



# Yes, Books Do Make a Difference

## Love of Mystery

By Sue Leskiw

My love of mysteries started in grade school with Nancy Drew and her little blue roadster, and continued through the old-school triad of Agatha Christie (Hercule Poirot, Jane Marple), Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Sherlock Holmes) and Dorothy Sayers (Lord Peter Wimsey).

Modern mystery writers have expanded sleuthing beyond private eyes and policemen doing the detecting, turning to librarians, bookstore owners, maids, housekeepers, priests, caterers, bakers, home rehabbers, archaeologists, park rangers, veterinarians, birdwatchers and Botswanan women. Often these days, the protagonists are female.

I especially enjoy period pieces, such as Anne Perry's Victorian settings starring William Monk or Charlotte Pitt, Elizabeth Peters's "Golden Age of Egyptology" heroine Amelia Peabody, and the sleuthing servants in Emily Brightwell's Mrs. Jeffries series.

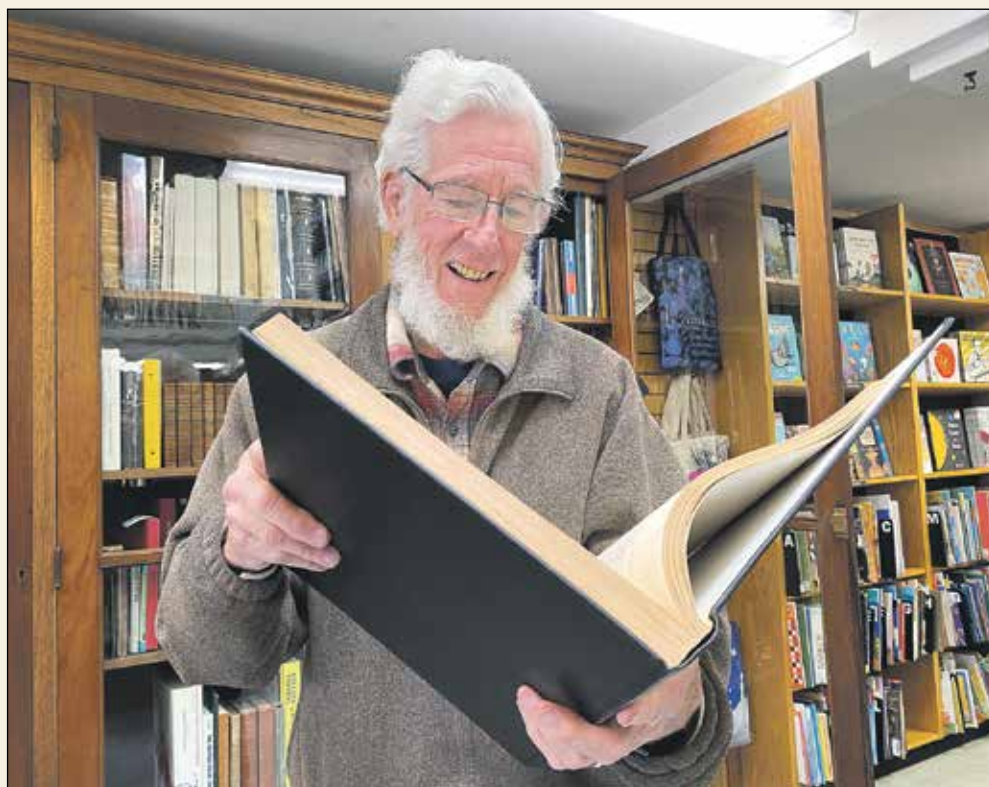
My yet-to-read books fill at least 58 linear feet of shelves, some floor-to-ceiling custom made to fit paperbacks (and

that's after I donated about 1,000 unread mysteries to thrift stores during our last move!). Dividing space by time, there's no way I can finish them all in this lifetime, but I can't leave a Humboldt County Library sale without bulging tote bags. I found nirvana at an estate sale boasting a roomful of 10¢ mysteries! (I have yet to purchase a full-price book.)

A few pet peeves related to mysteries: One is how some beloved characters are portrayed on the large and small screens. Most mystery novels include a physical description of their protagonists. Hercule Poirot is small and egg-shaped — NOT Peter Ustinov! Miss Marple is a soft-voiced, fine-boned spinster — NOT brash, portly Margaret Rutherford!

Gorgeous blondes have been wrongly cast as Joanne Fluke's bakery owner Hanna Swensen (who should be large and red-haired) and 50-something M.C. Beaton's PR guru Agatha Raisin (described as perpetually dieting and having "bear-like eyes").

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**BOOKLOVER** — Jack Irvine, owner of Eureka Books in Old Town, with an original 1882 "History of Humboldt" by W.W. Elliot. "It's wonderful to hold in your hands books so lovingly produced." Ted Pease photo.

## Humboldt's Bookstores

By Susan Penn

When we went into pandemic lockdown in early 2020, I was distressed when my favorite bookstore closed. I was willing to wear a mask, but I could not live without books!

Fortunately for the thousands of us who rely on books for sustenance, our local independent bookstores did not let us go hungry, taking on the new, strange

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## TEDtalks: Celebrate the Book

Back in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Bi Sheng created the first moveable type, but it was German inventor Johannes Gutenberg who changed the world when he came up with metal type in 1454, and made the printed word available for everyone.

Step into any bookstore or library (or newsroom), and you can still see Gutenberg's impact today. In liberating words on paper from scribes and clerics, Gutenberg's invention spread literacy across Europe. And we all know what literacy gets you — reading!

For no particular reason beyond my own love of books, this month's Senior News is dedicated to the book. And, boy, did we hit the jackpot! When the word went out, submissions flooded in.

Makes sense, of course: booklovers are also in love with words. Unfortunately, only so many words will fit in this issue, so some fine submissions will have to wait for future editions. With that apology, let's celebrate books, libraries, bookworms, writers and bookstores.

Over centuries, many have written lovingly of books, because of the wonders they contain and transmit from one person and one generation to the next. "Books hold most of the secrets of the world, most of the thoughts that men and women have had," wrote E.B. White.

And print helps words endure, as Eugene Fitch Ware observed: "Man builds no structure which outlives a book."

The Times Book Review just celebrated

its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In 1897, its editor wrote, "Life is worth living because there are books." Nine hundred years earlier, Roman statesman Cicero put it this way: "If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need."

Indeed, books are good for you. "Books are like vitamins," said Clare Boothe Luce. "When you walk into a library, you tend to pick — almost instinctively — the intellectual or the emotional vitamins you need."

Books do make a difference. As author Jane Smiley once said, "Many people, myself among them, feel better at the mere sight of a book." We hope this issue of Senior News makes you feel better, too.

...

**Thank You's:** First, to Sherman Schapiro of Eureka, who sent in a check to underwrite the Senior News crossword puzzle (page 20) for the next six months. Send Sherman a grateful little nod as you ponder a six-letter word for 23 down.

And we've had some lovely notes from readers and new subscribers, including a woman in Fortuna who said she loves Senior News ("even though it's sometimes a little too liberal"), and this from Diane in Eureka: "Congratulations on your wonderful publication. I look forward to every issue and devour each article!"

Read on!

*Ted Pease, an inveterate word lover, is editor of Senior News and co-authored "Publishing Books" (1992/1994).*

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COMING NEXT MONTH  
**Year-End Goodies**



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# Books Groups: ‘Entertaining, Beautiful & a Great Joy’

By Susan Parsons

Books and book groups are portals to new friends and novel ideas — thus the name for Arcata Library’s “A Novel Idea Book Group,” which I formed four years ago when I moved to Arcata from the Chicago area to manage the Arcata Library.

The “Novel Idealists” look forward to and live vicariously through each new read. The pandemic couldn’t stop us — all sorrows and joys can be borne if you share them in stories!

Books sustain us through extraordinary times. They connect us to family and friends who aren’t physically here anymore. They link past and future generations, and document our existence through the ages.

Here’s what the Novel Idealists say:

**Linda Mays:** “Books and book groups teach me about out-of-reach experiences, people, places, concepts and more. They touch my heart, mind and soul. They build community. They invite discovery.”

**Carol Coar:** “With a group giving input, one sees different views and learns more about a book than one thought possible.”

**Anna Leightman:** “Being in a book group encourages me to be a more critical, discerning reader, and expands my repertoire of authors and subjects to discover. I usually learn more about the book with the commentary of peers and people with diverse perspectives.”

**Sharon Ferrett:** “Reading and discussing different viewpoints expands my understanding of the world. I appreciate different opinions and learn to see and value a wide range of views. The friendships I’ve made have been a treasured part of my life. My mind and heart are expanded each time.”

**Guin Bishop:** “In these times of social struggles, local and abroad, it is nice to break the walls of isolation by talking about a good book with thoughtful people. It feels like we are participating in solutions together.”

**Alan Michaels:** “I don’t know why I like books so much — it just is. I can remember the exact time and place when I became a constant reader. It was like I went through a door, somehow, into another sort of life where reading became as inescapable as my own body.”

**Kathy Davis:** “Book groups provide a safe place to discuss difficult subjects. They encourage you to understand history and current events from a new perspective.”

