



A Walk on the Creative Side

The Beach Owl

By Carla Newton

Even before I moved to Humboldt County, I knew someday I'd live close to the ocean and beachcomb. I thought I'd just find pretty shells and rocks, and unique pieces of driftwood to place on my window ledge.

Little did I know what God had in store for me.

When I retired, I decided to move to Humboldt to be close to my daughter. It was a big adjustment, because besides my daughter, I knew only a few of her friends.

I had a wonderful church family in Missouri, so I prayed for one here. Boy, was that prayer answered, in more ways than one! Not only did I find people who have become like sisters and brothers to me, but in ways I hadn't expected.

One of my newfound "sisters," Diane, said she loved owls. So when I saw a piece of driftwood, I saw owl wings and breasts, heads and tails. I just had to make owls — it was a compulsion!

I made a few, but nothing I found would suit for eyes and a beak for one particular owl. Rocks and shells just didn't work. Then I discovered Arcata Scrap and Salvage — a big toybox! I had felt like that when I worked at a floral wholesaler, making artificial flower arrangements for floral shops. That wonderful creative feeling was back!

Immediately, I spotted a water faucet that would serve as a beak, but it took some special searching before I came up with a solution for eyes to fit in the holes of the faucet. And then, there they were: light bulbs! (Yes, one did actually go off in my head.)

I hot-glued and screwed the pieces of driftwood together, and got

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'HANKIN'S FOLLY' — Dave Hankin at his restored 1893 Steinway upright. Ted Pease photo.

Beloved Pianos Come Back to Life

By Ted Pease

In his spare time, when he's not studying Chinook salmon and other fisheries, publishing statistics textbooks or helping oversee the Westhaven water district, Dave Hankin leads

a quiet, secret life.

Well, it's not that secret, or quiet: Hankin loves pianos.

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Humboldt Senior Resource Center

TEDtalks: Oh, Bologna!

“What inspires you?” I asked, trolling for writers for the January issue of Senior News. The goal was to find a way to explore creativity — where it comes from, how people think outside the box.

I feel a little odd asking creative people this question. It reminds me of a line from comedian Steve Martin: Asked how come he's just so darned funny, he said, “You know, when I get up in the morning, I put bologna in my shoes, and I just *feel* funny.”

That'd do it for me.

It's hard to define or quantify creativity, but we know it when we see it. I had a great-uncle who wore wide gag ties and pulled foam rubber bunnies out of the ears of children. To us, Uncle Ralph was loud and funny and a little scary; adults rolled their eyes at him. Did Uncle Ralph have the creativity gene, or a screw loose?

The French artist Henri Matisse said, “Creativity takes courage” — certainly true for anyone who has embarked on something new (and as we start a new year). Albert Einstein, who knew about thinking outside the box, said rational thought has nothing to do with invention: “Imagination is everything.” And poet Maya Angelou said creativity is bottomless: “The more you use, the more you have.”

So what's with creative people? Do they all have bologna in their shoes, or a symphony in their pocket or what?

I'm not sure that we get very close to an answer with this month's issue of Senior News, celebrating International Creativity

Month. It's an intriguing topic anytime, but maybe especially for the *tabula rasa* (Latin: clean slate) of the first month of a new year.

Having lived in many other places, my impression is that Humboldters possess more natural creativity than the national average. Maybe there's something in the water, in the redwood fog, in the purity of the crisp air pouring in off the Pacific. You can't turn around here without running into accountants who are lyric poets, plumbers who play a wicked blues guitar, mechanics who are daz- zlingly inventive sculptors.

One such Renaissance man is Dave Hankin, a statistician and serious marine biology professor (ret.) by day, who brings vintage pianos back to life (page 1); another is Michael Fields, the former artistic director of Dell'Arte whose original comedy, “Mad-summer,” opens in February (page 4).

And we hear from Leslie Castellano, the new executive director of The Ink People, Eureka's unique creativity incubator (page 3), and plein air artists Nancy and Paul Rickard (page 18).

We don't get shed much light on understanding creativity in this issue — whether it's genius or bologna or madness — but the journey is fun, and inspiring.

