



“Old friends, old friends,
sat on their park bench
like bookends...”

—Paul Simon

Matt Filar photo

Nothing Like an Old Friend

Extended ‘Family’ You Can Choose

By Gina Belton, Ph.D.

Recently, during burial ceremonies of a close family member, a childhood friend asked, “So you’re coming to the high school reunion, aren’t you?”

I grew up in a small rural California town not unlike some of our small boroughs here behind the Redwood Curtain. Many of the people who came to the family burial grounds that day were faces from my childhood, a blending of my birth family and my friend family.

Thirty-plus years ago, our high school graduation was intimate, not quite 100 students. I still recall looking around at the faces of my fellow graduates, startled by the principal’s comment that more than half of us had been together since kindergarten.

These friendships were community connections, portals of entry to supporting each other through the significant and small moments of each other’s lives. Many of those who sat with me at graduation were also by my side as I buried my family member on that Sunday, and on other days before and since.

If it is true that friends are the family we get to choose, then shouldn’t we choose these relationships carefully? This kind of close relationship is cultivated in expected places — school or work

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LOVE AT FIRST KISS — Suzanne Simpson and Lew Litsky met in a hot tub in Marin County 38 years ago. The rest is history. Ted Pease photo.

It Was Love at First Kiss

By Suzanne Simpson

In June of 1981, I met the man of my dreams in a hot tub at a church retreat. A transplant from a teaching and filmmaking career in Sacramento, I fell into a job as a publicist for a small San Francisco PR firm that specialized in restaurants, hotels and enhancing socialites’ press profiles.

I enjoyed the job, but unlike most of my clients, who wanted to see their names in lights and in the SF social columns, this was not what my heart desired. I wanted to meet and be in relationship with a loving, progressive man who had integrity and was interested in having a mature relationship with me.

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ASK THE DOC

HSRC

LETTERS

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TEDtalks: New Friends

By Ted Pease

The whole time we've been working on this "Friendship" issue of Senior News, Simon & Garfunkel have been crooning "Old Friends" in my head.

You know the one: "Old friends, old friends, sat on their park bench like bookends. A newspaper blown through the grass . . ." There — now you can have it in your head, too.

The idea for an issue on friendships grew out of our annual conversation about how to get by Valentine's Day without focusing too much on the over-commercialized and saccharine-sweet.

(Did I say "over-commercialization"? Last year, Americans spent an estimated \$20.7 BILLION on Valentine's Day — or about \$162 per man, woman and child in the United States. I'm all for love, friends, but that's beyond ridiculous.)

The foundation of all this love, without the frilliness and lace, is friendship. As simple a concept as this is — and as fundamental to human beings as these relationships are — friendship is a lot harder than you'd think, especially after a certain age.

Albert Einstein once said that true friendship is rarer than true love, and who would disagree with a Nobel Prize-winner? Studies show that once we leave school, few adults have the time, energy or opportunity to make new friends outside of work. And once work life is over, it can take real effort to make new

connections with people.

In her article, "Extended Family," Arcata psychologist Gina Belton says that friends are "the family you choose," while acknowledging how challenging this can be (page 1). Although friendships grow out of shared experiences and interests — play, work, hobbies — somehow the "common ground of aging" isn't fertile enough to grow new friends easily, she says.

The flip side of friendship, of course, is loneliness — a dense and complex topic. Isolation and loneliness are common ailments among seniors in modern America, as spouses die, family lives far away; for some, the walls start to close in as they go about daily lives that seem to get smaller and smaller.

Which is why researchers and the contributors to this month's Senior News say that friendship is a health issue that seniors should focus on as much as on exercise, diet and medications.

As we say on page 1, there is "Nothing like an old friend." New friends are good, too — like those of you who are reading Senior News for the first time because it came in your Sunday Times-Standard or Mad River Union.

If so, welcome, friend.

Ted Pease, editor of Senior News, is always looking for a new friend. Can I buy you a cuppa coffee sometime?

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'The Girlfriends' Build Family and Life with 'Verve'

By Ted Pease

What began in 2006 with a random greeting between two old friends on the street — “Honey, let’s get together and have coffee.” — soon morphed into more. Much more.

Fourteen years later, Girlfriends Over 60 is a powerful and enduring force in the lives of 17 Humboldt women who come together every month for coffee, support and serious talk about life, death, passions, health, grandchildren, love, politics, and gardening. For starters.

“We’ve been through hip/knee replacements, weddings, milestone birthdays, husbands’ illnesses and death,” explained Joan Rainwater-Gish, a former banker whose turn it was to host the group in January. “We circle the wagons and try to bring support and comfort to our tribe of Girlfriends.”

“It’s more than a book club,” said Mary Gearheart, former owner of The Garden Gate shop on the Plaza in Arcata. She and former state Assemblymember Patty Berg co-founded the Girlfriends as a way to share more deeply with a circle of friends who were aging together.

“This group is without doubt the most important thing in my life,” said Berg, who has done many important things, including her work in the state legislature and as founding executive director of the Area 1 Agency on Aging.

“It’s more significant to me than my stepchildren or my siblings . . .”

“Or your exercise program . . .,” injected physical trainer Joan



BEST FRIENDS — The Girlfriends Over 60 include, in the back row from left: Tina McKenzie, Joan Rainwater-Gish, Maggie Banducci, Nancy Lengyel, Lyn Klay and Judy Edson. Seated, from left: Shelley Holstein, Michele McKeegan, Lori Goodman, Mary Gearheart, Ann Lindsay and Patty Berg. Missing: Joan Gold, Judy Hodgson, Peggy Irvine, Alex Stillman and Judy Webb. Ted Pease photo.

Rainwater-Gish.

“Or my exercise program,” Berg acknowledged. “This group is totally my family.”

It’s an impressive family of businesswomen, attorneys, doctors, artists, politicians, teachers and “do gooders,” as one said. But what brings and holds them together is not career or accomplishment, but how they want to age and live their lives.

“I was pretty isolated from the community,” said Shelly Holstein, whose practice as a psychologist meant she had to hold herself apart from many friendships. “This group has given me a whole new life after retirement.”

Berg and Gearheart’s original concept was to bring together like-mind-

ed women over 60 who were asking themselves the same question in various forms: “How can I grow old with class, dignity and verve?”

Meeting monthly for brunch, the Girlfriends quickly dispense with gossip and, over two to three hours, explore wide-ranging topics to help themselves and each other look ahead and clarify what they want to get out of their lives.

The discussion topics, assigned for each meeting, are not frivolous: What am I passionate about? What do I still want to learn? What is the essence of myself that I will leave behind? How can I stay relevant? How can I ensure independence, avoid loneliness and build companionship?

In the process, the Girlfriends share

just about everything. “There’s nothing about our lives that we don’t know,” they agree.

Some of them are actively exploring options for group living. When they were in their 30s, “Every one of us saw ourselves as old women alone,” Berg said.

Now they are “planning for aging and living together.” Retired physician Ann Lindsay is leading an effort to establish Life Care Humboldt (lifecare-humboldt.org), a comprehensive senior living community.

Former schoolteacher Nancy Lengel is still grateful for the group’s support and love that helped her through the death of her husband 10 years ago. “I consider everyone in this group my best friends,” she said.

Rainwater-Gish agreed. “I think this is a higher level of friendship.”

Tina MacKenzie, one of three former directors of Humboldt Planned Parenthood in the group, says she has found more than friendship.

“These women are an inspiration and a support for me personally,” she said. “I think we walk this earth to accompany each other through the many chapters of our lives, and I find the hope for kindness to be at the core of all our interactions.

“I am grateful to have found an abundance of kindness with these Girlfriends.”

—
Ted Pease, editor of *Senior News*, wishes he was qualified to be a Girlfriend.

Like ‘A Band of Gypsies,’ We’re the Best of Friends

By Donna Bacon Ulrich

My husband, Larry, and I have been landscape photographers since the early 1970s. We regularly take advantage of the 10-minute drive to Scenic Drive in Trinidad to photograph sunset, or the half-hour jaunt to the redwoods on a lovely, fog-drenched day.

Often we run into other photographers out there in the “wild.”

One time, backpacking along Arizona’s Paria River with Flagstaff photographer Tom Bean and his wife, Susan, a mud-smeared, pack-burdened couple suddenly emerged from a side canyon.

They didn’t just emerge — they slid down a steep trail on their behinds.

Larry was wearing a yellow t-shirt with “Tom Bean Photography” on it because we were posing on the trail for Tom — he liked his subjects in bright colors.

The muddy guy looks at Larry and says, “Are you Tom Bean?”

“No,” Larry said, “I’m Larry Ulrich. HE’s Tom Bean. Who are you?”

That is how we met Jeff Foott, a wildlife photographer.

Over the years, we’d often happen upon friends by accident, or make new ones, most of the time in those iconic places that can’t be ignored — in



IMAGE-SHARING — Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Jack Dykinga of Tucson shows fellow photographers Larry and Donna Ulrich some of his recent shots during a 2017 gathering of prominent photographic “gypsies” in Trinidad.

Mark Larson photo.

acres of poppies with saguaro cactus punctuating the landscape, or amidst rhododendrons shining like jewels in a redwood forest.

We’d greet one another without surprise, share a drink and information on new lenses, techniques and favorite spots to photograph. Sometimes we borrowed some film. We bad-mouthed clients who didn’t pay well or on time, and praised those who did.

light and fog.

Art and friendship have long been partners, the best of friends brought together by shared interests and ways of seeing the world.

Donna Bacon Ulrich lives in Trinidad, when she and Larry aren’t out on the road capturing beauty and making new friends.