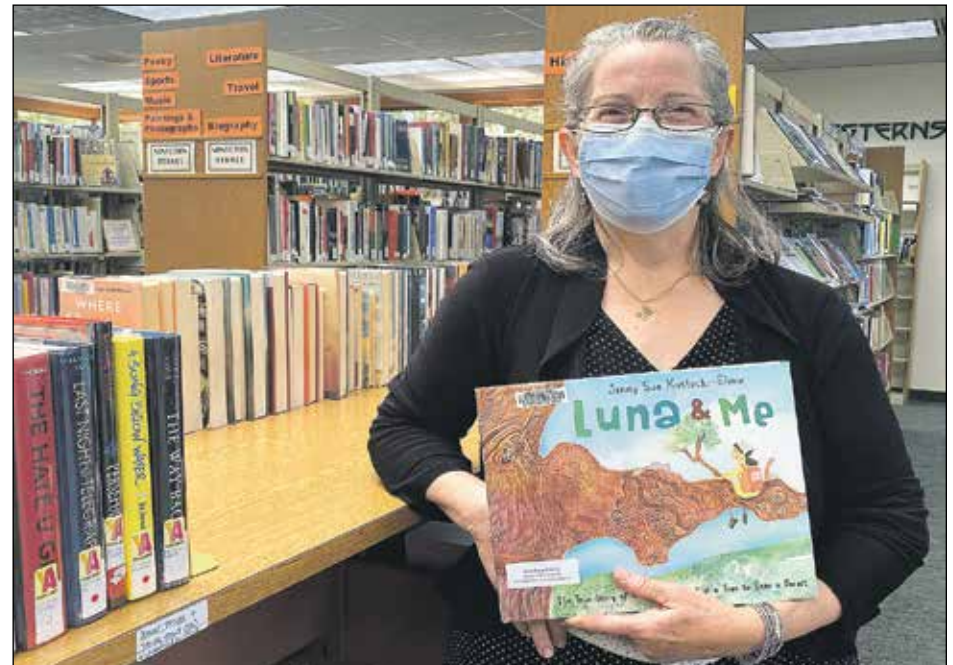
**Carol McNeill:** “Book groups introduce me to new ideas and knowledge. I gain new information and ways of looking at things when I hear the reactions of others. It’s a wonderful way to get to know, respect and care for new people.”

**Ila Osburn:** “I get to read something I may not have readily picked up, and most times it is pretty good stuff. Books take me away from the everyday clutter, introduce me to people and situations I may never experience on my own, teach me that others have issues, joys, and lives very similar to mine.”

“Books teach, teach, teach me. Book groups are accepting of differences in thought — how nice, with all that is going on in the world today. Books and book groups are entertaining, beautiful and a great joy.”

**Marika Chop:** “I love to discuss high and low points of books with others. Reading is generally a solitary activity. When we discuss a book with

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STORY TIME — Librarian Susan Parsons in her element. Ted Pease photo.

## Group Brought Her Back

By Carol McFarland

Through the bleak weeks and months that I endured a serious illness, I mourned the loss of contact with familiar things, especially the Novel Idealists book group, of which I’d been a member almost since its inception.

The double whammy of illness plus pandemic had caused me, in Susan Parson’s words, to “hunker down like a turtle” within my own protective environment, nursing myself through the loneliness.

I missed the lively monthly interchanges where we gathered in a circle to share the riches of new books and ideas that made the hour-long meetings fly by so swiftly, differing viewpoints bouncing from discovery to consternation to laughter.

On a recent Thursday, I didn’t feel quite up to the Zoom session that had replaced live book group meetings, but I tuned in anyway. As the screen on my laptop brightened, Susan came into view.

With the sight and sound of her welcome, I felt a kind of “awakening” that lifted my spirit. Though too late for the full meeting, the feeling that I had crossed back into a beloved family, so sorely missed during my absence, provided me with the hope that I was on my way back to something I’d almost forgotten existed.

—  
**Carol McFarland** of Arcata has run out of room on her bookshelves (but she always has the library).

# Finding Hope About Climate Change in Sci-Fi

By Mark Larson

My life was changed forever when I was 10, and my oldest brother gave me my first science fiction book — Arthur C. Clarke’s “Time’s Arrow,” a story about unintended consequences of using time travel to study dinosaurs.

After that, my sci-fi book favorites ranged from Ray Bradbury to Ursula K. Le Guin. In the 1970s, I gravitated toward dystopian science-fiction (see John Brunner’s 1968 Hugo Award-winning “Stand on Zanzibar”) that describes the consequences of climate change and overpopulation.

But after I moved to Humboldt County in 1975, I found that too depressing and stopped reading dystopian science-fiction authors — until 1993, when I read Octavia Butler’s apocalyptic science-fiction novel “Parable of the Sower,” a commentary on climate change and social inequality. Her story shocked me with its realistic description of a chaotic societal collapse due to resource scarcity and poverty, and a plot line where the protagonist ends up in Humboldt County.

Butler’s book motivated me to get educated about what we then called global warming. I sought out Bill McKibben’s “The End of Nature” (1989), often described as the first nonfiction book about climate change for a general audience.

Unfortunately, learning more about the dangers

looming ahead for our planet’s “climate crisis” (as McKibben now prefers to call it) also was depressing. My question then and now: what can we still do to avert the crisis?

McKibben recently was part of a Humboldt State University “Sustainable Futures” ([schatzcenter.org/speakers/](http://schatzcenter.org/speakers/)) webinar, and he outlined what we can do, and what gives him hope.

He said recent dramatic increased use of renewable energy, declining use of fossil fuels, and lower costs for solar technology and batteries all give him hope.

His second source of hope, McKibben said, are the many successful social movements involving climate activism. He co-founded 350.org, an international climate activist group that helped block pipeline projects and created successful campaigns urging fossil-fuel company divestment. (Coincidentally, the California State University system announced this same week that it was divesting its fossil-fuel holdings — more hope.)

McKibben also challenged elders in the webinar audience to get involved in climate action with organizations such as the Third Act ([thirdact.org](http://thirdact.org)), which is aimed at engaging activists over age 60, or the Elders Climate Organization ([eldersclimate-action.org](http://eldersclimate-action.org)).

“People over 60 need to act less as individuals and should join other movements and groups in order to better make your voice heard,” McKibben said.

Near the end of the webinar, McKibben was asked how he copes with depressing news about the climate crisis. His advice: pay attention to and get out into the remaining beauty on Earth as often as possible.

I also asked McKibben if he had any fiction reading suggestions that are not as depressing as the dystopian sci-fi books involving climate change. Excited by the question, he recommended Kim Stanley Robinson’s new “Ministry for the Future.” He said he’d just interviewed Robinson on his podcast, and complimented the author for his compelling fiction about climate change and his knowledge of climate science.

Watch McKibben’s webinar at the “Previous Talks” page at the Schatz Energy Center ([schatzcenter.org/speakers/](http://schatzcenter.org/speakers/)).

—

**Mark Larson**, a retired HSU professor, does his reading at home in Arcata and gets out in nature every chance he gets.

# ‘Traveling Steinbeckians’ Celebrated Writer’s 100th

By Jane Parks-McKay

‘In 2002, a group of us writers in Capitola got together to honor native son John Steinbeck, and to promote literacy and celebrate his 100th birthday (he was born in 1902 in nearby Salinas).

We called ourselves “The Traveling Steinbecks” and gave community presentations. We had a ball.

We each did something to highlight Steinbeck’s work and life. I read a piece I wrote called, “My Affair with John Steinbeck” (that never actually happened, of course — he was long dead).

Another group member talked about her book on “the women of Steinbeck.” The funniest act was a parody with Steinbeck characters set in the

“Leave It to Beaver” show.

At some point, it dawned on me that I’d better ask the Steinbeck family if we could use the name. Their longtime law firm asked us to change our name to “The Traveling Steinbeckians.”

Audiences got larger and we became pretty popular. The appearance that stands out was a gig at an independent bookstore in Capitola.

I contacted every English teacher in town, inviting them to bring their students. When we entered the store, every nook and cranny was full — maybe around 250 people!

All of a sudden, I had awful stage fright and ran into the bathroom to cry and pray. That worked, and the evening was a resounding success.

We eventually disbanded after celebrating Steinbeck’s 100th birthday for 3½ years, but we still talk about it.

That independent bookstore is long gone and the building was razed and turned into a chain movie theater. But, oh, the memories of Steinbeck in his prime!

—

**Jane Parks-McKay** rereads Steinbeck and relives the glory days in Santa Cruz.





## ASK THE DOCTOR

BY JENNIFER HEIDMANN, M.D.

# Healthy Holidays

Every year as we head into holiday season, certain factors arise that can affect our health.

The usual suspects include challenges around diet and weight gain, mental and emotional well-being, and the risk of falls from shorter and rainier winter days.

Added to these issues this year is the ongoing global pandemic, which complicates plans for travel and gatherings, as well as for everyday activity outside the home.

Starting with Halloween and through the start of the new year, we typically celebrate with scrumptious food. This can lead to weight gain, diabetes issues, tooth decay, and salt loads — all of which exacerbate chronic illnesses such as congestive heart failure or kidney disease.

It is not unusual to see an increase in emergency room visits the day after Thanksgiving due to salty food intake and worsening breathing.

It is not realistic or kind to suggest we should all avoid any celebratory holiday meals or treats. But we can try to keep track of what we are eating, and be mindful about choices. Sweets should be limited. Teeth should be brushed and flossed regularly. Extra salt should be avoided.

Keeping a food journal can keep us honest about our intake and choices, and also help us to notice correlation between what we eat and how we feel. Daily exercise can help with weight maintenance and overall health.

Exercising outdoors can boost mental and physical health. It is

trickier this time of year, with ever-shrinking daylight hours between now and the Winter Solstice on Dec. 21. If you're out for a walk at dawn or dusk, wear a headlamp (a great alternative to a flashlight, as it leaves your hands free), light-colored or reflective clothing and sturdy walking shoes with a good grip.

Redwood decks can be slippery in the rain and mist. I've seen several broken bones related to a quick trip out on the deck to let a pet out, so use caution.

Mental and emotional stress can worsen during the holidays, even for those who enjoy this time of year. There are expectations about gift-giving and gatherings of family and friends, and the holidays can be a reminder of lost loved ones and fractured relationships.

This is a good time of year to slow down the pace of our lives, which is what nature would have us do — in the past, before modern “civilization,” the short days meant people just did not do as much outside the home. Perhaps spending less on material things, and instead giving time to reach out to those we care about, could reduce our stress.