As we launch into this shiny new year, we hope you're well, and that the creative juices are flowing.

Ted Pease is editor of Senior News.

Page 1 top photo: Year's end sunset over Trinidad Harbor. Ted Pease photo.

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The Ink People — A Community Creativity Incubator

By Leslie Castellano

Artists and culture-bearers are integral to the well-being of our society. Through creative work, humans bring forth innovation, forge pathways to understanding, reckon with change and inspire joy.

Even during the pandemic, the Ink People Center for the Arts has been able to continue serving the community through its core projects. For instance, MARZ (Media Arts Resource Zone) Project mentors continued to meet online with underserved youth throughout the shutdown, offering creative outlets that they could access while isolating, and providing technology for those without.

The Ink People also launched the Funds for Artists' Resilience, working in partnership with arts agencies from Trinity and Del Norte counties, with funding from Humboldt Area Foundation and the Wild Rivers Community Foundation. This program supported artist-initiated projects that benefit our region, and provided critical funding for cultural events, murals and new ways of building connection in a rapidly changing world.

Additionally, more than 100 Ink People DreamMaker Projects lift up a diverse range of voices in the region. DreamMaker Projects are artist-led initiatives that channel community creativity while addressing regional hopes and concerns. Many DreamMaker Projects remained active and alive during COVID, doing significant work to build bridges to understanding and well-being throughout this difficult time.

Some of these projects include:

- **Trajectory** brought art facilitation, career development support and resources to artists. Its collaborative "Monster Project" is on display at the corner of 3rd and G streets in Eureka.
- **English Express** shifted to online classes for people learning English in Humboldt and Del Norte.
- **Kids in the Hive**, founded during the pandemic, is offering nature-based programming for young

children on YouTube.

- **Humboldt Asians and Pacific Islanders in Solidarity** (HAPI) celebrates the history and culture of the Asian and Pacific Islander community. They have implemented murals and street renaming through the Eureka Chinatown Project, produced Humboldt Taiko events, and led initiatives addressing the legacy of racism in Humboldt and beyond.

- **Black Humboldt's** numerous activities lift up and celebrate the voices of black and brown people in Humboldt County, including the Juneteenth Celebration.

- **Creekside Arts** created artist residencies, theater and creative community events.

- **The Humboldt Period Project** is building a culture of compassion while serving pressing needs for vulnerable citizens.

- **Synopsis** offers free drumming classes and performances through its drum brigade program.

Our world needs courageous and visionary actors, people who are bold enough to put forward new endeavors addressing the current needs of this community.

Artists give us the ability to see the world differently, reimagining and reinterpreting life and society. The Ink People is proud to provide infrastructure and organizational support to these initiatives. We seek to build more vibrant and nourishing communities through creative participation in society.

Life is riddled with complexity and change; in response, society blooms with new visions for jus-



FRESH INK — Leslie Castellano takes over from Libby Maynard as executive director of The Ink People in Eureka this month. Submitted photo.

...tice, beauty and collective well-being.

—

Leslie Castellano is the new (Jan. 10) executive director of The Ink People, 627 3rd St, Eureka; 707-443-8413 (inkpeople.org).

“We are not the high-art people, but the art-of-the-people people.”

—Libby Maynard, founder, The Ink People.

Some Advice for Performers: Stay Ahead of the Lion

By Michael Fields

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” —Lao Tzu

There is a moment that many of you may have experienced in one form or another. It is that moment right before you go on stage, prepare to speak to an audience, or just have to do anything in public. (Speaking in public is said to be one of the top things many people fear.)