Fun Facts About Photography

- **The idea for the pinhole camera** — *camera obscura*, from the Latin, meaning “dark room” — was first detailed by Mozi, a Chinese philosopher, between 470 and 391 BCE.

- **Joseph Nicéphore Niépce** (1765-1833), the Frenchman credited with making the first permanent photographic image (before Louis Daguerre), also invented the first internal combustion engine for propelling boats.

- **Ready for your close-up:** Research finds that, because the left side of the face exhibits more emotion, that’s your better side in photos.

- **The first color photo** was made in 1861, when Thomas Sutton (1819-1875), inventor of the single lens reflex (SLR) camera, layered red, green and blue filters to create a color image.

- **In the late 1800s**, the most popular photographic subjects were dead bodies — both to re-

cord the appearance of a departed family member, and because these subjects could hold still.

- **Moon rocks.** That’s what Apollo 11 astronauts traded for 12 Hasselblad cameras when they took off from the Moon in 1969. The cameras are still there. Fortunately, the images came back.

- **The oldest surviving photographic image**, created by Joseph Nicéphore Niépce about 200 years ago, took eight hours to capture.

ASK THE DOCTOR**All the Answers***By Jennifer Heidmann, M.D.*

It will come as a surprise to no one that doctors do not have all the answers. The internet does seem to have all the answers, so mad scientists are likely developing robot-computer doctors who have all the answers. Soon, maybe the white-coated middleman (or middlewoman) can be cut out of the process altogether, and you can just talk to Siri or The Google about your ailments.

I am all in favor of developments in science and technology that lead to better public health. Things like vaccines have changed the world for the better. Cancer treatments are getting more specific and less toxic. My own father received an extra six years from a heart transplant, and for that I am most grateful.

These things can be tricky, though. Sometimes the available treatments can be worse than the original disease. Some problems with the human body and mind are not fixable, or if they are fixable, sometimes the fix can lead to another problem, at which point more fixing is needed.

What can the physician middlewoman do with such ambiguities and dilemmas?

A computer can give us diagnostic and treatment algorithms, it can tell us when two or 10 medications do not go well together. But a computer cannot tell us what a person's

goals of care might be, what is important to them. It cannot tell us whether a medication is affordable, or whether someone will take them as prescribed.

A computer can list treatment options after a simple Google search of symptoms, but it does not often reveal how good the science is behind the listed options. Doctors can sometimes appear to be stubborn about recommending unproven therapies, having been trained as scientists who have taken an oath to "first do no harm."

A decent doctor should be able to absorb a patient's story, then read the untold parts during the physical exam and review of tests.

A decent

doctor can sense when something is off. A decent doctor will see the patient as a person in the context of a life being lived. A decent doctor will sometimes have to say, "I don't know," and ask the patient to keep showing up for visits and trying again.

More tests, more medications, more procedures should not be the measure of a doctor's skills, effectiveness or productivity. The human body has an amazing capacity to heal, and often the less we do to mess with that, the better.

Good doctoring should look like creation and nurturing of the best possible atmosphere for the body to do its work. And when the body

A decent doctor will sometimes have to say, "I don't know..."

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HEAVENS TO BETSY

BY BETSY GOODSPEED

Another Lawrence Welk

In looking back on my magical life, I can see interesting patterns that appear to be more than coincidental.

I taught music after I retired from performing, and three of my students were nieces of George Gershwin, Walt Disney and Jimmy Hendrix. There were others, of course.

One benefit of writing a blog is reconnecting online with old friends, and finding new ones. After coming across my blog, Lawrence Welk's great-nephew wrote that he saw me playing the harp on one of Welk's Christmas shows.

I was curious to know how he dealt with being named for a superstar, and he wrote back that he hadn't been named after his great-uncle. "My mother said she just liked the name," he said.

This was the first time I've ever interviewed anyone on email, and here is the heart of it.

"My grandfather was Lawrence Welk's eldest brother, John, whose eldest son was my father, Alex," he said. "He told me that Lawrence bought a big, fancy car in the early '30s — an Auburn or a Cord — because his first band lived in the car when they were touring. They were always on the road and he went to Printers Mass with the newspaper people when he didn't get off work

until the early morning hours.

"I visited his home in California when I was 5 years old. Peacocks were in his yard and he had a two-foot radio shaped like a champagne bottle. A clock that turned on his show with a timer may have been the first of its kind.

"I went to Canisius College in Buffalo, NY, to get an accounting degree, but ended up tending bar and working at a marina because I disliked accounting. My college roommate's father was a supervisor at the Buffalo FBI and I was recruited into the Bureau at 22.

"I heard a lot of stories about J. Edgar Hoover being close friends with Lawrence Welk, and I found the job pretty boring until I became an actual agent in 1978.

"I later earned an MBA degree and ran five marathons to stay in shape.

"My name still gets attention from time to time," he said. "A young Kmart clerk who saw it on my credit card said her grandparents always watched Lawrence Welk's TV show.

"I told her that Lawrence started a band because he learned to play the accordion, and thought it would be fun. The rest is history."

—
Betsy Goodspeed, 93, continues to make history herself in Eureka.

"Words are easy, like the wind; Faithful friends are hard to find."

— William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

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Young'uns Want to Talk to You

By Christopher Canfield

We're born into families, but we choose our friends, from old friends to new ones.

Having friends is a beautiful thing. It can hurt sometimes when first discovering each other's do's and don'ts. Two people who make it through all that have a chance at a long life together.

I have two best friends. One I've known since we were 15. We've been through everything together, from wrecking our bikes to wrecking our lives. We helped each other through the loss of our mothers and the births of our daughters.

My other best friend is going to be 80 this February. He is 48 years older than I am, but no matter how busy my life becomes, I make time to sit down with him a few times a week. I make sure he has enough wood packed in for the night, and enough to last him through the winter.

I love hearing how he would fix this or that when he was a kid, like when the hay-baler broke down on the farm. Or how he used to duck hunt where WinCo Foods now sits.

He worked for Simpson for over 20 years. He did his bit in the Army, and still visits his wife, Silvia, and

brings flowers to her at her grave every year.

He is my friend because he is always there to listen with something positive, or to say what worked for him. He always tells me he loves me when I go, and will always give me a hug. He's an amazing friend, and the best grampa ever.

I've always respected my elders, and helped them out. I'd rather hang out and talk with them than with people my own age.

I'm writing this because, when you're older, us young'uns want to talk to you, but we don't know what to say. So reach out, because once we get that conversation started, even though we're so many years apart, we end up having so much in common. You've been there and done that, and we want to know how.

My grampa comes to eat at the Eureka Dining Center, and I volunteered in the kitchen there. I'm grateful for all your hard work in helping our seniors — they got us where we are today. We can't just forget about them.

—
Christopher Canfield, 32, lives in Eureka.

Tacks-Free Groceries

When I was a young girl, my mother sent me to the corner grocery store to buy a couple of things for dinner.

She said, "Here's \$1 and two quarters to buy a carton of milk and salt and for tax."

When I returned, my mother was surprised to find a box of



tacks in the bag. She gave me a quick lesson on the difference between tax and tacks, and briskly sent me out the door to return the unwanted tacks.

This story is told at most family gatherings.

—Joan Rainwater-Gish

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PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

It's Burrowing Time

We've just stuck a bare toe outside the door, and it's cold out there. We've decided, like the groundhog, to wriggle back inside our burrow for several more weeks.

What can we do during this burrowing time along our Northern California Coast?

One solution is contradictory to burrowing: Let's go outside and play. Studying the day's weather report, we can dodge the raindrops, finding at least an hour where precipitation slows to a fine mist, or the sun makes a cameo appearance.

What if it's raining for weeks on end? Time to dig out raingear and tramp past ferns and creeks, heedless of wind and weather. Plenty of redwood sanctuaries tower alongside our stretch of Highway 101, originally named the Redwood Highway for a reason.

Or let's travel east, just over the fog, to find sun in pockets, visiting bakeries, galleries and exceptional hamburger joints in unhurried mountain towns.

Another solution to cabin fever: Let's create a Gratitude A to Z List, as a fireside game.

I start my gratitude for flowering plants with azalea. You say blueberry bush. We meander through an alphabet garden, grateful for camellia and dahlia, before getting stuck on x (settling on oXeye daisy), and ending with yarrow and zucchini.

It's almost too much to hope for: a flowering that goes from zero to miraculous bunches of cherry blossoms and crocuses. But let's re-

member — spring has materialized before. It's not outside the realm of certainty. Trust is a good practice in winter, when everything's being orchestrated underground.

Now, let's resurrect the vision projects we imagined several years ago. If we didn't write them down before, let's do that now. We'll use big poster paper with colored markers. Rather than a dream or vision sheet, let's call this a goal sheet, drawing connections with circles and arrows.

Did we say that we'd someday visit Taos, New Mexico? Since the number 20 signifies completion, the year 2020 must mean completion times two. On our goal sheet, let's list how we could reach Taos this year:

1. Find fantastic off-season, weeklong special at a Taos B&B.
2. Pack suitcase, leaving space to bring back turquoise and pottery.
3. Drive south, then east.

In my novel "Annie California," young Crow Boy tells his friend, "Time's all about waiting till you get an answer. . . . And when you see that answer, you say, 'Oh, it's you; I should've known.'"

Spring's not impossible. It's just going to take a little more burrowing and trust.

—
Margaret Kellermann is a novelist and a member of Ferndale Arts Gallery. Contact: bluelakestudio.net/contact

Friends Over Years & Miles

By Sue Blick

In the fall of 1963, my Dad accepted a job promotion that meant a move for our family from northern to southern New Jersey.