Being truly present each day and noticing each other and the small wonders can soften some of the pain this often harried season can produce.

Gatherings are a big part of holidays for many people, of course, but we still need to approach these with caution this year. The pandemic continues. In order to reduce the chance

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# New Aspirin Advice

The advice to take an aspirin a day to keep heart attacks away has been with us for so long that it's almost folk wisdom.

For years, physicians have advised a daily “baby aspirin” to avoid heart attack or stroke, but that advice has now been recalled.

In October, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, an independent non-governmental organization of volunteer medical experts, recommended revising the low-dose aspirin regimen.

The group said no one over 60 should take low-dose aspirin as a new treatment if they have not had a heart attack or stroke. Most people in their 40s and 50s who do not have a history of cardiovascular disease should consult their primary care physician.

The task force cited studies showing an increased risk of bleeding from aspirin that outweighs potential benefits.

“Aspirin use can cause serious harms, and risk increases with age,” said task force member Dr. John Wong, a primary-care expert at Tufts Medical Center in Boston.

The new findings also rescind recommendations to use low-dose aspirin to help prevent colorectal cancer.

But if you're already taking low-dose aspirin, the group says keep doing it until you can talk to your doctor.

“We don't recommend anyone stop without talking to a clinician, and definitely not if they have already had a heart attack or stroke,” said Dr. Chien-Wen Tseng, another task force member.

—Ted Pease

# The Buddy System

A San Francisco nonprofit, created to help record seniors' life stories, has become a weapon against social isolation and loneliness ever since the pandemic lockdown in March 2020.

Social isolation, loneliness and depression disproportionately impacts seniors, whose social interactions are often limited by age or health, and got much worse under COVID.

My Life, My Stories is a group designed to “share the life legacies of older adults through the power of intergenerational relationships.” They have promoted cross-generational friendships that have helped hundreds of San Franciscans push back pandemic isolation and fear while also preserving seniors' personal histories.

In 2016, Brittany Bare, then 32, conceived My Life, My Stories (mylifemystories.org) when she moved

in with her 80-something “Gram” in Ohio and got to know her as a person. After her grandmother died, Bare started visiting nursing homes in San Francisco and asking residents to share their stories.

By the time the pandemic hit, the group had connected more than 5,000 people — like Kathleen Toohill, 31, and Sooki Addison, 85, who started meeting twice a week for walks, chocolate chip-pecan cookies, or just to chat on the phone or Zoom.

“I feel like she's part of the family,” Toohill said.

Addison agrees: “Having a young person care for you like that makes you feel strong,” she said. “It's a good feeling to have a friend, a daughter, a buddy.”

Google “next avenue sooki” to read more.

—Ted Pease



**HOMEGROWN** BY JULIE FULKERSON

## Hearing Each Note

I used to pride myself on being able to do several activities at one time.

I play the violin. While playing chamber music with friends, I could simultaneously make lists in my head of things to do the next day, replay a conversation from earlier in the week, plan a fundraiser or wonder if I should clip my nails. The mundane slipped into the moments that could have been filled with music and unencumbered relationships with my friends.

Fortunately, somewhere along the path, I read research that countered the prevailing business and academic culture I was steeped in. In brief, current studies informed me that it was not productive or even healthy to multi-task.

Though it was a gradual transition, now when I sit with my string duets and quartets, I am with the music, the sounds, the reverberations, the ever-changing possibilities . . . in each moment. Nothing is static or even permanent.

We can play or hear the same Beethoven quartet and know it will never sound the same. Thousands before us have played the same notes; many will play them into the future. Each time this great music is played, we enliven Beethoven's genius and, I hope, a tiny bit of our own.

Forgiveness, and even love, are a big part of making music. Believe me, as a child learning to play the violin, both were required in large

measure. If my parents had not been able to overlook the squawking sounds and poor intonation, I would not be playing today. Instead, their encouragement kept me going. When I couldn't stand the harsh and imperfect sounds, my mother would play along with me to enhance the overall result.

I do not practice any religion, and yet I am deeply moved by the sounds of monks singing Gregorian chants, a children's choir in a cathedral, bells and chants in a temple, a Bach motet in the Clois-

ters, spirituals in the church, saxophones in the subway . . . and a Mendelssohn quartet in my garage.

Music is a place where the unimportant falls away and gives room to all possibilities. It is the perfect meditation. Musical mistakes are dropped with each new note, moving forward. With each note and phrase, my focus is on the sound, harmony, movement, mood, balance and the reverberations my instrument produces.

Once in a while, I am distracted, but usually by the realization that the composer, years ago, was also in that same moment. I forget the mistakes and remember the music. It is good practice and meditation, with or without music.

**Julie Fulkerson** of Eureka has started violin lessons again after 50 years. Her teacher is willing to play along. Contact: [juliefulkerson@mac.com](mailto:juliefulkerson@mac.com).

## Growing My Imagination

By John Meyers

I have often been accused of having a vivid imagination. I suppose if you ask my old school teachers, they would agree. Where does it come from?

I grew up on a 40-acre ranch in the middle of a forest. There was an open green pasture with grazing black and white cows and an occasional horse with its tail constantly swatting at bothersome flies. A murky pond full of cattails and croaking frogs in one corner of the pasture tempted us to skip a stone or two, if we could stand the swarming mosquitoes.

That whole scene was surrounded by towering, earthy-smelling Ponderosa pines, standing silent guard over a forest full of magpies and squirrels and raccoons and howling coyotes.

Just down from the house was an apple orchard of gnarled old trees with apparitions of grizzled faces visible in the bark. Tangy green apples hung low from the branches. The deer loved those apples as much as I did.

We didn't have a TV, and radio reception was spotty. Our nearest neighbor was a mile away and the nearest neighbor with kids was two miles away. I saw other kids at school, but then had to leave them to do whatever other kids did together after school while I took the 20-mile bus ride home.

### NOVEL IDEALISTS . . . From Page 3

others, it creates a field of sharing of views and experiences that sheds light on the topic in a way that is very organic. I always leave book groups with a deeper understanding of the book and my fellow book enthusiasts."

**Niamh Winslow:** "I have read books I would never pick up myself

At an early age, I discovered that a plain old stick made a sturdy steel sword for swashbuckling. I have battled more than one tree monster in my day. That stick also made a fine rifle for shooting rustlers who were after our cows . . . durned varmints! And I could bat wormy apples out of the stadium with ease . . . a regular Babe Ruth. And the crowd goes *wild!*

I also grew up in a time when I went out early to play, with my mother cautioning, "Be back by dark." As long as I had my chores done, my playtime was assured.

Mostly, I had parents who were voracious readers, and they passed that on to me and my brother. When we were little, we would perch comfortably on each arm of our dad's easy chair as he read to us. In our house, you didn't come to the dinner table without an open dog-eared book.

So where did my imagination come from? I think it's obvious: aliens implanted me with an Imagination Chip the third time they abducted me. What else could it be?

—  
**John Meyers, 72, has written more than 20 fiction and nonfiction books (some with his co-author wife, Sheryl) in several genres. He currently imagines himself living in Trinidad.**

and have had my reading horizon expanded tremendously through book clubs."

—  
**Susan Parsons** is Arcata librarian. Ask her about creating your own group with the Book Group in a Bag. Call 707-822-5954 or email [sparsons@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:sparsons@co.humboldt.ca.us)



# Still Waiting for My Novel

By Gail Slaughter

I never wrote a novel, but most of my life I fully expected to. As a child, I seemed to be writing constantly.

One of my earliest memories is filling a paper with zigzagging lines that I truly thought would tell my grandma about my dolls.

Once I learned to make actual words, I began “writing books.” Well, my mom was a typing teacher with stacks of old student papers to use the backs of; I bound them with staples, string and even a shoelace.

I have a box full of these early efforts, most of them cringe-worthy. “The Princess’s Sister is a Mermaid,” for example, and, worst of all, “A Girl and the Boys Who Do Funny Things” (mainly, the boys climbed ladders to peek in the girl’s window when she was getting dressed). These were all illustrated by the author.

In 4th grade, at my instigation, my “Puppy Club” composed a book of stories set in the land of “Puppyville,” where the people were dogs. Of course, I wrote more stories than anyone else, usually involving a dog-napping and escape. We presented this book to our teacher; I’d had so much fun that I continued to send her “The Monthly Puppy Pages” for the next three years.

Influenced by “The Bobbsey Twins,” I began my own series about orphaned triplets. I did finish two volumes. “On a Desert Island” wasn’t badly written for age 10, but it was completely implausible. The triplets rowed to an island they saw from

shore, rescued a father and daughter who’d been shipwrecked, and discovered a treasure there, too!

My family lived in England during my 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. Although we lived in a pleasant neighborhood, I became intrigued by the idea of “cockneys” in London slums and diligently developed a chapter book about an East End schoolgirl named Lesley. The boy she liked was named “Harvey” so I could drop the H.

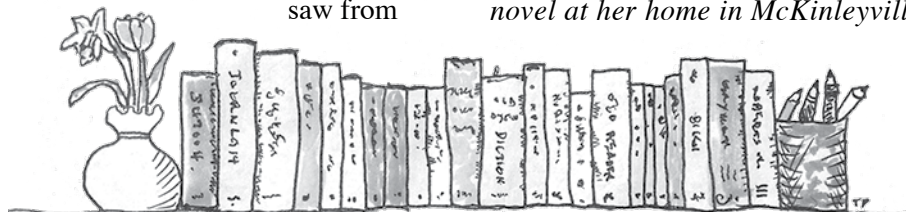
But when we returned to the states, things changed. I was reading better books by then, and teachers said, “Write what you know.” I began resetting “Lesley” in America, but suddenly nothing I wrote seemed very good. “Lesley” languished as I got busy with high school.

Then college, jobs, marriages, kids, plus lots of other distractions that I finally realized were excuses. I had nothing important to say. I lacked the talent, imagination and confidence. Most of all, I lacked discipline.