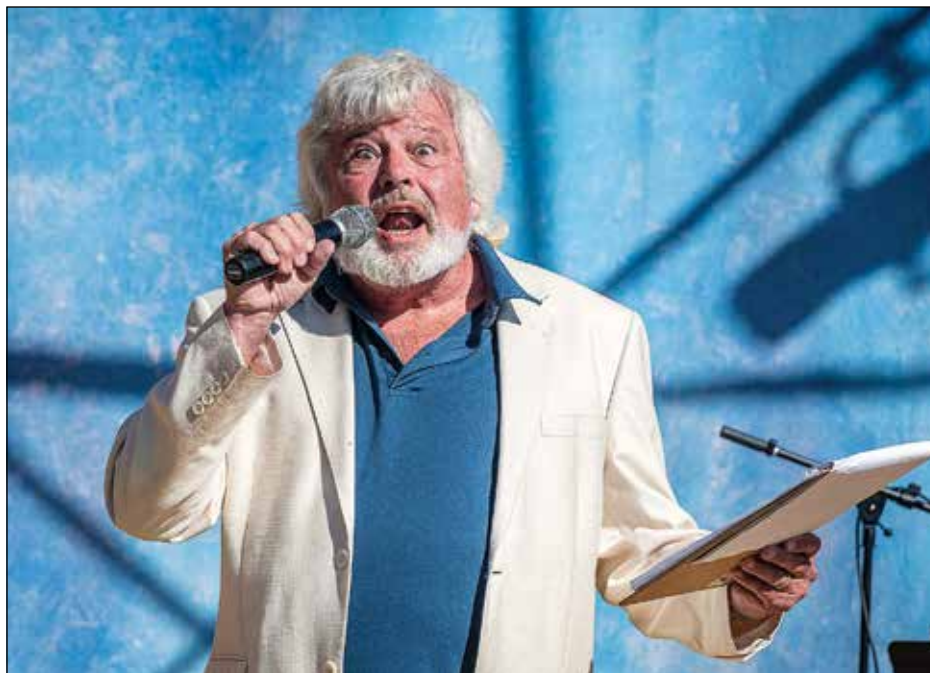
In that moment — “just before” — something physiologically interesting happens to us that is rooted in the ancient synapses of our bodies. I know from experience that it happens to all actors.

Dell’Arte once worked with a clinical psychologist, Dr. Robert Maurer, whose specialty was “staying creative.” Part of creativity is getting up for a performance, either on stage or in the wild. He said that if an antelope encounters a lion, the first thing both of them will do is void their bladders and bowels so that they both can run faster. It is not just fear, but survival.

I think being creative is part of our collective survival. And we do it with the forays we take, big and small, into the wonder (from MacGyvering holiday lights to maybe meeting that lion and hoping there is a bathroom nearby).

In his work, Dr. Maurer references a Japanese concept called “Kaizen.” The Kaizen philosophy is a simple one: “Great change is made through small steps.” I think creativity is the same.

When I write, I force myself, often with threats and rewards (no 49ers news until three pages



MADSUMMER — Michael Fields performs “I Don’t Look Good Naked Anymore” in the new comic jukebox musical set in a nursing home, coming in February. Mark Larson photo.

are done). Right now, I am completing the play “Madsummer,” a very free take on “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” that will be a juke box musical, set in a nursing home during a pandemic, with all the lovers over 60.

Will it be funny? I hope so, but I can’t worry about the lion. I have to keep taking those small steps; worrying slows me down, and then I know the lion will eat me. So I try to take my daily Kaizen steps.

A deadline also helps. We open Feb. 18 in the Carlo Theater in Blue Lake. You all should come.

Last August, I was in the Netherlands and had a lunch with members of a Dutch theatre company for which I directed several productions in 1990s.

They are all my age and retired comfortably on actors’ pensions (my mind exploded there). All of them are still engaged in some aspect of making creative work. It reminded me of a saying they have — “walking the edge of the knife.” It is that balancing act between safe and dangerous, funny and serious, doing and not doing.

I think creative acts are an inherent part of being human. We all do them. My creative partner at Dell’Arte for 40+ years, Joan Schirle, compared the creative effort to the steelhead spawning. It is a unique fish that swims upriver against the current, hoping to leave something for the future.

I think that is our collective, creative wish.

—
Michael Fields, 67, lives in the boonies between Arcata and Blue Lake. He retired last year after 35 years as founding artistic director at Dell’Arte to create a new theater production company, Longshadr (longshadr.com). Contact: longshadr@gmail.com.