I was 16, a sophomore in high school. To leave the home where I grew up was unthinkable. And leaving my childhood friends was heart-breaking.

My sister Joanne is about a year-and-a-half younger than I am, which meant we were very competitive and fought a lot as kids. When reality set in that we knew no one in our new neighborhood or at this new school, a true friendship developed between us that we had never experienced before.

Over time, our previous childhood friends became a distant past — out of sight, out of mind. But with our

beginnings came new social activities and new friendships.

I made four girlfriends at my new school, and we've stayed connected for more than 50 years. We have helped each other as we've experienced the roller coaster ride of life — college, dating, jobs, marriage, children, divorces, deaths, and so much more.

Even though we live all over the country now — Missouri, Florida, California and New Jersey — we always manage to meet at a rental home on the Jersey Shore overlooking the beautiful Atlantic Ocean to continue bonding forever.

—
Sue Blick, 71, maintains her friendships from McKinleyville.

Who's on First? Maybe You.

By Paul Woodland

Do you remember the classic comedy routine, "Who's on First?" by Abbott and Costello? It's a clever piece of wordplay about who plays what on a baseball field.

I bring this up because the Humboldt Classics Senior Softball Association (HCSSA) is looking for a few more seniors to play on first . . . or second . . . or outfield . . . this season.

It's a wonderful opportunity to make new friends, get some exercise, and have a blast playing the great American pastime.

The HCSSA is a recreational, slow-pitch softball league for seniors (58 and up — our oldest player is 81). The league has six teams (Legends, Senior Moments, Closers, Relics, Rookies and Classics), and invite newcomers

like you to get in the game — for some folks, it's their first time playing organized softball.

The games (of which there are 25) are played at the Samoa Field, across the street from the Cook-house, between May and August. The Association emphasizes fun, safety, comradery and fairness. The teams have uniforms (well, shirts and hats), the players use wood bats to hit the ball, and the games are officiated by real umpires.

So, who's on first? It could be you!

—
Paul Woodland, 65, of Eureka is commissioner of the Humboldt Senior Classics Softball League. To sign up, call him at (707)-441-9424 or visit humboldtseniorsoftball.org.

Singing with Friends

By Louise Bacon-Ogden

I moved to Humboldt in 1990, not knowing a soul. I came to begin a business (Strictly for the Birds), so my first Humboldt friends were customers.

When I retired in 2004, it was time for new adventures and new friends. I led bird walks (of course), started doing art, took all kinds of classes, taught some myself (about birds, of course). And I wanted to join a choir.

One holiday season, I was in the audience listening to the McKinleyville Community Choir. The director had 6-year-olds singing in parts. I had hesitated to join a choir because I couldn't read music. But upon hearing those kids, I figured that if a 6-year-old can sing like that, I might be able to get the hang of it.

That January, I called the director. The conversation went something like this:

"Yes, I sang in 7th grade but was rejected in 8th grade."

"No, I can't read music."

"Now tell me, which is the lower voice, soprano or alto?"

Silence.

"Oh, yes, I do think I can carry a tune."

All I had to do was show up. I headed to McKinleyville and walked into a roomful of strangers. Immediately, a nice woman named Naomi introduced herself. She was an alto and took me under her wing.

I started slow: I could see the notes on the page go up and down. I saw

those flags that meant to sing those notes faster. Hold open notes longer. Other symbols and words had me baffled, but I felt safe enough to ask, and Naomi was patient and helpful. Slowly, ever so slowly, I met the rest of the altos.

Singing felt so good, I could NOT not keep going. It took a while to meet and begin to know sopranos, tenors and basses, but many of the same faces kept coming season after season. Each time, I met new people. We were "choir friends."

A bunch of us formed a carpool from Eureka, and strangers agreed to share rides. The drive is about 20 minutes, a great chance to share non-music stories. These are the things that build friendships.

Eventually, a choir friend becomes a real friend. You celebrate a birthday, you send greeting cards, meet for lunch, go to the movies or just call and chat.

Need a friend? DO SOMETHING! Follow your heart and friends will follow.

—

Louise Ogden-Bacon of Eureka says the McKinleyville Community Choir is recruiting new voices beginning Jan. 27. Make your own choir friends: Contact Clare Greene, 831-419-3247; ccgreene46@gmail.com, or come to rehearsal on Mondays, 6:30 p.m., Grace Good Shepherd Church, 1450 Hiller Road, McKinleyville.

Advice from Old Coots

When a bunch of retired friends in Salt Lake City started boring each other with their stories and opinions at their regular Saturday morning coffee, they decided to take their bad advice on the road.

Actually, across the road . . . to the Farmer's Market, where Tony Caputo, who owned the coffee shop and deli, rented a tent and set up a folding table for "Old Coots Giving Advice."

They still got their Saturday coffee and the old riffs and opinions got a new and appreciative audience of strangers lugging bags of produce.

"It started as a whim," said retired journalist Carol Sisco, 72, the only female Coot. "We just got bored."

But the whim turned into more than a change of venue, for both the Coots and market-goers.

With their banner's disclaimer that

"It's Probably Bad Advice—But It's Free" the Coots booth was soon one of the most popular at the market.

They got a lot of questions about of course, romance, but there are other weighty matters, and the Coots aren't shy with their opinions:

"Why does my cat pee on everything in the house?" "Have I put in enough time at my job to take a one-week vacation?" "What should I name my baby?" They told the man with ghosts in his house that he should move.

"People ask us, 'Are you qualified to do this?'" Caputo, 69, told the Washington Post, "And, of course, we have to say no. But neither was Ann Landers. Hopefully, we won't mess people up too much."

—Ted Pease

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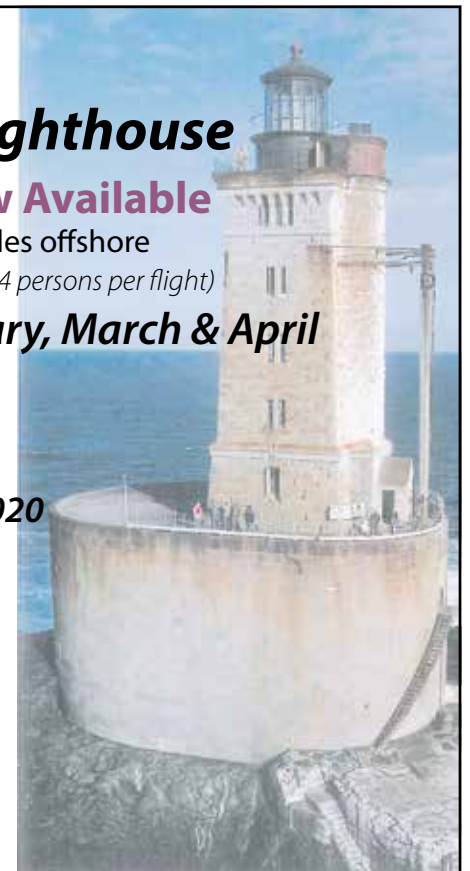
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"However rare true love may be, it is less so than true friendship."

— Albert Einstein (1879-1955), physicist



AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

Beautiful Hands

In a skilled nursing facility dining room, David, an elderly man with Alzheimer's disease, sits working his fingers around his napkins, one repetitive gesture after another.

He folds the napkin in front of him, then again and again. His hands are captivating and beautiful — mesmerizing. On his left hand is a wedding ring, a memory of a life shared. Now he sits here all alone, or maybe he is drifting away to places in which that ring is not just a memory.

Old hands are beautiful. Mine certainly are. I love my hands. I stare, without guilt or shame, at each in turn. Not at my face; I can do that only with a mirror. Besides, what has my face done for me lately, beside remind me that I am getting old?

But my hands, I can hold them in front of me, take a deep breath and see where I have been, feel where I am, and face where I might end up.

Aging hands, hands with experience, hands that touch and have been touched, are beautiful. We touch, soothe and empathize with others with our hands. We comfort and encourage ourselves with our hands.

When I was a young boy I was in admiration of my father's hands. I was always afraid he would catch

me staring at them. As a middle-aged man, I held my father's hand as he died. His eyes closed; I could stare as long as I wanted, and I did. Not at his face, but his hands.

Will someone hold my hand when I die?

I both mourn and celebrate my hands. I celebrate the ability to still use my hands, to feed myself, to wipe the spittle from my mouth, to wipe my backside. I mourn the potential of no longer being able to do any of those things for myself.

Maybe that is why I find my hands so beautiful. In viewing them, I can take in all that I have been, all that I am, and all that I might become.

Back at the skilled nursing facility, David has left the napkins in the dining room, and sits in a wheelchair in the hallway next to what I imagine is his room. His hands? He is holding a stuffed toy wolf given to him by the on-duty nurse's aide.

David, his eyes closed, gently caresses the wolf with one repetitive motion after another.

I allow myself to stare.

John Heckel, Ph.D., 73, of Eureka is a retired HSU theater and film professor with a doctorate in psychology.

“In love, one and one are one.”

—Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), French philosopher.

The community is invited!

Spring OLLI open house

Saturday, February 22

1-3 p.m. at Sequoia Conference Center, Eureka

- Register for classes
- Meet OLLI Faculty
- Join OLLI
- Enjoy refreshments

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

Big Changes to Dining Services

By René Arché

Big changes are coming in February at two of Humboldt Senior Resource Center's (HSRC) Senior Dining Centers, as well as in the Home Delivered Meals (HDM) program.

ARCATA: Beginning on Monday, Feb. 3, the Arcata dining site will expand service to five days per week, providing meals at 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. Previously, lunch was served only Tuesday-Friday.

Arcata diners at the Arcata Community Center, 321 Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway, should still call 707-825-2027 for lunch reservations.