This doesn’t mean I didn’t write. I worked on newspapers, I composed humorous verse and song parodies for my silly stage persona. I have boxes of personal journals. Hey, I write posts on Facebook about other people’s novels. Even something for Senior News now and then.

But, oh, for the passion and confidence of that little girl who never doubted she would someday write a novel.

—  
**Gail Slaughter**, 76, muses on her novel at her home in McKinleyville.



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## PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

### Peace Talks

For the past few months, I've promised myself, "This is the month when I will publish 'Annie California Book Two.'"

I tried to polish and publish it in July, but July went by. Again in August, but that was a bust. September? I cannot remember.

Readers of Book One have stopped me on the street: "When's the sequel coming out?" We're talking teachers, lawyers, librarians, even retirees

— all somewhat older than ages 8 to 12, as I thought my readers would be. These readers were men and

women who said, "I didn't think I was going to like this novel about a 10-year-old kid. But I started caring about Annie and kept hoping she was okay."

Throughout Book One, Annie California was quite the national traveler, keeping an honest journal. She's leaving Eureka in a van with her dysfunctional family, traveling east and staying a week with her new friend Crow Boy and his mom in Georgia, before heading north to Rhode Island for a while. Annie could have composed a folk song, "Five Thousand Miles."

At the end of Book One, Annie is whisking her mom south by bus from Rhode Island, hoping Crow Boy and his mom might want to pick up the two travelers at the Macon, Georgia, bus station.

As I thought of how to begin the sequel, I was surprised — as writers often are by their own charac-

ters — that Crow Boy doesn't pick up Annie and her mom at the bus station after all.

That's the start of a series of communication troubles, each followed by a salty-sweet understanding, helped along by food, porch swings, and peace talks. Annie finds herself perplexed, fighting with her friend a kind of civil war — what Crow Boy calls "The War of Northern Aggression" (with a dual meaning). But throughout, Annie is taking charge of her new life.

**'Here in November,  
we're possibly  
seeing a way forward.'**

I wrote most of Book Two before the pandemic. Then . . . well, life intervened. It seems readers now might enjoy a taste of "the before times," as a friend calls the pre-pandemic era, when arguing about nectarine pits was the worst thing to happen all day.

Throughout these pandemic months, tempests within and without buffet us on a regular basis, storms strong enough to break our concentration, if not our spirits. But here in November, we're possibly seeing a way forward.

I also see a way forward in my editing and re-editing of "Annie California Book Two," which might be published in time for the holidays — "if the fates allow. Until then, we'll have to muddle through somehow."

**Margaret Kellermann** is a local author. Contact her at [bluelakestudio.net/contact](http://bluelakestudio.net/contact).

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# 'Manly Men' Share Books, Beer (& Cookies), Brotherhood

By Rees Hughes

Fourteen years ago, I helped start a book group. This was partially in response to my envy of the raucous, laugh-filled evenings listening to my wife's book club gatherings as I sheltered upstairs. Who would have thought talking about a book could be so much fun?

To capture what we hoped would be our wild and spirited meetings, our group adopted the moniker, "Humbookers" — that is, until my younger daughter heard this smoking-jacket, patrician name choice. Major eye-roll.

Mei Lan retreated to her room and emerged a short time later with a written proposal to our group to jettison "Humbookers" for the "Manly Men." She has always had a knack for irony.

So, some 160-plus books later, a dozen Manly Men are still going strong, the antithesis to Robert Putnam's treatise in "Bowling Alone" (2000), about the precipitous decline in club attendance, having friends over, and community organizations.

My wife thinks that we have a way to go to rival her group. She finds our tradition of the host offering beer and cookies an offensive culinary combination. And her club has gone to New York City and Lake Tahoe together.

But we Manly Men have loved our book group. We've read unexpected gems, and some dogs, too (the consensus is that I recommended the biggest

loser . . . and they have never let me forget it). We invite our partners to join us for an annual trip to Ashland (we read a book related to a theatrical production at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival) and gather for a potluck on July 4th. All would agree that we have read many books that we would have never opened if left to our own preferences.

Joining the Manlies is difficult — one of us will need to move or die. But it's easy to start your own group. Beer and cookies optional.

—  
**Rees Hughes** *does his manly reading in Arcata.*



**BOOKISH BOYS** — The Manly Men take a hike. Front, from left: Rees Hughes and Buzz Webb; back row, from left: Mike Yanke, John Schafer, Willard Foote, John VanSpeybroeck, Rick Vrem and Rollie Lamberson. Missing are Zach Zwerdling, Dennis Rael, Tom Lisle and Harvey Kelsey. Rees Hughes photo.

Some of us struggled to get through Marilynne Robinson's acclaimed "Gilead: A Novel," while one member recently visited the town that inspired the book in rural Iowa. We read Ron Chernow's biography, "Grant," big enough to strike a lethal blow if you fell asleep while reading it in bed. Some were overwhelmed by the minutiae while others cherished the level of detail.

We've tried to challenge ourselves with books about race and conservatism. COVID opened up the opportunity for us to us to have authors like Larry Diamond and Tran Manh Khiem join us by Zoom to talk about their books. One evening, we each submitted a musical selection that had a special place in our own personal history.

As you would expect from Manly Men, we periodically read poets like Mary Oliver, Gary Snyder and Billy Collins. And imagine a bunch of old fellows spending a night at the Requa Inn and sitting around the communal space reading our favorite Ted Kooser poems and drinking wine. I'm still not sure who the other guests thought we were.

## Friends of Redwood Libraries Offers Buck-a-Bag Books

The Friends of the Redwood Libraries (FRL) will hold its ever-popular Buck-a-Bag book sale on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 5 & 6, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., to benefit the Humboldt County Library System.

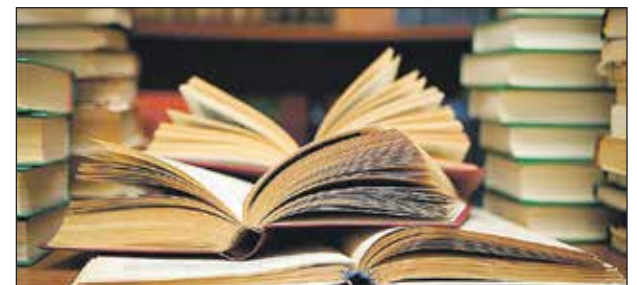
The sale in the Eureka Library's garage, 1313 3<sup>rd</sup> St., will feature both hardback and paperback fiction and nonfiction, children's books, CDs and DVDs.

FRL members only on Friday, but newcomers

can purchase memberships at the door. Open to the general public on Saturday. Masks are required.

Friends of the Redwood Libraries also has available its 2022 children's art calendar of drawings by local kids ages 5-12. Information about this and other other FRL activities at [eurekafrl.org](http://eurekafrl.org).

FRL is an all-volunteer organization. New volunteers are always welcome.





## AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

### Did You Hear That?

Why is it that we associate hearing aids, which help the hearing-impaired, with the elderly, the feeble and the less capable, and yet we make none of those associations with glasses, which help the seeing-impaired?

Hearing loss, according to most research, is completely natural, especially as we age. Unfortunately, unlike glasses, hearing aids — often the best solution to hearing loss (presbycusis) that is related to the aging process — are mired in stigma, confusion and greed. That trifecta is responsible for the fact that only one in seven of us with a hearing loss uses a hearing aid.

When our hearing loss goes undiagnosed and untreated, things only get worse. Our reluctance to seek out help can lead to “cognitive decline, social disengagement, and a variety of serious health issues,” experts say.

For some time now, I have refused to acknowledge my own hearing loss. It did not take much self-reflection to understand my hesitancy was due to vanity. All those silly internet ads promising “ever smaller and more invisible hearing aids” — ads that claim “no one will know you are wearing them!” — have had an effect.

Many factors contribute to the stigma surrounding hearing loss. In a study published in 2009, Margaret Wallhagen, a University of California—San Francisco professor of physiological nursing, found that most of these factors revolved

around a similar trifecta: self-perception, ageism and vanity. I am guilty of all three.

Finally, Janet said to me, “Hearing aids? Old? Don’t you think constantly asking people to repeat themselves is worse?” So, two weeks ago I started my own difficult and confusing hearing aid odyssey.

Asking my friends about their hearing loss experiences was easy; they were informative and supportive. Doing research on the internet was insane. Google “hearing aids” and you will find a massive world of contradictory information, ads that help stigmatize hearing loss, and greedy scams for hearing aids that promise the moon.

I ended up seeing an audiologist. If I want Medicare to cover the cost of the exam, she said, I needed to get a referral from my family doctor. I did, so I got the referral. I took the hearing test and found I have significant hearing loss in my left ear. My next stop is an ear, nose and throat specialist. Then, and only then, hearing aids.

I have been wearing glasses for most of my life. No stigma! They help me stay safe and creative. Hearing aids? I hope they do the same.

Wish me luck.

**John Heckel, Ph.D., 74, of Eureka is a retired HSU theater and film professor with a doctorate in psychology.**

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**It is highly recommended that all beneficiaries use Medicare’s plan finder tool each year to compare the available Part D plans, as opposed to simply letting an existing drug plan auto-renew.**

**The Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) can help you review your drug plan.**

**Contact HICAP to make an appointment:**

**by phone: (707) 444-3000 or 1(800) 434-0222**

**or call Medicare at 1(800) 633-4227**

\*The production of this document was supported, in part, by grant number CFDA 93.924 from the US Administration for Community Living (ACL), DHHS, Washington, DC, 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration of Community Living policy. \* Its contents are solely the responsibility of AIAA/HICAP and do not necessarily represent the official views of ACL.





# HSRC News

## ‘Helping People Is What’s Important,’ Says Meals Recipient

By Tasha Romo

McKinleyville resident Ben Bridges is concerned about the state of the world.

“Helping people is what is important,” he said.