Online Art Classes for Seniors Start in January

“Art for the Young at Heart” returns this winter with more online class offerings for those 55 and older.

The California Arts Council is providing funding for low-income seniors to take the class at no charge; the 10-week course is \$200 for all others.

Weekly classes run from Jan. 4 through March 9. Course offerings include Beginning Watercolor, Tuesdays 10-11:30 a.m. or 1-2:30 p.m.; Drawing and Design, Wednesdays, 10-11:30 a.m.; and Storybook Workshop, Wednesdays, 1-2:30 p.m.

Supplies and materials will be provided for low-income participants.

For more information or to sign up, email Maureen McGarry (maureen@inkpeople.org) or call The Ink People at 707-442-8413.

“Art for the Young at Heart” is a project of the DreamMaker Program of The Ink People Center for the Arts.



ASK THE DOCTOR

BY JENNIFER HEIDMANN, M.D.

Antibiotics

Many amazing technological advances in medicine have occurred over the past century — things like surgery with anesthesia, organ transplants, dialysis, more targeted cancer therapies, and biologic therapies for autoimmune diseases.

The two most powerful tools we have developed to increase lifespan and reduce risk of illness are vaccines and antibiotics.

Vaccines are becoming a political issue. But from the standpoint of a doctor, they provide a great way to reduce spread of preventable diseases. Perhaps it would be better if we could disconnect our emotions from the subject, and just look at risks, benefits and public health outcomes: Vaccines save lives.

Antibiotics save lives, too, but — paradoxically — are overused. Again, from an unemotional standpoint, antibiotics should be used for what they were made for, when appropriate and safe, based on the determination of a doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant. While being asked to consider getting vaccinated for public health fuels outrage in some, being told antibiotics are not needed can also make people angry.

I have talked a lot about vaccinations during this global pandemic. As we head into the cold season again, let's consider antibiotics. First, what are they?

Antibiotics are medications developed to inhibit growth of bacteria, ultimately not allowing bacteria to lead to infections that can cause illness. They can be lifesaving, but

even when used appropriately they can have serious side effects, such as horrible diarrhea (I have seen otherwise healthy people with antibiotic-induced colitis have around 40 bowel movements in a day), allergic reactions, and kidney and liver problems.

More mild side effects from antibiotics that also cause discomfort include yeast infections, rashes, nausea, and less serious diarrhea. When doctors think about prescribing antibiotics they consider all of these things, and prescribe them only when they feel the benefit outweighs the risk.

Viral infections do not need antibiotics. Most sinus infections can clear without antibiotics. Even urinary tract infections can sometimes clear without antibiotics. Older women in particular get over-treated for urinary tract infections, as they may just have some bacteria in their urine doing no harm. This is where a doctor needs to look at the whole clinical picture and figure out the best course of action.

On a public health level (and ultimately this affects us individually), overuse of antibiotics leads to bacteria developing resistance. They mutate and find ways to avoid the mechanism the antibiotics use to halt their growth.

When we culture a patient's urine, blood or sputum, we plate out the bacteria in the lab and test different antibiotics on them to see which might be best. It is a terrible

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Confronting Ageism

Aging in America is not just about biology — it's about a culture where "old" is a four-letter word.

While many societies — Native American, Greek, Asian — honor their elders for their wisdom and experience, America's cultural mindset prioritizes the new and the young, and farms seniors out to "care facilities," says anti-ageism activist and author Ashton Applewhite.

"The fear of aging is cultural," she said. "There are many societies where older members are venerated. If we don't challenge the theory that to age is to lose value as a human being, we will continue to internalize a negative message."

When does this marginalization begin? At 30? 50? 60? Now approaching 80, writer Garrison Keillor says, "I'm used to being kindergartened by the young."

"I went to a physical therapist once who said, 'Wonderful' when I stood

with my eyes closed and didn't fall over," he wrote. "The message was clear: you're a burned-out wreck and it's amazing you're still mobile. Next stop: Happy Acres."

If you feel like healthcare providers are talking to you like you're a kindergartener, not answering your questions or otherwise not treating you with respect, you're not alone, according to the American Society on Aging.