Likewise, five-day meal service for all HDM recipients in Arcata, Eureka and McKinleyville will begin on Monday, Feb. 3.

Restoration of Monday service for HDM clients and at the Arcata Dining Center reflects a commitment by HSRC's Board of Directors to restore the nutrition services that were cut almost six years ago for budgetary reasons.

Barbara Walser, HSRC's director of Nutrition & Activities, says many factors contribute to restoration of the Monday meal service.

"Over the past few years, HSRC has enhanced our program offerings to compliment growth," Walser said. "In turn, this growth has allowed the agency to build back up reserve funds to handle program needs. This, coupled with increased community engagement and support, is allowing us to begin restoring some of these lost services."

HSRC's Eureka Senior Dining Center restored its Monday meal service in December.

FORTUNA: In other news, on Tuesday, Feb. 4, HSRC will officially open its new, larger Fortuna Senior Dining Center in the Gene Lucas Community Center at 3000 Newburg Road, moving from its old location at Mountain View Village.

Lunch will be served at this new location Tuesday through Friday at noon. The Fortuna Senior Dining Center phone number remains the same: 707-725-6245. Lunch reservations are recommended. For a limited time, bus service to the new lunch site will be available by calling 707-725-7625. See "Take the Fortuna Bus" on page 12 for details.

To-go lunch will be available at the old location, 2130 Smith Lane, from Tuesday-Friday, Jan. 28-31, but no dine-in service will be available. Diners should make reservations as usual for packaged, take-away meals.

Menus for all HSRC Senior Dining Centers and Home Delivered Meals can be found on pages 12-13, and on the HSRC website (humsenior.org), or weekly in the Tuesday "Boomers" section of the Times-Standard.

For information on the Nutrition Program changes, contact Tasha Romo, HSRC manager of Nutrition & Activities, at 707-443-9747, x1228 or at tromo@humsenior.org.

—
René Arché is HSRC director of Communications & Marketing.



COLORS ABOUND down at the Old Arcata Rail Yard, if you know where to look. Carol Beers watercolor.

Humboldt Scenes in Lobby

Eureka artist Carol L. Beers brings her love of Humboldt's cool air and land- and seascapes to the Humboldt Senior Resource Center this month, with an exhibit of 17 watercolors and photographs.

A Fresno native, Beers grew up near Red Bluff and, after earning an art degree from Chico State, began a

career working with seniors, developing an art therapy program.

Her appreciation for Humboldt's climate seeps into her art, which often features fogs and fresh coastal scenes.

Through the end of February, her artwork will hang outside the HSRC library, where Beers also volunteers, when not painting.

February @HSRC

TAX SEASON: The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program will come to Humboldt Senior Resource Center in Eureka beginning Thursday, Feb. 6, and every Thursday through April 9.

VITA offers free tax help to people with annual income of \$54,000 or less, persons with disabilities, seniors and taxpayers with limited English who need assistance.

Fifteen appointments are available each Thursday by appointment only. Call Humboldt Senior Resource Cen-

ter's Senior Service Office at (707) 443-9747 ext. 1240.

VALENTINE'S DAY: HSRC celebrates Valentine's Day at Senior Dining Centers in Arcata, Eureka and Fortuna on Friday, Feb. 14, with a special meal and festivities.

"Valentine's Day is one of our favorite celebrations because it's a reminder of how special all of our friends are, both here and in the community," said Cathy Denbo, the Eureka Dining Center coordinator.

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Take the Fortuna Bus

Fortuna Transit is pitching in with free bus service to and from the new HSRC Senior Dining Center and the new Fortuna Senior Center at the Gene Lucas Community Center, 3000 Newburg Road.

The new HSRC dining site starts serving meals Tuesday, Feb. 4. Call 707-725-6245 for reservations.

The free bus service, funded by a grant from Hops In Humboldt, is of-

fered for a limited time by calling Fortuna Transit at 707-725-7625.

Fortuna bus service is otherwise available anywhere within the city limits Monday-Friday between 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. to those over 50 or who are disabled for \$2.50 per ride, or \$22.50 for a 15-ride punch card.

Tuesday medical appointment service is also now available.



Senior Home Repair

a program of HSRC

Need minor home repairs?

Safety bar installation?

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for details**

FEBRUARY SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

Humboldt Senior Resource Center in Eureka

An HSRC Senior Dining Center

1910 California Street

Call Tasha at 443-9747 x1228

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

HSRC will be closed on Monday, February 17, 2020

Every Weekday

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

Mondays

9:30-10:30 Karate with Jerry Bunch
10:00-12:30 Mahjong
11:00-12:00 Tai Chi for Better Balance w/ Sandi
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/ Beth & Lois
2:30-4:00 Memoir Writing Class

Feb. 17 **Closed** *Presidents' Day*

Tuesdays

10:00-11:00 Harry's Bingo (*not Feb. 4*)
12:15-2:15 Pinochle
12:30-1:30 Bunco
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/ Beth & Lois
Feb. 4 10:30-11:30 Dine & Dance w/ Ray, Dave & Lois
Feb. 18 11:30-2:00 Foster Grandparents Program
Feb. 25 6:00-9:00 Stamp Club

Wednesdays

10:00-11:00 Bunco
1:30-3:30 Intermediate Line Dancing w/Sue
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/ Beth & Lois
Feb. 5 10:30-11:30 Dine & Dance with Ray, Dave & Lois
Feb. 12 11:00-11:30 LeeAnne Morini performs
Feb. 12 11:30-12:15 Emblem Club serves lunch
Feb. 19 10:00-11:30 Commodities Distribution
Feb. 5 & 19 1:00-2:00 Caregiver Support Group
Adult Day Health & Alzheimer's Services Library, 2nd floor, Bldg. B
1901 California St., Eureka

Thursdays

9:00-3:00 VITA Tax Preparation new)
10:00-11:00 Grocery Bingo: Bring 1 grocery item
10:00-11:30 Intermediate French
2:10-3:10 FABS/S.A.I.L. w/Beth & Lois
3:30-4:30 Laughter Yoga- Laughing our Hearts Open
Feb. 6 & 20 10:00-12:00 Genealogy Group

Fridays

9:00-10:00 Falun Dafa
10:00-11:00 Beginning Tai Chi Movements
11:00-12:00 Beginning Yoga
1:00-4:00 Bridge
Feb. 7 & 21 1:30-2:30 Conscious Living Book Club
Feb. 14 11:30-12:15 Valentine's Day Celebration Lunch
Feb. 28 11:30-12:15 Birthday Celebration

Saturday

Feb. 8 12:00 Globetrotters Lunch Bunch:
Tandoori Bites Indian Cuisine
1735 4th St, Eureka, CA

Fortuna Senior Dining Center

An HSRC Senior Dining Center

OPENS FEBRUARY 4th

Gene Lucas Community Center

3000 Newburg Road

Call Launa at 725-6245

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

Tuesdays 12:00 Lunch (See menu below)

Wednesdays 12:00 Lunch (See menu below)
5:00-8:00 pm Bingo

Thursdays 12:00 Lunch (See menu below)

Feb. 13, 20 & 27 12:00-2:00 Caregiver Support Group
United Methodist Church
Fireplace Room
922 N Street
For info call 443-9747

Fridays 12:00 Lunch
Feb. 7 12:00 Grand Opening Lunch
Feb. 14 12:00 Valentine's Day Celebration
Feb. 25 12:00 Mardi Gras Lunch
Feb. 28 12:00 Birthday Celebration

February 2020

SENIOR DINING CENTER MENU

FIRST WEEK

Feb. 3 **Spinach Lasagna**
Feb. 4 **Baked Western Omelet**
Feb. 5 **Shrimp & Linguini**
Feb. 6 **Taco Salad**
Feb. 7 **Chicken w/Fire-Roasted Tomato**

SECOND WEEK

Feb. 10 **Chicken Noodle Casserole**
Feb. 11 **Soup & Turkey Sandwich**
Feb. 12 **BBQ Pork Rib**
Feb. 13 **Butternut Squash Ravioli**
Feb. 14 **Chicken Wellington - Valentine Celebration**

People 60+ are invited

\$3.50 suggested donation

\$6.00 for those under 60

No senior 60 or older will be denied a meal if unable to donate.

Call for Reservations

Arcata • 825-2027 Eureka • 443-9747 Fortuna • 725-6245



**Humboldt Senior
Resource Center**

Nutrition & Activities Program

THIRD WEEK

Feb. 17 **All Dining Sites Closed: President's Day**
Feb. 18 **Stuffed Baked Potato**
Feb. 19 **Clam Chowder Soup & Salad**
Feb. 20 **Chinese Chicken Salad**
Feb. 21 **Chili Verdé Tacos**

FOURTH WEEK

Feb. 24 **Creamy Chicken & Veggies**
Feb. 25 **Jambalaya - Mardi Gras Celebration**
Feb. 26 **Chef Salad**
Feb. 27 **Salisbury Steak**
Feb. 28 **Lemon Herb Fish - Birthday Cake**

**Senior Lunch is now available on Mondays
at the HSRC Eureka & Arcata Dining Centers**

Low-fat or nonfat milk served with each meal

A vegetarian alternative is available by reservation daily.