Ben knows firsthand the impact that help can make. Before being referred to Humboldt Senior Resource Center’s (HSRC) Home Delivered Meals program, Ben had not been taking good care of himself, and didn’t always eat well.

After being referred to the Home Delivered Meals (HDM) program more than four years ago, Ben has noticed a big improvement in his health.

“I really appreciate all of the people who help with the meals,” he said. “I consider them part of my family.”

Like many program participants, Ben enjoys his interaction with the HDM driver who brings his

meals as much as he likes the food. This interaction is another important benefit of the Home Delivered Meals program — not only do the drivers deliver meals, they also provide a wellness check and social contact for every recipient on their route.

Ben is one of the 150 homebound seniors in communities from Fortuna to McKinleyville who receive regular meal deliveries under HSRC’s Home Delivered Meals program. Since the early 1980s, the program has provided fresh, nutritionally balanced meals prepared in the HSRC kitchen to homebound older adults throughout our community.



**Ben Bridges**

The HDM program is funded, in part, through a contract between HSRC and the Area 1 Agency on Aging, and also with funds from the federal Older Americans Act–Title III Senior Nutrition Program.

But this funding is not enough. Additional financial support for the program comes

from community donations, participant contributions, grants and foundations.

Meals are delivered to the homes of frail and homebound seniors by HSRC staff as well as by community volunteers. In these COVID pandemic times, safety precautions are taken to ensure the

**Continued on Page 14**



## Calling all Caregivers and Families of Seniors

**Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) is planning for the future of older adults in Humboldt County and surrounding areas.**

We invite you to take part in a survey to help us understand the challenges and needs experienced by caregivers – paid or unpaid – and families and friends of older adults (age 55 and older) who need care assistance.

### How to Take Part in This Survey

- Complete the survey online. Visit [humsenior.org](https://humsenior.org) for more information and the survey link.
- Take part in a virtual Caregiver Forum hosted by HSRC to provide information and feedback regarding caregiving challenges and services. Email [adm@humsenior.org](mailto:adm@humsenior.org) or call 707-443-9747 ext. 1267 to participate.
- Complete the survey by phone; call 707-443-9747 ext. 1267 to provide input.

**We appreciate your assistance in shaping the future of caregiving for older adults in our community.**



**Humboldt Senior  
Resource Center**



## Humboldt Senior Resource Center Is Open and Here to Serve You



**H**umboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) provides a wide range of programs and services to help older adults in our community remain as independent as possible. We now have Centers in Eureka and Fortuna. All HSRC programs are providing services with pandemic safety in mind:

- **Adult Day Health** – A therapeutic day program for ages 18 and older with chronic conditions
- **Alzheimer's Services** – Resources for anyone with a dementia-related diagnosis
- **Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP)** – A care management program to help frail elders remain at home
- **Nutrition Program** – Offering meals for pick-up by senior diners or delivery to homebound elders
- **Redwood Coast PACE** – Providing comprehensive medical care and in-home support for qualified adults



Referrals are being accepted for all programs.  
For more information, call us at 707-443-9747  
or visit [www.humsenior.org](http://www.humsenior.org).



**Humboldt Senior  
Resource Center**

1910 California St., Eureka CA 95501  
3200 Newburg Road, Fortuna CA 95540

## HSRC News

**Eureka**  
1910 California Street

**Arcata**  
321 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway  
707-443-9747 • [www.humsenior.org](http://www.humsenior.org)

**Fortuna**  
3200 Newburg Road

## Service Offers Peace of Mind

The Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC), in partnership with the Arcata Fire District and the Humboldt Bay Fire District, is offering a new service to call subscribers every morning.

The service, "My Safety Call," is designed as a way to help check in with friends and loved ones who live alone or who have ongoing health concerns. The service offers peace of mind and a way to help ensure safety.

The service, which replaces the



old "Are You OK?@" system, is available to residents of the greater Eureka, Arcata and McKinleyville areas.

Here's how it works: Every morning at a pre-set time, the My Safety Call

program automatically calls subscribers. If there is no answer after three attempted calls, the program sends an alert to an HSRC staff member or volunteer, who will call the subscriber's emergency contact. If needed, local fire personnel will be notified to initiate a wellness check.

### To enroll in the My Safety Call program, subscribers must:

- Live in the Arcata or Humboldt Bay fire districts.
- Be capable of answering the phone.
- Provide a house key to place in a lock box outside the residence, accessible only to emergency personnel.

There is a one-time \$12 fee for the service.

To enroll or for more information, call HSRC's Activities Department, 707-443-9747, x1240.

### COMMODITIES DISTRIBUTION

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Arcata</b>   | <b>Eureka</b>                   |
| Thurs., Nov. 18, 10:30-11 a.m.                          | Wed., Nov. 17, 10-11:30 a.m.    |
| Arcata Community Center                                 | Humboldt Senior Resource Center |
| 321 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy.                    | 1910 California St.             |
| <b>McKinleyville</b>                                    |                                 |
| Thurs., Nov. 18, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.                    |                                 |
| McKinleyville Family Resource Center, 1944 Central Ave. |                                 |

## HSRC Programs

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. Our doors are locked, but staff are available for on-site assistance.

**Activities Program:** See the Calendar at [humsenior.org](http://humsenior.org) for activities updates. Senior Home Repair is 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. The Senior Firewood Program is discontinued.

**Adult Day Health & Alzheimer's Services:** Open in Eureka and Fortuna. 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 welcome.

**Redwood Coast PACE:** Open in Eureka and Fortuna. New referrals are being accepted.

**Senior News:** Open as usual. Free copies available at area groceries and businesses. Available online at [humsenior.org](http://humsenior.org). Subscriptions, \$25/year. Call 707-443-9747 with credit card info, or mail a check to 1910 California St., Eureka CA 95501.

**Nutrition Program:** Status of HSRC Nutrition services:

**Home Delivered Meals** service continues.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We thank community members for their flexibility during this time as we continue to offer modified services.

As the holiday season nears  
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Fortuna Senior Center Activities

3000 Newburg Road, Suite B, Fortuna, CA 95540  
(707) 726-9203 • fortunasenior.org  
Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Mondays

8 a.m. Walk the Riverwalk Levee  
10-11:30 a.m. Tai Chi  
1-2 p.m. Beginning Ukulele  
2-3 p.m. Book Club (1<sup>st</sup> Monday only)

Tuesdays

8 a.m. Walk the Riverwalk Levee  
10-11 a.m. Aerobics for Seniors  
1-2 p.m. Stitchery  
1:30-3 p.m. Recorder  
2-3 p.m. Seated Tai Chi

Wednesdays

8 a.m. Walk the Riverwalk Levee  
10-11:30 a.m. Tai Chi  
12-1 p.m. Brown Bag Lunch  
(bring your own)  
1-3 p.m. Art

Thursdays

10-11 a.m. Aerobics for Seniors  
12:30-1:30 p.m. Mah Jongg  
1-4 p.m. Pinoacle  
4-5:15 p.m. Yoga

Fridays

9 a.m.-noon Bike Club  
Call Lee McDowell –  
(707) 725-1229  
9 a.m. Senior Hiking Group  
Call Lynn Crosthwait –  
(707) 725-7953  
10 a.m. Pinochle  
1-3 p.m. Scrabble  
7-9:30 p.m. Camera Club  
(last Friday only)

Best Sellers

The 17 best-selling books of all time, ranging from 200+ million for Dickens to ~65 million for Dr. Spock (not counting the Bible and other religious tomes). How many have you read?

- *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), Charles Dickens.
- *The Lord of the Rings* (1954), J.R.R. Tolkien.
- *The Little Prince* (1943), Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.
- *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (1997), J.K. Rowling.
- *The Hobbit* (1937), J.R.R. Tolkien.
- *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), Lewis Carroll.
- *Dream of the Red Chamber* (18<sup>th</sup> century), Cao Xueqin.
- *And Then There Were None* (1939), Agatha Christie.
- *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950), C.S. Lewis.
- *She: A History of Adventure* (1887), H. Rider Haggard.
- *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), Dan Brown.
- *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1883), Carlo Collodi.
- *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), J.D. Salinger.
- *The Alchemist* (1988), Paul Coelho.
- *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007), J.K. Rowling.
- *Steps to Christ* (1892), Ellen G. White.
- *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* (1946), Benjamin Spock.

HELPING PEOPLE . . . From Page 11

good health of participants and drivers.  
HSRC has openings for additional Home Delivered Meals participants in Arcata, Eureka, Fortuna and McKinleyville. We also plan to offer weekly Home Delivered Meals services to areas of Humboldt Hill, King Salmon, and Fields Landing.  
If you or someone you know could benefit — as Ben and so many of your neighbors have — from receiving free, nutritious meals at home, please

contact HDM coordinator Vanessa Kuersten at 707-443-9747, x1221, or email vkuersten@humsenior.org.  
Intake questionnaires are conducted via phone, and eligible participants can generally start to receive meals within two weeks of their referral date.  
—  
Tasha Romo is director of HSRC’s Nutrition & Activities Program.

Wishing you a festive & fun holiday season!

OLLI · HSU is grateful to the volunteers & Friends of OLLI for their support of lifelong learning in our community.

Share your love of lifelong learning with a friend or family member this season. Email [olli@humboldt.edu](mailto:olli@humboldt.edu) for more information.



JOIN, RENEW, REGISTER: [humboldt.edu/olli](http://humboldt.edu/olli)

OLLI at HSU is a vibrant lifelong learning community of people age 50 and better.

## Reading with Children

By Cindy Chesbro

When my children were preschool age, I worked in a community college preschool facility. At home, we always had many picture books in baskets in their rooms, and even in the bathtub.

I would take my boys to story hour at the local library, and checked out as many as 40 picture books to read at home and take to my preschool class.