"I don't confront these people," said Doris Morgan, 85, a retired scientist in West Virginia. "There's no use doing that. I just dump them and find someone else."

How does ageism manifest in your experience? Senior News is planning to focus on ageism in a future issue. If you have a story to tell about this, contact editor Ted Pease, 707-443-9747, x1226, or email tpease@humsenior.org.

—Ted Pease

Blood Donor Month

Every two seconds — so, in the time it took to read this sentence — someone in the United States needs a blood or platelet transfusion.

A single car wreck can use as much as 100 units of blood, but the greatest ongoing demand for blood and plasma is for cancer treatments, orthopedic and heart surgeries and other routine medical procedures.

If you or a family member here on the North Coast needs blood, chances are it will come from the non-profit Northern California Community Blood Bank in Eureka, which wants to remind everyone that January is National Blood Donor Month.

A single donation can save up to three lives, the Blood Bank says. About 38% of us are eligible to donate blood, but only 5% of us actually

do. This means that blood banks are often scrambling to meet demand, since donated blood has a limited shelf life.

"Blood centers across the country are reporting less than a one-day's supply of blood — a dangerously low level," officials said.

Blood donations dropped off with the COVID pandemic, but local blood centers and bloodmobiles are open for business, with strict protocols in place. The Blood Bank and the Red Cross urge eligible donors to step up and donate blood twice in the New Year.

You can make a big difference in 2022. Contact the Northern California Community Blood Bank at 707-443-8004 (nccbb.org) to learn more.

—Ted Pease



HOME GROWN BY JULIE FULKERSON

The Pig's Ear

With apologies to the four-legged, I don't eat meat, but one of my favorite metaphors is turning a pig's ear into a silk purse.

It so clearly creates the image of taking something of questionable value (except to the pig) and turning it into something useful, even attractive.

I reflect on creative genius and the union of art and industry right here at home in Humboldt County. For inspiration, look to those who turn metal, glass, milk, wood and dirt into valuable, world-class products.

This list could be much longer, so I'll keep it short to remind us of all the wonders that are created in garages around here with sparse funds and an abundance of creativity and perseverance.

The '70s and '80s were a time of economic decline here in Humboldt, and innovators literally rose out of the woodwork to create new jobs and products. These are headlines that deserve fuller telling than I can accomplish here:

- Willy fed worms food scraps in his backyard bins and created FoxFarm.
- Mary chased and caught a goat to feed her family and then started Cypress Grove Cheese.
- Holly made earrings pair by pair until Paul designed machinery to create Holly Yashi.
- A backpacker needed a light-weight sleeping bag that eventually led to Kokotat.
- Wallace and Hinz custom-built bars and exported them to distant

spots like Belize and Hawaii.

- Dennis and Peter took flour and water to create culturally-diverse bagels and adopted a sister city.

- Maggie studied glass waste; John and Natalie created Fire and Light.

- Ron loved the marimba sound, found resonant wood and created MarimbaOne.

- A crazy group of wild river users turned a kayak foot brace company into mega star, Yakima.

- Gayle and Andrea created original woolen designs and partnered with women internationally.

- Matthew ground and boiled soy beans into healthy food, and The Tofu Shop emerged and replaced pig protein.

And there were the makers of banjos, guitars and furniture, the artists, musicians and actors, and mixers of potions, lotions and sauces.

Other partnerships of creativity and grit resurrected the Minor and Arcata Theaters, Open Door Community Health Clinics, Potowot Village, the Arcata Co-op, the North Coast Farmers' Markets, the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, the Redwood Community Forest, and a plethora of restaurants, bars and festivals.

Now, we have a new generation of innovators and inspiration. Fortunately, creativity is a free and unlimited resource.

Julie Fulkerson is creative in Eureka. Thanks to her parents, she knows everyone is talented. Contact: juliefulkerson@mac.com.

There's Always Something

By Louise Bacon-Ogden

Being from a middle-class family, creativity was a necessity. We, as well as many others, learned "tricks" to stretch a dollar.