Arcata Community Center

An HSRC Senior Dining Center

321 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway

Call Anna at 825-2027

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

Closed on Monday, February 17, 2020

Mondays

11:30-12:15 Lunch (See menu at left)
Feb. 10 & 24 11:00-12:00 Silver Quills Writing Group
Feb. 17 **Closed** *Presidents' Day*

Tuesdays

9:00-11:00 Katie's Krafters
11:00 Bread distribution
11:30-12:15 Lunch (See menu at left)
Feb. 4 & 18 10:00-11:00 Caregiver Support Group
Mad River Community Hosp.
Minkler Education Room
3800 Janes Road, Arcata
For info call 443-9747
Feb. 11 9:00-2:00 Valentines/Card Making
Feb. 25 2:00 Arcata Marsh Slow Walk

Wednesdays

11:00 Bread distribution
(resumes 2/12) 11:15-12:15 Tai Chi with Kathy (advanced)
11:30-12:15 Lunch (See menu at left)
(resumes 2/12) 12:30 - 1:30 Tai Chi with Kathy (beginning)
Feb. 12 10:00-11:00 Site Council
Feb. 19 9:00-1:00 Chocolate Mint Day
Feb. 26 all day Tell a Fairy Tale Day

Thursdays

9:00-10:00 Tai Chi w/Tim
9:00-11:00 Katie's Krafters
11:30-12:15 Lunch (See menu at left)
12:30-2:30 Bridge
Feb. 20 10:15-11:15 Swing 'n' Sway Trio
Feb. 20 10:30-11:00 Commodities Distribution

Fridays

10:00-11:30 Ping Pong with Pete
11:30-12:15 Lunch (See menu at left)
Feb. 14 & 28 10:30-11:30 John Humphrey on the Piano
Feb. 14 9:00-1:00 Valentine's Day Celebration
and Quilt Drawing
Feb. 21 10:15-11:15 Sing along with the Half Notes
Feb. 28 11:30-12:15 Birthday Celebration

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Crossword Puzzle on page 22



FEBRUARY SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

McKinleyville Senior Center

Azalea Hall • 1620 Pickett Road
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mckinleyvillecsd.com
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Mondays
8:30-9:30 Tai Chi
9:00-12:00 Computers (\$1 donation & call for availability.)
10:00-11:00 Writing Workshop
10:30 High Steppers (Meet at Knox Cove Trail)
1:00-4:00 Party Bridge
Feb. 17 **CLOSED** Presidents' Day

Tuesdays
9:00-11:00 TOPS
9:30-10:30 S.A.I.L. Class
10:40-11:40 Stretching
12:30-3:30 BINGO
1:00-2:00 Exercise
6:30-8:00 Art II Class
(Call for information & fees)

Wednesdays
8:30-9:30 Tai Chi
9:00-12:00 Computers (\$1 donation & call for availability.)
10:00-11:00 Line Dancing
10:00-12:00 Needlework
10:30 High Steppers (Meet at Knox Cove Trail)
1:00-4:00 Pinochle
Feb. 5 & 19 3:00-5:00 Caregiver Support Group
Timber Ridge at McKinleyville
Private Dining Room,
1400 Nursery Way.
For info call 443-9747

Thursdays
9:30-10:30 S.A.I.L. Class
10:30-12:00 Pinochle Lessons
10:40-11:40 Stretching
12:30-3:30 BINGO

Fridays
8:30-9:30 Tai Chi
10:00-11:30 Support Group
10:30 High Steppers (Meet at Knox Cove Trail)
1:00-4:00 Pinochle

Rio Dell

Every Mon, Wed & Fri
11:30-12:30 Senior Exercise Class
Chamber of Commerce Bldg.
406 Wildwood Avenue

Fortuna Senior Center

FSC is at 3000 Newburg Road, Suite B
fortunasenior.org
admin@fortunasenior.org • 726-9203
Mon-Fri 9:00-4:00 & by appointment

Mondays
River Walk 8:30 Walking
FSC 9:00 Tai Chi
11:00 Line Dancing
3:00 S.A.I.L. Class
3:30 Ukulele Group

Feb. 3 1:45 Book Club
Rio Dell/Scotia Chamber of Commerce
11:30 Exercise Group

Tuesdays
Rohner Park 8:30 Walking
MGC 1:30 Senior Stitches
2:00 Seated Tai Chi
3:00 Recorder Group

Wednesdays
RiverWalk 8:30 Walking
FSC 9:00 Tai Chi
3:00 S.A.I.L. Exercise
Feb. 5 12:00 Senior Lunch Bunch
Call Chris 725-2020 or Carol 725-2931
Rio Dell/Scotia Chamber of Commerce
11:30-12:30 Exercise Group

Thursdays
Rohner Park 8:30 Walking Group
3:00 Bocce Ball
FSC 9:00 Cards
9:30 Yoga (donation suggested)
1:00 MahJong
2:00 Seated Tai Chi
4:00 Line Dancing

Fridays
FSC 9:00 Tai Chi
9:30 Cards & Games
2:00 Scrabble Group
3:00 S.A.I.L. Exercise
9:00 Hiking (Call Lynne 725-7953)
9:00 Biking (Call Chuck 725-5095)
Feb. 28 7:30 pm Fortuna Camera Club
Rio Dell/Scotia Chamber of Commerce
11:30 Exercise Group

Saturday
FSC
Feb. 15 11:00 Volunteer Luncheon

Sunday
FSC
Feb. 16 4:00 Doors Open
5:00 Bingo begins
Monday Club
2:00-4:00 Open Mic

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EXTENDED 'FAMILY' YOU CAN CHOOSE ... From Page 1

or the neighborhoods where we grew up. There also are professional friendships and community friendships — like those I might meet for a dog walk in the marsh from time to time, or those joined weekly in faith communities.

Some friendships form in unusual places — times of crisis or shared camaraderie, such as military service or support groups, in catastrophic illness or grief.

Other friendships can also be experienced with such deep intimacy that we don't know how we would have become the person we are today without them. These relationships can be seen as spiritual friendships, like a mentoring, a witness to one's growth in all of one's vulnerability.

All of these experiences of friendship grow in shared spaces of common ground, yet the common ground of aging seems to be a place where friendships can be a most painstaking and challenging experience.

The most obvious challenge with friendships as we age is, of course, loss. These relationships that have endured years of mutual celebration, trials, time and often separation by geographical space will come to an end. Our friends will die as we age. These friendships might also not be able to tolerate these experiences, and, one morning while sipping a cup of coffee we may reminisce about, "Whatever happened to..." Like our intimate partner relationships, the bonds of friendship can also rupture due to experiences of betrayal or having outgrown each other.

A recent New York Times article asked if we even need close friendships? Not just a friendship, an acquaintance or a work buddy, but a *close* friendship. Many aging adults interviewed

replied how difficult it is to make new friends and to maintain these relationships.

More and more research demonstrates that friendships as we age are important predictors of physical and mental health, and play a key role in the regulation of emotional distress.

Research also demonstrates that it is the depth of these connections where the health benefits most come alive. Researchers cited in the Times article identified five foundational elements of secure relationships that can cultivate deeper connection in friendships:

Consistency – Do these friends drift in and out of my life on a whim?

Availability – How often can you spend time together?

Reliability – Can I count on them if I need something?

Responsiveness – Do they reply to my emails and texts? Do I hear from them on a regular basis?

Predictability – Can I count on them to act in a certain way?

With isolation being one of the leading factors affecting quality of life as we age — and a determinant in not just how but how long we live — it is smart to choose our extended family well, and to tend the garden of these relationships with care.

—
Gina Belton, Ph.D., of Arcata practices
*Existential Medicine and teaches Humanist
Existential Psychology at Saybrook University.*

'Sometime in the Future' Is ... Now?

Folks are always making predictions for what will — and won't — happen in their lifetimes.

For example, the president of Digital Equipment Corp. (DEC) famously said in 1977, "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

Business Week said in 1968 that Japanese autos would never have much impact on the U.S. market. And the president of a vacuum cleaner company said "nuclear-powered vacuums" would soon be a reality.

In 1999, futurist Ray Kurzweil predicted life expectancy exceeding 100 by 2019 (U.S. lifespan is averages 79); and that computers would be "invisible" by now, with health monitors in clothing and jewelry, which has come to pass.

In 1996, the Space Studies Board of the National Research Council said NASA would land humans on Mars. Eight unmanned spacecraft have reached the Red Planet, and more missions are in the works.

In 1968, a prominent mathematician and scientist predicted that antigravity technology would revolutionize warfare and daily life, with antigravity cars and jetpacks. (George Jetson was ahead of his time.)

Today, many futuristic predictions focus on artificial intelligence (AI) — the ability of computers to think and act for themselves. AI is either scary or promising, depending on whom you talk to.

"Basically, there is no institution in the world that cannot be improved with machine learning," said Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon. But inventor Elon Musk disagrees: "AI is a fundamental risk to the existence of human civilization," he said.

We'll check in again in 2040.

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LIVE VIGOROUSLY

BY JOAN RAINWATER-GISH

Lifetime of Love

Maybe you've seen them on Walnut Drive in Eureka, walking together and holding hands.

Elmer (94) and Betty (90) Eberhardt have been holding hands for 71 years of marriage. Think about that — more years than some of you have been alive. I wanted to interview them to learn how one manages to stay married for all these years.

Both of their parents were German immigrants who immigrated to Nebraska and took up farming.

Betty had just graduated from high school when she met Elmer on a blind date, and they were attracted to each other immediately.

The story goes that their first kiss lasted several minutes. From then on, they knew they wanted to spend the rest of their lives together.

They married in 1948. Being young and poor, they had no money to buy a wedding dress, or have a photographer, or even a cake to mark the momentous occasion. But, said Elmer, it didn't matter, as they said they had more than enough love.

They moved to Omaha to find work and began having a family. Jobs didn't pay much in the bean factory, and weekly train deliveries of eggs and round steak sent from the family farm helped them get by.

In 1953, Elmer's brother convinced them to move to Eureka, where timber jobs paid four times as

much as the bean factory in Omaha.