At the center where I worked, we celebrated National Reading Day by dressing teachers in characters to read from a book, and the children would vote on which they enjoyed the best. I dressed as the bear in Jill Murphy's "Whatever Next!" with a box on my body and a colander on my head, as the bear did in the book to go to the Moon.

Reading to children as early as infancy enhances their literacy and vocabulary skills, researchers have found.

"Even during story time, their minds are at work, taking in all the language they hear and lessons the characters learn," says Healthline.com.

Reading together is also a great

way to connect. My boys are in their 30s now, but I still have many of the books that I bought when they were young — it's hard to let go of them. We have a Little Free Library at our house, and I occasionally put in a few books to entice children to read.

I encourage you to read with your grandchildren and take them to story hour at one of the local libraries. Contact your Humboldt County Library ([humboldt.gov/library](http://humboldt.gov/library)) about Zoom or live story hour offerings.

When you read to preschoolers, ask them questions about the book to engage their thinking. Do a cooking or art project around the book. For example, "Stone Soup" by Marcia Brown can prompt a great cooking activity — children are intrigued to put a stone in the soup pot.

Encourage children to read by expressing and sharing your own love of books.

—  
**Cindy Chesbro** of McKinleyville  
is a member of the Humboldt  
Library Foundation Board  
([humboldtlibraryfoundation.org](http://humboldtlibraryfoundation.org)).

## The Library at Your Door

By JoAnn Bauer

Shuttered at home? Live too far to walk to your branch library, or do you need children's books delivered to your door?

The Humboldt County Library will soon offer a new service to bring library materials directly to community members with mobility issues or other barriers to visiting library facilities.

Providing access to materials, information and programs is one of a public library's most important missions. Fulfilling this goal was difficult when the pandemic forced closure of the main library in Eureka and all 10 branches and the bookmobile service.

Library programs switched from in-person events to Zoom presentations, and curbside services were added.

Library Director Chris Cooper recognized that library users with transportation and mobility challenges were still not able to access the richness the library has to offer. Networking with other librarians, Cooper learned about home delivery programs in jurisdictions similar to ours. They were wildly popular with patrons.

To make home delivery happen here, the library needed a cargo van. Cooper and the Humboldt Library Foundation (HLF) collaborated to launch a fundraising campaign last spring, and we are close to reaching our \$50,000 goal.

The library also will partner with senior living facilities and care homes to make deliveries to residents, who will be able to call the main library or go online to request specific items, or ask for general topics — like a bird identification guide, a history of Scotland or even a cozy mystery or two.

Initially, the service area will include Eureka, Arcata and Fortuna, with plans to extend to outlying communities later.

To help support the project, go to [humboldtlibraryfoundation.org](http://humboldtlibraryfoundation.org) and make a donation, or mail a check to HLF, PO Box 440, Eureka, CA 95502, specifying that it is for the cargo van.

—  
**JoAnn Bauer** of Eureka is a former children's librarian and a Humboldt Library Foundation Board member.



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## LOVE OF MYSTERY . . . From Page 1

Movies and TV shows are spoiled for me when they get the character basics wrong.

Another peeve is book naming. The worst offender is Sue Grafton, she of the Kinsey Milhone Alphabet Series (“A is for Alibi,” etc.). I can’t remember whether I’ve read H or O or W. Is it a scheme to sell duplicate books, because I know I’ve fallen into that trap?

Books named for food are another issue — did I already devour Fluke’s Lemon Meringue, Key Lime, Coconut Cream, Banana Cream or Blackberry Pie titles?

Why do I enjoy reading mysteries? It’s likely related to my love of crossword puzzles. My analytical mind loves watching for clues scattered throughout a book . . . or did the author throw a curve in the last three pages?

My current favorite sleuth is Flavia de Luce, the central character in 10 books by Alan Bradley. The novels



**WHODUNIT? Sue Leskiw is surrounded by books — and that’s how she likes it.**  
Tom Leskiw photo.

begin in 1950 with 11-year-old Flavia living in a small English village.

Wikipedia describes Bradley’s writing style as “reminiscent of the Golden Age of crime writing,” citing my first loves, Christie, Conan Doyle and Sayers. A harkening back to my early years of mystery enjoyment, with Flavia’s bicycle subbing for Nancy’s roadster? —

*Sue Leskiw pursues mysteries at home near Blue Lake.*

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OPINION

No Pot Mega-Grow

By Earl Bootier & Cheryl Furman

The Humboldt County Zoning Administrators Office, with ZERO notice to anyone living more than 350 feet away from this proposed project, is preparing to unleash a 44,000-square-foot mega pot grow on Kneeland.

Kneeland, along with the rest of the planet, is already suffering from global warming, drought, punishing smoke and ash from regional forest fires and the threat of fire. The developer plans to install 60 5,000-gallon rain catchment tanks (that’s 300,000 gallons), which would likely be the death knell for many wells and springs in this neighborhood, which includes Cross Creek, Foss, Paddock, Tim Mullen and Barry roads.

Groundwater from Kneeland to the ocean would be affected — Cross Creek to Bell Creek to Lawrence Creek to the Van Duzen River, to the already water-impaired Eel River and out to the Pacific.

I first bought property on Cross Creek Road in 1984 when I was in my late 30s, before there was a Cross Creek Road. I’ve seen a lot, but is this what’s in store for us here in Kneeland, and then on to someone else’s neighborhood?

This project DEMANDS a comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR). In addition, the out-of-state developers should be required to assume reimbursement liability for adversely affected neighboring property owners who will suffer from this development and its rainwater catchment, visual blight, increased aggressive traffic on dangerous narrow roads, and the constant smell of growing and drying of thousands of square feet of this mega-grow (44,000 square feet, with two harvests annually).

The vast majority of us have nothing against cannabis — many of us use it ourselves; my wife and I use it to help us sleep. It works! What we oppose are industrial mega-grows from out-of-town developers, who want to take all of our water and who will squash the mom and pop growers who grew up in this area.

Even if you don’t live in Kneeland, please call your county supervisor and express your concern before the zoning commission approves a similar or larger commercial grow/threat in your neighborhood/viewshed.

Please contact your supervisor ([humboldt.gov/167/Board-of-Supervisors](https://humboldt.gov/167/Board-of-Supervisors)), Planning Director John Ford ([jford@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:jford@co.humboldt.ca.us)) and Planning Commission Chair Alan Bongios ([abongio@humboldtcds.org](mailto:abongio@humboldtcds.org)). And please sign our petition to “Save Kneeland water for residents, wildlife, and fire suppression, not a mega-grow!” at <https://chng.it/9p-P9yfHjQ2>, and help us fight back by donating what you can at [gofundme.com/f/Save-Kneeland-from-this-Mega-Grow](https://gofundme.com/f/Save-Kneeland-from-this-Mega-Grow).

This is a countywide threat — it could happen in your neck of the woods!

Earl Bootier & Cheryl Furman  
live in Kneeland.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | R | I | P | S |   | I | M | A | C |   | G | O | O | D |
| S | E | W | U | P |   | N | E | R | O |   | E | D | G | E |
| A | W | A | R | E |   | P | A | I | L |   | M | O | R | E |
|   |   | S | E | C | R | E | T | A | D | M | I | R | E | R |
| P | I | N |   | I | A | N |   | C | A | N |   |   |   |   |
| I | T | T | E | A | M |   | T | O | U | R | I | S | T | S |
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| S | C | E | N | E | O | N | E |   | A | B | S | E | N | T |
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| O | M | E | N |   | B | A | L | L |   | L | O | O | M | S |
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| E | N | Y | A |   | G | E | M | S |   | N | E | S | T | S |

Crossword Puzzle is on page 20.

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## HUMBOLDT BOOKSTORES . . . From Page 1

COVID-era reality with creativity and determination. From McKinleyville to Ferndale, bookstores are alive and thriving.

Blake's Books on Central Avenue in McKinleyville sells new and used books, and has a special kid-friendly area. They remained open, disinfecting customers' hands as they entered and strictly enforcing masking. "It is important to us that all our customers be and feel safe," said owner Courtney Blake. She saw "a notable increase in requests for novels that provide relief (or distraction or escape) from the anxieties, pains and frustrations of life under COVID."

In Arcata, Northtown Books ([northtownbooks.com](http://northtownbooks.com)) on H Street closed its doors, but not its service. "Our website and curbside pickup service kept us afloat for the first three months," owner Dante DiGenova said.

When Northtown reopened, readers returned. "The support from the community has been amazing," Dante said.

Just up the block is the Tin Can Mailman ([tincanbooks.com](http://tincanbooks.com)), a fixture in Humboldt used books. The popular Arcata landmark for Humboldt State folk and local book lovers weathered the pandemic with phone and curbside sales.

Eureka Books in Old Town has always done a lot of its business online ([eurekabookshop.com](http://eurekabookshop.com)), especially for its specialty antiquarian offerings, which sustained them while their doors were closed. When the store reopened for curb service, customers rallied, happy to support their favorite purveyor. But that was a rough patch, said owner Jack Irvine. "\$200 in sales was a good day," he said.

Store manager Katy McCreary noted upticks in books on the latest pandemic hobbies — like sourdough baking.

Down the block from Eureka Books is the Booklegger ([bookleggers.com/](http://bookleggers.com/)), which primarily sells used books. While the store was shuttered, they mailed books to customers. "A lot of people turned to books as a comfort/distraction/inspiration during the lockdown," owner Jen McFadden said.

"Some were rather new to reading for pleasure, and have become true bibliophiles since," she said. Children's books, always big sellers, were especially popular as were nature and field guide books, as folks spend more time outdoors.

In Ferndale, Chapman's Bookery ([chapmans-bookery.com](http://chapmans-bookery.com)) on Main Street sells books of all sorts, and also musical instruments. Owner Christina Chapman thinks many people come in because they need something tangible to hold in their hands after so much screen time.

Some customers also looked to do something new during the pandemic, she said — like play the banjo. Christina has noticed an increase in nonfiction sales, especially politics and science.