Therefore, Dad became a handyman around the house. He repaired, remodeled and made things to keep us safe and sound. He did roof repairs, plastered ceilings, wallpapered, installed a swing set and kept a large vegetable garden.

Mom cooked, canned and sewed our clothes. She made professional-looking draperies and decorated relatives' special wedding, anniversary and birthday cakes, and, together, we did crafts from ideas in magazines.

The Depression taught my parents well. They, in turn, passed those skills along to their children.

I wasn't much into the "home-making" stuff, but loved going to the Sears hardware department with my father. I absorbed much but was rarely asked to hammer in a nail or run a Skilsaw (after all, I was a GIRL . . .).

I do recall helping Dad paint the house and roof a large patio he built.

As I ventured out on my own,

my creativity grew. Not only did I adore redecorating, doing house projects, gardening and calligraphy, but, in time, I opened my own business. What a creative outlet that was! My store was my palette.

I got to dress windows, set up appealing displays, make advertisements, make brochures and create "ambiance." I worked at creating products (that my husband made), concocting contests and hitting the lecture circuit.

In 2004, I retired and made a "creativity shift": I joined a choir, did a bit of writing and began renewing my interests in creating art on paper.

I took many art and crafts classes and joined art groups. Today, via Zoom, I teach some fun art classes (and some bird classes as well). I still work in the garden and do as many DIY projects as I am able. I even bought myself a cordless drill.

Who knows what my next project will be? —

Louise Bacon-Ogden is forever creating . . . something . . . in Eureka.



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Hop a Train to Wherever

By Jim Slade

In my imagination, the Rum Ridge and Whiskey Hollow Railroad stretches for hundreds of *smiles* (scale miles). In reality, the RR&WH runs for 30 or 40 feet in a series of hidden curves through tunnels and into railroad storage yards at least seven tracks deep.

In my small world, if you don't like what's happening over here, just turn around and go over there. I always find something to do.

It's HO scale, which means there are 87 scale inches in every full-size inch — the world's most popular modeling scale among model train enthusiasts. That's small, but not as small as N-scale, which is roughly half the size of HO.

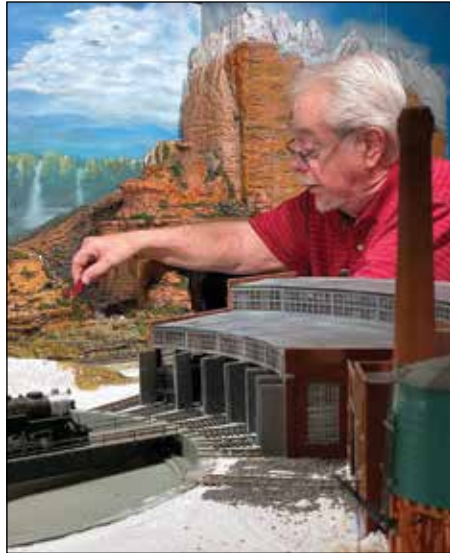
If that boggles your mind, forget it . . . you can get a ruler that measures things in HO inches and feet when you want to build a model.

And that's only the beginning. As you build a model, you have to put in surroundings that have HO-scale grass, trees, sidewalks, stores, mountains, fields and, of course, a railroad to run through it with tiny people to make it go.

In the process, you get to do some carpentry, a little electrical work and whatever art you've got in you — all you have to do is have fun. A lot of railroaders call themselves "Imaginarians." I love it.

I had dabbled in the hobby when I was a young man, but never had time to really get into it. When Jane and I (both widowers) married seven years ago, I discovered the foundation of a working model railroad in the basement of her home in Delaware, Ohio.

Her late husband, Jimmie, was a master of fancy track building, which he had pretty much completed, so I



SOCIAL ENGINEERING — Model train devotee Jim Slade spends hours and hours creating tiny worlds linked by train. Jane Moore photo.

dived in and started building scenery, the part I like best.

I like to add "super detailing," so my trout stream has rocks visible under the plastic water and guys with fishing poles standing on them. Rock cliffs painted with oils have cracks and fissures with grass growing out. I like buildings with interior furnishings and lots of people to give them life.