With this move, the Eberhardts' life became much better. They were able to buy a house and take family vacations.

Annual trips always included going home to the Midwest for family reunions. Often trips were combined with hiking excursions with fellow members of the Oregon-California Association of Trails. This helped instill in their three children a commitment to family and a love of the outdoors.

Now in their gos,
modifications have
become a part of life.

Keeping family connections has always been Elmer and Betty's priority, and one of the strengths that

have supported all these years of marriage.

Other secrets, they said, include not going to bed angry with the other, learning to give and take, enjoying each other, and showing love and affection.

Now in their 90s, modifications have become a part of life. Instead of briskly walking two miles every day, they're down to a half-mile, with rest periods at the corner.

But they always hold hands, maybe not only out of affection, but also to steady each other's balance as they walk.

Joan Rainwater-Gish, 77,
*of Eureka, is a personal trainer
and senior group fitness instructor.
Contact: jrainwatergish
@gmail.com.*

The Wisdom of Mom

By Jane Parks-McKay

Mom, AKA Betsy, used to share a lot of wisdom with me. I have to admit that I didn't listen much when I was growing up. I mean, who really listened to adults? As a Baby Boomer, everyone over 30 was over the hill.

As I got older, however, Mom got smarter. I had many conversations with her in her kitchen on various topics, mostly my trials and tribulations. She always came through.

One good piece of advice Mom gave me came after she and Dad took an RV trip through Humboldt County. They raved about Humboldt, which made us want to visit it ourselves. Now we're househunting.

During one of our talks, Mom said, "I love getting old."

I was taken aback.

"Uh, what?" I said.

"When you get old, anytime something happens, you just go back in your mind when something similar happened and remember how you handled it," she said. Smart Mom.

I filed this advice in my mental filing cabinet and — you know what? — she was right. Now that I'm only 10 years away from her age when she passed away in 2002, I have to say

I'm starting to feel the same way. It makes life a lot easier.

Not that I particularly like getting old. I have to say, though, that I wouldn't trade my experiences, both good and bad, for anything in the world.

I miss Mom. She was becoming a best friend, and, like any loss, a big hole was left in my life when I lost her.

And then Dad passed away, too, seven years ago. I recently found a copy of the homily the pastor used in his memorial service.

The pastor quoted Henri Nouwen, a great Christian writer, who said that when a loved one passes away, we are left with a grief that paralyzes us emotionally. People we love become a part of us, living in our hearts even after they're gone.

As I ponder what life brings, I can't help but feel that a part of Mom (and Dad) are with me all the time. I think they would be kind of proud.

—
Jane Parks-McKay and her
husband live in Santa Cruz,
but want to move to Humboldt.

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Compassionate Friend: My Favorite Person is a Horse

By Annie Kassof

You've got to appreciate it when someone senses how you're feeling and responds compassionately. Even if that someone is a horse.

My bond with Jasmine was amplified recently in a tender moment at the ranch where I board her. I'd gone to feed her and to clean her stall and paddock.

This routine — being around Jasmine every single day of the week (unless I'm visiting my granddaughter) — lends a peaceful, purposeful rhythm to my days as I mosey into retirement.

The other day when I was standing next to Jasmine preparing to groom her, she began licking my right hand. The back of my hand where my thumb and index finger meet has been swollen and somewhat painful recently. She licked it over and over. Her tongue felt warm and nubby.

For a moment, I thought there was something on my hand that tasted good, but what would it be? No, I think Jasmine was licking my hand because she sensed there was something wrong with it. I was convinced she could feel my pain and worry.

In a previous article ["Things That Ache in the Night," September 2019], I wrote about dealing with an increasingly aching body, about ailments both real and imagined. My right hand has been swollen and my arm aches, symptoms

that indicate arthritis . . . but how would Jasmine know?

She's never licked me anywhere before.

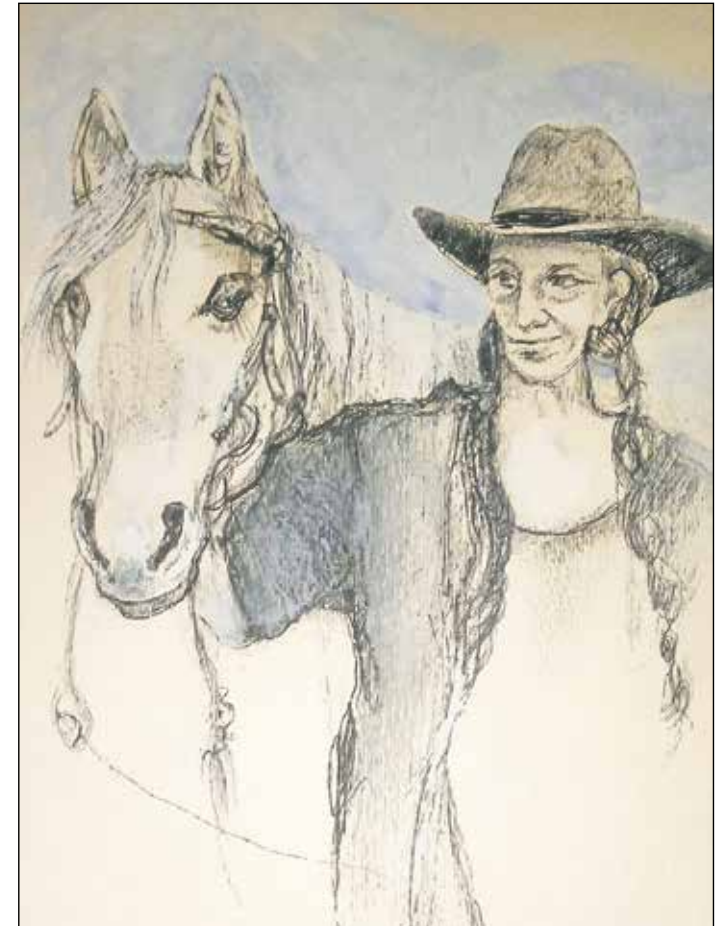
It's probably anthropomorphism, but I'd like to believe that Jasmine cares about me as much as I care about her. I do think that the wordless connection I share with my 1,000-pound friend speaks to the social connection that nearly all beings seek, connections that help us feel less alone regardless of how many legs we possess or our ability to speak in complete sentences.

Over the holidays, a dog-loving friend gave another dog-lover a mug that reads, "My favorite person is a dog." When I heard this, I said, "Well, my favorite person is a horse — of course."

The sun was setting at the ranch, and I believe my mouth must have dropped slightly open in amazement, even if no words came out, as Jasmine continued licking my hand. I rested my head against her firm shoulder, and felt honored by the subtle compassion of my equine friend.

When I went home, my hand didn't hurt at all.

—
*Annie Kassof, 62, and her best friend,
Jasmine, 24, live in Carlotta.*



Annie Kassof illustration.

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Missing Barbara – The Secret Magic of Shower Curtains

By Patti Stammer

I found a package on my doorstep. I was feeling a little blue, had no memory of ordering anything, and wondered if it was a gift. I think it was...

Three years ago, my dearest friend Barbara died suddenly of a heart attack. We were lifelong friends, beginning in kindergarten in 1949 and throughout high school, college, stupid boyfriends, laughing at our bridesmaid dresses, getting used to our husbands and children, who all came at the same time.

Our paths diverged many times, always coming back to add layers to the years we shared. She was my grace and beauty. I was her fire and courage. She was the keeper of my history, my secrets and lies. I was the person with whom she shared the things she could share with no one else.

As time slides by, I'm spending more and more

days going through the stuff of life.

I find her silly cards everywhere, corny books, crazy magnets, always with a note of love attached, photographs of us together when we were kids, of our gorgeous years, of our kids and families as we grew old.

A few years ago, I was complaining about hurt feelings or a broken heart or some silly slight. Barbara looked at me and said, "Nothing perks you up when you're blue like a new shower curtain . . . let's go to shopping!"

"What? Well...OK."

And, so we did. I bought a colorful shower curtain bursting with spring flowers. I hang it every winter and think of how I miss my friend, laughing over that afternoon. It's a treasured memory.

But back to the package on the porch.

I brought it in and opened it, and there was a tapestry of bookshelves. It took a moment before I remembered wending my way through Amazon and finding more beautiful shower curtains than I'd ever seen. I ordered the library for my bathroom, and laughed out loud as I hung it up.

Saved from the blues by this "gift" from Barbara, still looking out for me after 60 years of knowing and caring for each other. This crazy shower curtain, so wrong and so right, brought me back to the light that still shines love on a remarkable friendship.

—

Patti Stammer, 70, writes, reminisces and laughs in her shower in McKinleyville.

SCAM ALERT

PG&E Calling . . . NOT!

Those scammers out there have found a way to make our recent power outages profitable . . . for them.

A friend recently received a phone call from someone purporting to be from PG&E, confirming that the "power shutoff he had requested" would take effect that afternoon.

Except that he hadn't asked for a power shutoff.

The caller told him that there must be some mistake, but if he wanted to cancel the order, he would need to call another number right away.

Instead, he called the real PG&E, whose service department told him there was a scam going on in which people are told the power will be cut off unless they pay some sort of power shutoff "cancellation fee."

The scammers can fake the call-

back number they give you so that it looks like you're calling PG&E, but you actually reach the scammer, who explains how to get a cash card in order to get the power shutoff stopped.

If you haven't requested a power shutoff — and why would you unless you were selling your home or planning to be away for an extended period? — fear not. It's a fake.

And, of course, don't go and pay any "shutoff cancellation" fee!