Jen, at the Booklegger, clearly stated the message I heard from everyone:

"Our community is already good about supporting local business, but I think people have really doubled down on that and are going out of their way to avoid ordering books online if they can get them through a local store," she said. "We appreciate that support so much. The readers of Humboldt are a top-notch crowd."

Personally, I am so grateful for all these great local places to buy books!

—  
**Susan Penn** of Eureka is a booklover and a fervent believer in buying locally — especially books.

## Best First Lines

The first line of any story is crucial. Get it wrong and the reader has turned on the TV. But, as playwright Tom Stoppard once said, "Get the right [words] in the right order, and you can nudge the world a little."

Here are some. Opinions will vary.

*"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."* *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), Jane Austen.

*"Call me Ishmael."* *Moby Dick* (1851), Herman Melville.

*"It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen."* *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), George Orwell.

*"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* *The Bible* (King James).

*"All this happened, more or less."* *Slaughterhouse Five* (1969), Kurt Vonnegut.

*"Ships at a distance have every man's wish on board."* *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), Zora Neale Hurston.

*"He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish."* *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), Ernest Hemingway.

*"We slept in what had once been a gymnasium."* *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Margaret Atwood.

"Best" is in the eye, ear and mind of the reader, of course — making generalization an impossibility. Dickens might have called these the best of lines, the worst of lines . . .

—Ted Pease

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## ASK THE DOCTOR . . . From Page 5

of getting or giving COVID to each other this holiday season, everyone should be vaccinated. Wear masks when in groups of people you don't live with, and before gatherings, people ideally will get a COVID test to be sure they are not carrying the virus without symptoms.

Those at highest risk should be particularly careful. Elders, those undergoing some cancer treatments, people with immunosuppressive disorders or lung disease, and young children are particularly susceptible to contracting COVID-19 and having a severe case. It may be inconvenient to do so, but protecting each other from this virus is an act of love.

I hope everyone enjoys this beautiful time of year, and that you can be gentle with yourselves and to others as we all navigate the winter, the holiday stressors and the ongoing pandemic. Here's to a better year ahead, and good health for all!

**Dr. Jennifer Heidmann** is medical director and primary care provider at Redwood Coast PACE (707-443-9747). This column should not be taken as medical advice. Ask your medical provider if you have health questions. Send comments to [seniornewseditor@humsenior.org](mailto:seniornewseditor@humsenior.org).



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# Crossword Puzzle

**Light My Fire** by Bill Pipal & Jeff Chen  
Edited by Amanda Rafkin

Crossword sponsored by Sherman Schapiro

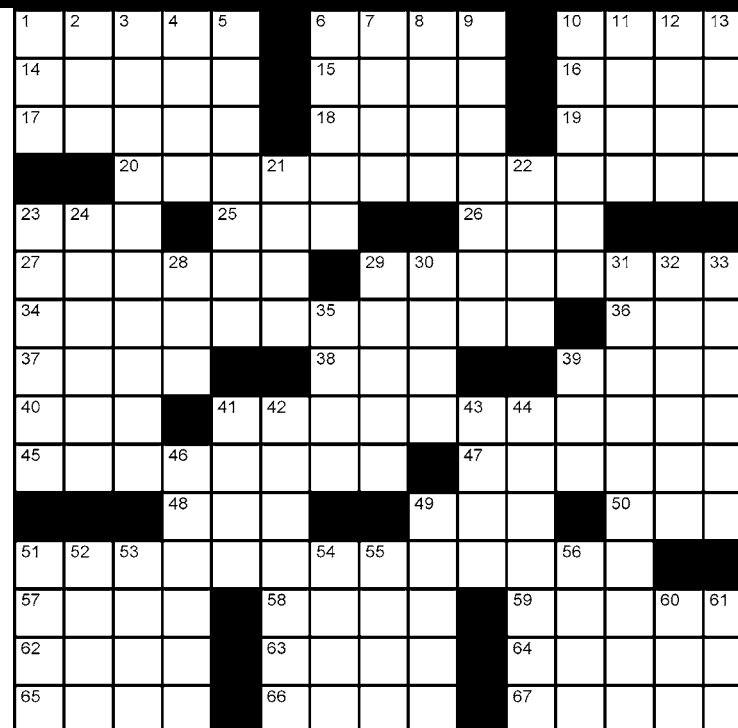
## ACROSS

- 1 Stumbles  
6 Apple desktop  
10 Not evil  
14 Finalize  
15 Infamous Roman emperor  
16 Slight advantage  
17 Not in the dark  
18 Beach bucket  
19 "One \_\_\_ song!" ("Encore!")  
20 Sender of an anonymous valentine  
23 Bowler's target  
25 007 creator Fleming  
26 Food drive item  
27 Grp. concerned with viruses  
29 Sightseers, often  
34 New York Harbor attraction  
36 Chart out  
37 Plant with soothing gel  
38 WaterSense org.  
39 Guitarist's chance to shred  
40 Ominous sight for a swimmer  
41 Person who welds  
45 Act opener  
47 Playing hooky, say  
48 Quantity: Abbr.  
49 Big diamond?  
50 Home where slop is served

- 51 What 20-, 34- and 41-Across each does in a different way  
57 It's usually a bad sign  
58 Big event for Cinderella  
59 Hovers (over)  
62 Where to find heros among men?  
63 Water, in Spanish  
64 Louvre Pyramid architect  
65 "Only Time" singer  
66 Precious stones  
67 Residences on Wingspan cards

## DOWN

- 1 Org. responsible for travelers' checks?  
2 Opposite of FF  
3 "Would you let me finish?!"  
4 Unadulterated  
5 "Well, isn't that \_\_\_?"  
6 How some solve crosswords  
7 Tofu might replace it  
8 Song that may end on a high note  
9 Slice of roast beef, e.g.  
10 The twins, astrologically  
11 Stench  
12 Baddie in a D&D campaign  
13 "Do-Re-Mi" animal  
21 Actor Malek  
22 "Jesus Christ Superstar" role  
23 Spiced rice dishes  
24 Like slanted type  
28 Center of a hurricane  
29 Conical home  
30 Mouth-related  
31 Stores for cigar aficionados  
32 Juggling or dancing, e.g.  
33 Like Mustangs and Miatas  
35 "\_\_\_ there, done that!"  
39 Ditch Day participants: Abbr.  
41 Hauler  
42 Reusable grocery carrier  
43 Texas city hidden in "draw a conclusion"  
44 Liberal arts college in Ohio  
46 Fantasy world accessed through a wardrobe  
49 Titan holding up the sky  
51 Write in Python, say  
52 "You got that right!"  
53 Depend (on)  
54 Herb in stuffing  
55 Reunion attendee, briefly  
56 "On the \_\_\_ Up" (Angie Thomas novel)  
60 Encountered  
61 Solange, to Beyonce, for short



Crossword answers are on page 17

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## Letters to the Editor

### No Triskadeckaphobia

To the Editor:

Re. your October edition, “Facing Fear”: You are much too young to have known about The Page Cavanaugh Trio, an L.A. vocal combo who sang, among other hip tunes, one titled “Triskadeckaphobia.” They recorded on Capitol.

As a high school hipster in the late 1940s, I played snare drum and high-hat cymbal as a pal of mine and I sang Page Cavanaugh Trio songs at Long Beach Poly High School student assemblies. Aside from going steady with Mary, a pompom-shaking songleader, that was the only thing of consequence I did in high school. (A widow now, Mary lives in Connecticut and she and I email regularly for

old time’s sake and because all of our other old friends are dead.)

Other than not knowing about triskadeckaphobia and leaving it out of the October issue, your newspaper was thorough and colorful and impressive. Although it did make me fearful of a lot of stuff. Especially dreaded tsunamis, which, now that I think of it, you failed to mention.

**Tim Henney, Sandpoint, Idaho**

**Editor’s Note:** *I had to look it up: Triskadeckaphobia is fear of the number 13. Related: friggatriskaidekaphobia, the fear of Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. Senior News regrets the omission. —TP*

### Contemplating Fear

To the Editor:

I thought I would comment on fears [“Facing Fear,” October Senior News], but two things made me pause.

First, a couple of weeks before the topic came up, my husband for some unknown reason said he thought I was “fearless.” That was such a surprise that I spent a few weeks trying to discern if I really was. He couldn’t explain exactly what he meant either.

As I tried to work my brain around that, I realized that worrying, stressing about something to come, and

generally preparing to cope with a worrisome situation might cause me to lose sleep, but they are not fears. Then I could not come up with a true fear. Earthquakes, fires, homicidal maniacs, public speaking and car wrecks are surprise issues — not worth fear or worry until they show up.

My definition of fear turned out to be something that would make me afraid whether imminent or so not likely as to be irrational. So maybe I need therapy!

**Catherine Mace, Eureka**

### ‘Unquenchable Indeed’

To the Editor:

Thanks for the great article on Dr. Kamelgarn [“Redwood Coast PACE’s Unquenchable ‘Dr. K,’” October Senior News, page 11]. When I first moved to Eureka back in 1995, he was the family doctor. And so we were taken into the fold as well. I’ve never had such a great doctor.

After he left Open Door clinic a few years back, nothing has been the same. I get a new doctor every year now, sometimes more often than that. Some of them try to make a differ-

ence, some of them do not. But I miss the connection I had with Steve. I miss the maverick conversations about the crazy world of health care. Or just the world in general. Whatever the issue, he tried to get to the heart of it, and not always in an entirely orthodox manner. I appreciated that.

I wish Dr. K well with his new novel. I’m sure it’ll be interesting. And unorthodox. Unquenchable indeed.

**Greg Shepard, Eureka**

### Sensitivity Needed

To the Editor:

As a longtime resident of the North Coast, I appreciate our unique perspective of the world. and I read the descriptive, interesting and informative articles in the October issue of Senior News [“Facing Fear”] with much enjoyment. Thank you for the newspaper and all the hard work put into providing this service.