And then I get up close and photograph it all to see just how close to real I came.

You can get a little blurry-eyed if you spend too many hours seeing everything at 1:87. That's when you go for a beer and kick back to plan the next part of your imaginary world.

It's never dull.

Jim Slade, 85, covered NASA for 50 years as a broadcast journalist before becoming a model train mogul in Morgantown, Ohio.

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PAINTING THE OCEAN

BY MARGARET KELLERMANN

Creating Space

More than a century ago in Ferndale, a stately Victorian building with two-story stained-glass windows was enjoying its first incarnation as a flourishing Methodist church, with plenty of music inside.

The Methodists are gone, but the music remains. Cheri March and Paul Beatie of Ferndale Music Company bought the building in 2015 and christened it The Old Steeple, creating a cultural hub that quickly became one of Humboldt's most beloved music venues.

Before 2015, a few blocks away on Main Street, the couple owned a music shop where they hosted open mic nights. Paul taught guitar classes.

"But we'd often pass the church building," Cheri said. "We tried to look in the windows. It was privately owned, but it called to us.

"When it went on the market, it came to us what we wanted to do," she said. "We stayed up all night talking about how we could buy this place and make it work. After we bought it, we housed the music store in the great room. Then we focused on hosting concerts in the sanctuary/concert hall. The sanctuary was built for singing, after all."

Their ideas grew organically. "We booked the musicians we wanted to listen to," Cheri said. "We hoped people would come enjoy them, too. We've been offering music and art classes for kids and adults in the area. We've even had a magician and a quilter give workshops."

By early 2020, The Old Steeple was on a roll. Folk musicians and other performers, including big names like Iris DeMent and David Lindley, traveled to play there. PBS had picked up local coverage on KEET, broadcasting the series "LIVE from The Old Steeple" across the country from New York to Los Angeles.

Then, with the pandemic shutdown, the couple went almost two quiet years without hosting a concert.

This month, though, The Old Steeple is experiencing a resurrection. Starting Jan. 8 with "vaudeville cowboy musician" Sourdough Slim, the 2022 winter/spring season looks varied and bright. The noted duo of Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser and California cellist Natalie Haas plays in February. Art hikes and yoga classes have been added to the growing list of workshops.

What's the next incarnation?

"There's the idea that if you feed creative energy, you're going to attract it, and there's reciprocation," Cheri said. "That's all part of what motivates us: creating space to share with others. Maybe a gallery. Maybe spaces for writers. We haven't exactly defined what it will look like. We don't want to limit that."

Margaret Kellermann leads art classes and art hikes through Ferndale Music Company. For 2022 events at The Old Steeple, see ferndalemusiccompany.com.

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Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA)

assists income-qualified seniors and disabled households with energy assistance payments (HEAP) or the purchase of firewood, propane, or fuel oil and/or FREE Weatherization services.

The **HEAP Program** can help qualified households on a once per year basis with a credit on your PG&E bill or the purchase of propane or firewood.

RCAA's Weatherization Program improves health and safety conditions in the home and installs energy saving measures to save money on your energy bill.

To qualify for RCAA's 2022 Senior and Homebound/Disabled List

- you must be at least 70 years old
- or a homebound/disabled person
- and meet the federal income guidelines listed at right.

Federal Income Guidelines

# PEOPLE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD	MAXIMUM - GROSS MONTHLY INCOME ALLOWED
1	\$2,564.73
2	\$3,353.87
3	\$4,143.02
4	\$4,932.17
5	\$5,721.31

Beginning January 3, 2022, call* 707-444-3831, ext. 201
to have your name added to the
2022 Senior and Homebound/Disabled List

*Please follow the recorded directions and leave the appropriate information to get your name placed on the Senior/Homebound Disabled List. Please remember to speak slowly and clearly when leaving your contact information.



redwood
communityaction
agency

Long-Distance Bicycling — the Quest and the Journey

By Robert Berg

It was May 2014, and I had just finished the grueling “Tour of the Unknown Coast” (TUC) bicycle race — 100 miles of bad roads, stiff winds, steep climbs, hair-raising descents, but breathtakingly beautiful.

