men) were still officially excluded from the right to vote, and African American women (and men) were still denied the franchise in many states because of racism. Still, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was a critical step forward for American democracy.

Anne Hartline, 66, of Bayside is a retired middle school educator and 40-year League of Women Voters member.

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## Crossword Puzzle

#### ACROSS

- 1 Con artist's ploy
- Ungentlemanly sorts
- "That's enough," in Spanish
- Brit's "Bye-bye!"
- Wilson of "Starsky & Hutch"
- Smiley face in a text, e.g.
- 17 Do the bidding of
- Bear with a soft bed
- 19 Burton of "Roots"
- 20 Part of a flying flatland?
- 23 Tennis match unit
- 24 Grand \_\_\_ Opry
- 25 Textile colorants
- 26 Like a wallflower 27 Songwriters' org.
- 29 Garb for Caesar
- 32 What you hear on TV?
- 35 Direction many birds fly for the winter
- "I do," at a wedding
- 38 Flatland that's behind you?
- 41 Butter serving
- 42 Bring joy to
- 43 Late for school
- 44 Covered, as a horse's hooves
- Take a stab at
- 47 Like fresh paint

#### 48 Disney clown fish

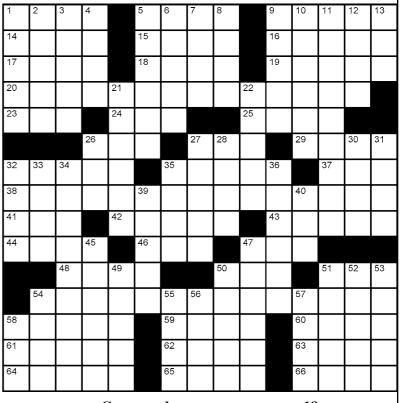
- 50 Aqualung filler
- 51 Rainbow shape
- 54 Artist O'Keeffe, when on a flat land?
- 58 Interrupt at a dance
- Lively spirit
- "Fine" or "liberal" follower
- Got up
- Dull way to learn
- They slip into slip-ons
- Special Forces cap
- Animal that's a plant backward
- "\_\_ of the d'Urbervilles"

#### **DOWN**

- Transit map points
- CNN introduction?
- Bugged incessantly
- "Pretty please?"
- Conform to another's wishes
- In the loop
- Auditioner's CD
- Flip one's wig
- "Promiscuous" singer Furtado
- 10 Eggy brunch entree
- Steps aside
- 12 Open just a bit

#### On Even Ground by Fred Piscop Edited by David Steinberg

- 13 Knight's title
- 21 Zero chance
- 22 Archie Bunker's wife
- 26 Drink from a flask
- 27 Pirate's haul
- 28 TV-silencing button
- 30 Egg on
- 31 Out of whack
- 32 Venomous snakes of Egypt
- 33 Zion National Park's state
- 34 Device used for demolition
- 35 Have top billing
- 36 Prefix meaning "different"
- Former 76er Brand
- 40 Double-crosser
- 45 Cook up
- 47 Shape of the Oscar Mayer car's upper part
- "The Fifer" painter Edouard
- Banded gemstone or marble
- See eye to eye
- Baptism and bris, for two
- 53 Assigns a role to
- "Fine by me" 54
- 55 Stereotypical Comic-Con attendee
- Skin cream ingredient
- 57 Simple boat
- 58 City transport



Crossword answers are on page 18.

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#### You Can Be in Senior News

- **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.
- MAY is a time of rebirth, green growth and new beginnings. What are your thoughts on renewal in the garden and, as more of us get vaccinated, the new normal of living with COVID?

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

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