It seems we are learning to broaden our inclusion of many groups and individuals in society however they may differ from us. My experience and sensitivity has pushed me to write to Senior News and our community. There was one article in that issue which put a bad taste in my mouth: “‘Only One?’” [Patty Holbrook, page 17]. I am pointing out what perhaps many might miss: The acceptable, aesthetic, moral, contemporary view of one’s body is causing much pain to

individuals.

As much as Sean Connery is a type, so is Oliver Hardy. Typing individuals tells us what is “acceptable” and what is “less than” in our culture.

**Irith Shalmony, Arcata**

**Patty Holbrook responds:** *In my little story about women who are reluctant to dine alone in nice restaurants, I described an incidental character as fat, because he was. He was also rude. In a PC world, how could you describe an intruder in your home? If you say the perpetrator was male, that’s gender stereotyping. Say he was skinny, or tall, that’s body stereotyping. Say he was black, brown, yellow or white, that’s racist. Even calling him an intruder is judgmental — perhaps it was just a visitor breaking into your house to see how you were doing.*

**Letters to the Editor Policy:** Senior News welcomes letters to the editor. To be considered for publication, letters should be received by the 12th of the month, must not exceed 300 words, and may be edited for space. Submissions must include the writer’s full name, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address. Senior News reserves the right to reject any letter. The same requirements apply to those interested in submitting longer commentary columns (up to 400 words). Mail to Senior News, 1910 California Street, Eureka, CA 95501 or E-mail tpease@humsenior.org.



## MORE LETTERS ...

## Reflections on Life Expectancy

To the Editor:

Ted Pease's article, "No Fountain of Youth" [August Senior News, page 5], may give some people the false impression that older people are living longer. I note that the phrase "rates of aging" has a different meaning than "life expectancy," because "rate" is a measure of change, whereas there is no "rate" in the ultimate age at death.

Pease's phrase, "[P]eople do live longer now than in Ponce de Leon's day," is correct when the life expectancy from birth is considered, but Senior News is meant for elderly people, say 65 and older, and their life expectancy has not increased significantly since 1900. Likewise, [Oxford University researcher José Manuel Aburto's statement], "More and more people get to live much longer now," is somewhat misleading since the life expectancy for elderly people has not increased much; it is just that now there are more people.

Some say that the [number of] deaths during the coronavirus pandemic are politically increased because of the \$13,000 reporting reward the hospitals get. I've heard several people say, "They are old and were going to die anyway." One person said 91 percent of the people who have died of COVID-19 were over 70 years old. The CDC [Centers for Disease Control] has said that the people over 65 who died had an average of 2.6 preexisting conditions like diabetes, cancer, etc. Another study, I forget where, said that the average age of people who have died was higher than the life expectancy of these same people.

I'm 86 and I'm not afraid of statistics, but I do think they are interesting. Perhaps Senior News could explore this idea since it is so pertinent right now.

Charles Wilson, *Eureka*

**Editor's Note:** Mr. Wilson raises some interesting points. Although the short piece on the "Fountain of Youth" in the August Senior News was intended as an amusing brief, he is correct that the issues of life expectancy are complex.

Indeed, as Mr. Wilson points out, human lifespans have not increased all that much over centuries — Ponce de Leon, who never found the Fountain of Youth, died at 46 of wounds in a skirmish, but a study of historical records of 298 people living before 100BC found they lived on average to 72. Of course, the population as a whole then died much younger.

Mr. Wilson's other point about coronavirus deaths also is complex. First, we should clarify that hospitals are not "rewarded" for reporting COVID-19 deaths; Medicare reimbursements are based on the complexity and cost of treatment; COVID-19

treatment is reimbursed at \$13,000, more than an ankle sprain and less than cancer treatment.

As for COVID mortality, by mid-October, the World Health organization reported more than 4.8 million deaths worldwide of complications from COVID; in the U.S., about 77% of deaths were people 65 and older, reported the Centers for Disease Control. Clearly, the older we are, the more other health issues we have and the less robust our immune systems, so COVID becomes an increasingly deadly "complication" among older people who get the virus.

There is too much in Mr. Wilson's letter to discuss in detail, but here's one other related statistic: 99% of coronavirus deaths are people who are unvaccinated, so get your shot!

COVID boosters are now available; schedule one with your doctor.

—TP

## Another View from the Heights

To the Editor:

Mark Larson's experience with "visual height intolerance" resonated ["Don't Look Down," October Senior News, page 1].

I had long considered my discomfort with heights to be "acrophobia." I assumed it to be uncertainty about my balance or ability to rescue myself. As a boy, I loved climbing the low branches of the weeping willow but never ascended far into a tall oak.

My need for maintaining three or four points of contact while working from a ladder or scaffold significantly

hampers efficiency. And visions of sliding or toppling off the edge of the roof "terror-bly" delays and prolongs gutter maintenance.

Fifty-some years ago, visiting the Okefenokee Swamp, I kept a constant grip on the handrail as I climbed the stairs to the 60-foot-tall fire lookout tower. The common advice, "Don't look down," is useless. Our eyes are drawn to and captured by the distant ground, much as a moth is driven toward a flame. (I refer you to the 1969 Burt Lancaster film about barnstorm-

ing skydivers resisting the pull of the earth, "The Gypsy Moths.")

It was there that I, with both hands tight on the rail, looked down 60 feet and realized that my "acrophobia" was as much fear of jumping as it was fear of falling.

The old lookout tower has been replaced. It's now 90 feet tall. If I make it back to Georgia sometime, I want see how that feels.

Chip Sharpe, *Bayside*

## Volcano

To the Editor:

I've decided that next August I'm going to retire from my 20+ years janitorial job. For the past five years, people in my age group have retired from the businesses where I work.

I want to go to Hawaii. I want to see a volcano — I've only seen one on TV. It would be spectacular, unless a fireball hits the helicopter I'm in.

Harold McArthur, *Eureka*

**FALL BACK!**  
Set your clocks back  
Saturday night,  
Nov. 6!



## STILL MORE LETTERS...

## Giving Thanks

To the Editor:

Thanksgiving, the time of year when we set aside a special day to render thanks for all our blessings. Americans call our first thanksgiving the one celebrated in October 1621. President Lincoln, in 1863, proclaimed a “national day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwells in the heavens.”

I am thankful most mornings when I turn the tap and water flows. As you read this, some of our fellow Californians’ faucets are dry. I am very thankful for the wife of my youth — come January, it will be 60 years. Proverbs says, “When a man finds a wife, he has found a treasure. For she is the gift of God to bring him joy and pleasure.” So true. She is my best friend, soul mate, helper, partner in life!

I am indeed thankful and blessed to have been born and raised in America. A nation formed and founded by

men with a vision to establish a government “of the People, by the People, for the People.” Were these men perfect? Not so much. Is America perfect? Not so much. However, this 200+-year-old experiment has been the greatest government mankind has experienced heretofor.

I am most thankful that, as an American, I have the constitutional right and privilege to worship my beneficent Father who dwells in heaven and His beloved Son who dwells in my heart. While you may not worship my God, rest assured that I stand shoulder to shoulder with you to defend your choice of worship.

I encourage you this holiday season to pause and give voice concerning all you are thankful for. This Thanksgiving, I am grateful to be above ground to enjoy this holiday and the next one on the calendar. Happy Thanksgiving.

**William Shreeve, Eureka**

## Political Licks

To the Editor:

There are many ways to comment on today’s political arena. I decided to express myself through flavors of ice cream, which I describe as follows:

**Big Lie Chocolate:** A new creamy French vanilla.

**Trumpy Road:** Tastes like a combination of Big Macs and Diet Coke.

**Melania Melon:** Fruit flavored sherbet with the quality that, no matter how much you like it, you can’t smile afterward.

**Insurrection Punch:** A vanilla-cherries combo with a touch of THC.

**Giuliani Trifle:** Raspberry cookie dough with super-gummy gummy bears that make it difficult to talk straight after eating.

**Filibuster Fudge 2021:** A rich fudgy ice cream that leaves you unable to speak at all.

**Harmony Swirl:** A blend of vanilla, chocolate, and strawberry ice creams mixed with lemon sorbet.

Should any manufacturer decide to make one of these, I would appreciate it if they would send me a voucher for a free carton.

**Sherman Schapiro, Eureka**



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## You Can Be in Senior News

- **DECEMBER** — At the end of another year, let's remember gifts and gratitude, and revisit favorite holiday memories. What have been your best (and worst) gifts of the season — that fruitcake or ugly sweater? Mom's cookies? Dad's singing?
- **JANUARY** is International Creativity Month, a great way to start a new year. What makes you feel creative? What's the biggest life change you've undergone? And how will you innovate and renovate your life this year? How can we all think outside the box during 2022?

Contact SN editor Ted Pease: [tpease@humsenior.org](mailto:tpease@humsenior.org), or call 707-443-9747, x1226.

## Senior News

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## Life Care Humboldt

*... developing a Life Plan community  
for older adults in Humboldt County*

Life Care Humboldt is now moving into our second phase of funding to raise \$4 million from businesses, grants, and private donors. This is for pre-finance development expenses, design permitting, and building a liquidity fund for project support. By the end of 2023 we will secure construction bond financing and break ground.

### The Build-It Phase

- An offer has been made on the Arcata Creekside property!
- This next phase of development will last about three years.
- We will raise \$4 million from donors, foundations, loans, and partnerships.

- Negotiations ongoing to build 40 affordable senior cottages on our campus.
- The community design will be finalized.
- Land entitlements and permits will be completed.
- Partnerships with supporting institutions will be sought.
- We will obtain construction bond financing.
- Projected 'move-in' date is June 2025.

Our focus will be on asking for **PLEDGES** for 3 years, at which time we will be able to obtain funding by bonds for our anticipated move-in date of June 2025.

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