PG&E promises it will never ask for financial information over the phone. If you get a suspicious call, hang up and call PG&E Customer Service at 1-833-500-SCAM (7226).

For more information on PG&E scams, go online to pge.com and click the customer service tab.

—George Ingraham

A Recording Star at 102

When you're feeling like you're too old to do something new, tune in to Alan Tripp, who at 102 just released his debut album of original songs.

Tripp's music took a while to come together — about a century, in fact. But now he's released the "Senior Songbook," a collection of eight original pieces that the Washington Post calls "reminiscent of Cole Porter or Irving Berlin."

Tripp had written a poem called "Best Old Friends," which was published in the local paper. His friend and neighbor at a Pennsylvania retirement community, Marvin Weisbord ("He's my junior partner, by the way," he told NPR. "He's only 88."), put the poem to music and gave it to Tripp for his 100th birthday.

"Next thing you know, Weisbord said, 'I have another poem on my desk.'"

They organized a jazz band — Weisbord plays piano — and booked

a recording studio. The rest is music history.

The songs are timeless, about love and relationships and aging, but "looking ahead to the 2020s," said the 102-year-old lyricist.

One of Tripp's instant classics includes the refrain, "I know I ought to kiss you, but baby, there's an issue. I just can't remember your name...."

Tripp says he wants to get back to the mystery novel he was working on before music fame came knocking. But there might be more music in store for "Senior Songbook" fans.

"I've never had so much fun in my life," Weisbord told The Post. "I never expected to be doing this in my old age."

Which made Tripp snort: "He doesn't know anything about old age."

— Ted Pease

ASK THE DOCTOR... From Page 5

is unable to recover, a good doctor should recognize this and help people live the rest of their lives as comfortably and with as much dignity as possible.

Having all the answers does not in itself alleviate suffering. In our current system, the 15-minute exam room visits allotted per patient are often not conducive to formulating the best question, much less the best answer. But when doctors are given time to know their patients, to practice their craft, to hone their skills, to have a chance to focus on the person for more than 15 minutes, there is hope for the health of our society, one visit at a time.

I am pretty sure about this, as I saw it on the internet.

Seriously, though — we can all

expect and demand a more humane healthcare system, by the way we vote and by the way we treat each other as partners in humanity. The most fundamental answer is actually pretty straightforward: trust science, fund research, take adequate time for each other, and move through the world with compassion.

—
Dr. Jennifer Heidmann, *medical director and primary care provider at Redwood Coast PACE (443-9747), looks for better answers in Eureka every day. This column should not be taken as medical advice. Ask your medical provider if you have health questions. Send comments to seniornewseditor@humsenior.org.*



Clam Beach Run

Watch hundreds of runners from 10 to 90 brave the waters of the Little River at Moonstone Beach in the 55th annual Trinidad to Clam Beach Run Honoring Ford Hess on Saturday, Feb. 1. The 3-mile, 5.75-mile and 8.75-mile race from Patrick's Point to Clam Beach was started by track coach Ford Hess in 1964 and draws hundreds today. Visit trinidadtoclam-beach.com for info.

HDVS Workshop

Humboldt Domestic Violence Services (HDVS) will host a community network gathering on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 12:30-3 p.m. at the Humboldt Area Foundation, 363 Indianola Road, Bayside, to share information and resources, and connect individuals with service providers. Info and RSVP: Ariel Fishkin, 707-444-9255 or ariel@hdvs.org.

Chinese Expulsion

The Clarke Historical Museum opens its new exhibit, "Immigration, Expulsion, Homecoming: The Legacy of the Chinese Expulsion in Humboldt County," during Arts Alive, Saturday, Feb. 1, at 6 p.m. It will also mark the reopening of the museum, which closed for renovation in January. Info: 707-443-12947 or visit clarkemuseum.org.

Godwits Are Coming!

Online registration is now open for the 25th annual Godwit Days bird festival, April 15-21 at the Arcata Community Center. Go to [\[days.org\]\(http://days.org\) for the schedule and registration forms for 90 field trips, plus exhibits, presentations and programs, or call 707-826-7050.](http://godwit-</p>
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Wine & Jazz

The Humboldt Arts Council sponsors a monthly afternoon of Wine & Jazz at the Morris Graves Museum of Art, 636 F St., Eureka, featuring Jerry Moore & Friends on Sunday, Feb. 16, 3-5 p.m. \$5 for adults, \$2 for seniors/students/military, free for museum members and EBT cardholders. Info: humboldtarts.org or 707-442-0278.

Peace Scholarship

The Humboldt branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom seeks applications for the Edilith Eckart Memorial Peace Scholarship, which supports peace and social justice projects. Applications are online at wilpfhumboldt.wordpress.com, due April 1. Contact: 707-822-5711 or wilpf@humboldt1.com.

Swingposium

Taiko Swingposium, a living history performance of dance and music telling the story of big bands in Japanese American internment camps, comes to Humboldt. A free short program and discussion, Thursday, Jan. 30, at 7 p.m. at the Van Duzer Theater; and Friday, Jan. 31, 6:30 p.m., and Saturday, Feb. 1, 2:30 and 6:30 p.m., at Bayside Community Hall, 2297 Jacoby Creek Road, Bayside. Tickets \$10 at brownpapertickets.com and Wildberries Market.

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More Than ‘an Old People’s Mag’

By Laura Cooskey

Frankly, I don’t really know what Senior News used to be like, as I seldom used to read it. I would pick up a copy to look over with my coffee at Ramone’s, and think, “Oh, the usual boring litany of health and security issues in an old-people’s magazine,” before setting it aside.

But I spotted an article by Ellen Taylor on the front of your October 2019 issue (“Please Don’t Pave Paradise”), and realized that this paper has changed direction. Since then, I have enjoyed every issue.

Senior News is full of writing attractive to people with a continued interest in engaging with life — people who believe in doing good and staying informed.

Senior newspapers always seemed

to me depressingly stuck on the most basic level of existence: mere survival. Perhaps those publications should be called “One Foot in the Grave” papers. They suggest that the mere quantitative presence of life, not its quality, together with the specter of imminent departure, have finally created equality for their readers. No politics, no passion — just a dead-end recognition of our shared mortality and how to avoid it for as long as possible.

Well, that’s all fine, realizing our common fate, but it’s also the ultimate capitalist dream: encouraging a class of people full of worry and fear to buy the idea that there are products or services that can help. Articles or ads about life insurance, alarm but-

tons, anti-slip products, crime prevention, and health news, much of it tout-ing life-extending snake oils, fill these publications. Of course, such topics can be helpful, but to fill formerly inquiring minds with numbing litanies of dangers and how-to’s . . . that’s no way to entertain and inform.

Now our local Senior News has come to life. It is a stimulating and relevant paper for thoughtful people of any age. (Perhaps it’s no accident that this is a Humboldt County publication; our Baby Boomers are unlikely to go resignedly with the mainstream.)

While I appreciate the notices of local activities and observations about today’s world, it’s the nostalgic reflections by local elders that are some of

the paper’s most valuable contributions to the larger community. They offer comfort and familiarity, but also hindsight, wisdom and the objectivity brought by having lived in what now seems a different world.

Senior News makes me feel that aging might bring gifts of perspective and insight, rather than dark forebodings of wrongness, defeat and, if nothing worse, mediocrity. It’s not that death and the pains of aging don’t exist; instead, your writers show that we can look at them philosophically, from a spiritual angle, and share our burdens and fears through honest and compassionate communication.

Thank you for your good work.

Laura Cooskey lives in Petrolia.



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Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA) will be helping income-qualified seniors sign up for its Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and **FREE** Weatherization services from the Senior and Homebound/Disabled List. The HEAP program helps qualified households on a once per year basis with a credit on their PG&E bill or assistance with firewood or propane. RCAA’s weatherization program improves health and safety conditions and installs energy saving measures in the home.



To qualify for RCAA’s Senior and Homebound/Disabled List for the 2020 program, you must be at least 70 years old or a homebound/disabled person and meet the federal income guidelines below.

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3	\$3,710.42
4	\$4,417.17
5	\$5,123.91

Call beginning December 15th, 2019 through April 30, 2020 to be placed on the list. Call 707-444-3831, ext. 201 or 204 to speak to an RCAA’s Energy Specialist to be put on the list.

Letters to the Editor

About Spirituality

To the Editor:

My wife and I have been longtime readers of this newspaper, and have enjoyed the diversity of subjects offered each month.

Not being the sharpest knife in the drawer, it only dawned on me while reading the last issue, the absence of articles on people's spiritual experiences. I say "spiritual" rather than "religious," as the latter often carries negative baggage.

We humans are composed of spirit, soul and body. Lots of sharing of ideas on the last two, but very little on the first. This observation is not meant to be negative in any way, but any readers willing to share or discuss their personal spiritual experience would greatly enhance an already good monthly read.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "There is a time and a season for every purpose under the heavens." Verse 2 begins with "A time to be born and a time to die." Our time to live began at conception; I would imagine that most readers of Senior News are now on the north side of 10 or 11 p.m. In other words, there isn't much room left on the canvas to paint before it's time to put the brush to rest.

I am not suggesting you hire a local man of the cloth to write a monthly column. Rather, open the forum to any who might feel led to share their personal thoughts and experiences with their Maker. As we all stand to give an account of our lives, who knows what might be shared on these pages that could influence even one reader's eternal destiny.

William Shreeve, Eureka

To the Editor:

I was intrigued by Dennis Scales's comment in his December letter ["Counterpoint: Lighten Up!"] when he assigned the concept of human-caused climate change to the ash-bin of irrational thought by calling it a "religion."

Dennis Prager, long-time national radio host and theologian, once called "liberalism" a religion with the same intent: to trivialize and deprecate his political opponents. That was a Freudian slip, in my opinion, since Dr. Prager is a vocal student and supporter of organized religion and opposed to agnostic/atheist ideation.

I have no idea if Mr. Scales is at all religious, but I

share his suspicion and fear of blind faith, the belief in spirits and dogmas unseen and unproven. I do respect and honor those like Betty Kwan Chinn and unsung Samaritans who help the poor and volunteer in our community because of their spiritual beliefs.

Climate is always in flux and has been so since the beginning. There is also a case to be made for human activity influencing current trends. California is one example, and an area twice the size of Maryland has burned in Australia.

It's a topic worthy of debate.

Timothy Crlenjak, Eureka

Life Care Humboldt

To the Editor:

Someday Humboldt County may have its own senior life plan community, and residents who seek such supportive communities will not have to move away to Santa Rosa, Medford or beyond.

Senior life plan communities offer independent living options that feel like a "real" home, with both privacy and socialization opportunities, offering a continuum of living solutions on the campus from independent living to assisted living to advanced nursing/memory support.

Local residents who are working to establish Life Care Humboldt seek to support independence, socialization, personal growth, community involvement and intellectual stimulation, promoting an environment of continued learning, culture, wellness and fun.

We aim to engage in sustainable practices that improve our environments, and to foster a rewarding work experience and professional growth opportunities for staff.

For more information, visit lifecarehumboldt.org. Join the mailing list to keep up with developments and hear about opportunities to help.

Ann Lindsay, McKinleyville

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Ever
Wonder
Why . . .

- . . . “abbreviated” is such a long word?
- . . . doctors call what they do “practice”?
- . . . lemonade is made with artificial flavor, and dishwashing liquid is made with real lemons?
- . . . the man who invests all your money is called a “broker”?
- . . . the time of day with the slowest traffic is called rush hour?
- . . . Noah didn’t swat those two mosquitoes?

Crossword Puzzle

Bash Open by Freddie Cheng. Edited by David Steinberg

ACROSS

1

Doesn’t just skim

6

“Interstellar” director Christopher

11

Word before “lion” or “urchin”

14

Muslim’s god

15

Scarlett played by Vivien Leigh

16

Energize, with “up”

17

Some are stuffed a few weeks before Thanksgiving

19

Puppy sound

20

“See?!”

21

Modifies

23

Glistening with droplets

24

Religious ceremony

27

Common knee injury site, briefly

28

1999 space spoof

32

Enthusiasm

36

Often-fuzzy insect

37

Chess master’s triumphant cry

38

Golf club for driving

41

‘90s health catchphrase

43

Von Bismarck of Prussia

44

Pasty

46

Bumblng

47

DNA shape

51

Dessert used to teach fractions

52

Washer amount

53

Pageant garment

57

Mail-related

60

“Tell the truth!”

62

“Open wide” sound

63

Political bigwig, and a hint to the first few letters of 17-, 28- or 47-Across

66

“Doctor ____”

67

Grape-shaped

68

Motrin rival

69

“How ya doin’?”

70

Tennis champion Osaka

71

1994 Peace Nobelst Shimon

DOWN

1

Dangerous, as a squirrel

2

Bring joy to

3

Permit

4

Dawdle

5

Like horses’ hooves

6

Judge’s harsh pronouncement

7

“I thought so!”

8

Hardly harsh

9

Residential ____

10

Where AMZN and MSFT trade

11

Manners advice to a tot

12

Radiate

13

iPad downloads

18

Banks on TV

22

Keen insight

25

Beer can feature

26

Alimony recipients

28

Slimy stuff

29

Vote of support

30

How-to book division

31

Helpful or distracting thing when studying

32

Deserving a B

33

“Do ____ others ...”

34

Start a business

35

Second-rate

39

Be in debt

40

Roald who created Willy Wonka

42

Rig, as a match

45

Lead role in “The Matrix”

48

Jump atop

49

People’s Princess

50

Worshipped one

53

Like week-old bread, often

54

Birch family tree

55

Holey tool in a kitchen

56

“____ looking at you, kid”

57

They leave prints at some crime scenes

58

Island west of Maui

59

Hawaiian flow

61

Tide type

64

Pooh’s young friend

65

“Dumbo” director Burton

~ ANSWERS ON PAGE 14 ~

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1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14						15						16		
17					18							19		
20									21		22			
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47				48				49	50					
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57	58				59			60		61				
62					63		64	65						
66					67					68				
69					70					71				



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Get Your REAL ID

By George Ingraham

As of Oct. 1, the federal government will no longer recognize your California driver's license. This is no problem, unless you wish to board an airplane. Then you'll need either a current passport or one of the new California driver's licenses called a REAL ID.

You know they're serious about this, because they capitalize the whole thing – REAL ID.

To get one, take your current driver's license or California ID, along with a raft of documents most people can't find, to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

I hate going to the DMV. Everybody hates going to the DMV. Mister Rogers and Mother Teresa would hate going to the DMV.

"Simple enough," I thought. "Some papers to sign and a fee to pay, and I'll be good to go with my all-new federally approved REAL ID." Nope. It took me three trips — my own fault, of course, for not reading the small print.

Here are some tips to cut your trip down to just one. (Hint: Make an appointment online at dmv.ca.gov.) You will need:

1. Either a current passport or your original birth certificate or a CERTIFIED copy; a photocopy will not do. You can get one from your birth county government. In Alameda County, there's a fee, and I'm guessing yours has one, too.

2. Your current California driver's license or California photo ID.

3. Your Social Security card, up-to-date U.S. passport, or other federal document that includes your Social Security number, such as a tax document. (A Medi-Cal

or Medicare card will not do, even though it may have your Social Security number on it.)

4. A bill — PG&E or water bill — with your current California street address (not PO box). Bring three or four of these, since some are acceptable and some aren't.

Next, fill in a touchscreen questionnaire, take a number, and wait to be called. Then there's the eye test, fingerprinting and a mugshot, and enrich the state by \$28. Done.

Two more items, both good news:

1. The Eureka DMV is now at the Bayshore Mall, not in the old building on West 15th Street.

2. The DMV has added people who work in FRONT of the counters. They walk right up to confused seniors like me and offer help with the computer questions, where to go next, and so on. They are cheerful, courteous, patient, and will get you through it with the minimum of frustration. I actually walked out smiling (the third time).

One final hint: The DMV expects a rush next summer, when people planning to visit distant family members realize that they won't be allowed on an airplane without the REAL ID.

Editor's Note: *Some people prefer regular California driver's licenses to the REAL ID, which requires that a street address appear on the card, a potential privacy/security concern if IDs are lost.*

George Ingraham, M.D., 84, *of Eureka is all ID'd, stamped and certified, and trying to figure out if he really wants to get on an airplane.*

LOVE AT FIRST KISS . . . From Page 1

I began attending a very progressive church in Marin County. To my surprise, it also drew a lot of interesting single people.

When I mentioned to the pastor that I had been a filmmaker, he perked up and told me the church was holding a creativity weekend at a retreat center in Napa County, and invited me to be one of the keynote presenters.

I was thrilled, and arrived with my four films, looking forward to meeting interesting people.

The first night, I discovered maybe 20 people in a very large hot tub (clothing optional). I put on my bikini and joined them, settling next to a good-looking man with beautiful eyes, a kind face and a pleasant demeanor. We fell into an engaged conversation.

One of the group leaders, seeing our interaction, recruited us to participate in a reading that weekend of Arthur Miller's "The Creation of the World and Other Earthly Matters."

"You both will be perfect to read this during the performance," he said. We looked at each other, laughed a bit self-consciously, and agreed.

I knew little about Miller, but enjoyed all the drama of the story, which

is loosely based on the Adam and Eve creation story. As an artist/filmmaker, I began thinking of costuming, and soon envisioned us draped in grape vines, lounging around Eden, sipping wine and making eyes at each other.

We had a lot of fun giggling and rehearsing, and then I asked Lew if we needed to practice The Kiss. He was quite enthusiastic about it and suggested we practice several times, which I thought was a grand idea.

From then on things moved quickly, more so for me than him. I knew that day I had met the man I was going to marry.

After the weekend we began seeing each other regularly, and three months later we moved in together on a houseboat in Sausalito. Four years later, we married.

Our story has continued to unfold with such depth and love since we met 38 years ago. As a young woman, I could never have imagined this kind of love possible. Our love and closeness has continued to grow and Lew has made me a truly happy, fulfilled woman.

Suzanne Simpson, 79, is still running lines with her best friend, Lew Litsky, 85, in Arcata.

Moo! Talk to the Animals

An Australian researcher has learned how to talk to the animals. Well, so far just cows.

Alexandra Green, a PhD student at the University of Sydney, finds that cows are talking to each other when they moo.

The research enhances "our understanding of the richness of cows' social and emotional lives," Smithsonian Magazine says.

Previous studies have already shown that mother cows and their

calves communicate, but after five months in the, er, field, Green says she found distinct differences in bovine chatter.

Cows in heat sound different from cows who are heading for lunch, or who are hungry, lonely, excited or penned up away from the herd, she said.

Individual cows also have their own distinctive voices, Green found.

"My friends and family think it's a bit funny," she said.

You Can Be in Senior News

- **MARCH:** "Leprechauns" is not really the theme. Let's "March On" next month, with stories about how we move ahead in life . . . or just get through the winter.
- **APRIL** is time for "Spring Fever," when we teeter on the cusp of summer. Send us your stories of new growth and how you bloom in springtime. Ted Pease, editor, tpease@humsenior.org or 707-443-9747, x1226.

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