Billed as “California’s Toughest Century,” the ride begins in Ferndale, heads south through the Eel River Valley to Scotia, along the Avenue of the Giants to Bull Creek, then west through the most majestic of the remaining old growth redwoods. The first big climb of the day is next, 10 miles up Panther Gap and the descent to Honeydew and the Mattole River Valley. On through Petrolia and a climb out of the valley, the ride hits the beach and 10 miles of headwinds to Cape Mendocino — the 80-mile mark. Most veterans will tell you that the ride is just beginning.

After Cape Mendocino comes “The Wall” — three miles of 12% to 21% grade — and then the dive down to Capetown and up again over the “Endless Hill” to the Wildcat, and finally another step descent back into Ferndale for lunch and sharing stories of the ride.

I was 71 in 2014, and had ridden the TUC more than 35 times, as well as many more training rides. The race was getting harder and taking longer. I began to wonder if I could still do this at age 80. That was still nine years away, and seemed a daunting goal, but it was a goal I made for myself.

I rode the TUC in 2015, 2016 and 2017, still hanging in there; my 2017 time was over eight hours — two hours longer than my personal best. I missed the race in 2018 and 2019 due to illness and travel, and decided to rededicate myself to riding the TUC.

In 2020, I was 77, with a new bike — lower

gears, disc brakes, electronic shifting. A trip to Death Valley for an eight-day bike camp kicked off the season. Then COVID hit, and the 2020 TUC was canceled.

This year began with a winter training trip to Arizona and five days riding with Phil Dresser, a longtime training partner who spends winters in Tucson. I took a second trip to Tucson in March for a grueling training camp — 85 miles a day for 10 days.

Back in Humboldt, ready for the TUC, COVID strikes again, and the 2021 tour was canceled. A group of us rode it in May anyway. My time was not great, but completing it gave me confidence.

As I write this, at age 78, I’m still riding, of course — commuting, touring, on family outings, mountain biking, and regular Tuesday and Sunday rides with Vince Smith, Lee Rusconi and Phil Dresser.

Riding California’s Toughest Century at 80 is two years away, and it’s a realistic goal. It will be nice to achieve it, and may be my last TUC. But the friendships I’ve made, the satisfaction, health benefits and emotional wellbeing are the real rewards, and that is what I’ll take away from this journey.

—

Robert Berg, D.D.S., 78, keeps pedaling in Bayside, and beyond.



PEDAL PUSHERS — Dedicated bicyclists (from left) Robert Berg, Philip Dresser, Vince Smith and Lee Rusconi are set for the open road. Submitted photo.

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AGING IS AN ART — BY JOHN HECKEL

Becoming Karl Heckel

We have all experienced those breathtaking moments during which we embody one or the other of our parents. Aging seems only to intensify such moments.

Often, these experiences tend to be verbal. We experience the amazing sensation of a parent speaking through us and, suddenly, we sound like one of our parents. Sometimes this manifestation is physical, in that we find ourselves walking or sitting in a way that triggers a long-lost visual memory.

The more profound ones, however, seem to me to be emotional, ones during which we take on qualities we absolutely associated with one or the other parent.

Lately, I have been having Karl Heckel moments.

My father died some 20 years ago. I was fortunate enough to be able to go back to Chicago for six weeks and help him die.

Within a day or two of my arrival, he shared with me his “folder.” Sitting up in his bed, he had spread out before him the contents — scads of meticulously detailed information, all he felt necessary for me to know when he died. He was proud, and I was speechless.

He seemed pleased that I was awestruck. He pointed to a cabinet across the room and asked me to open the second drawer from the top. I did. The drawer, certainly —

and the entire cabinet, I guessed — were filled with a lifetime of canceled checks.

“I have a record of every dime I ever gave you for college!” he said.

I searched in the back of that second drawer from the top and there, filed under September 1964, was the first check he ever made out to help with my tuition.

Now, at 75, I am creating my own folder.

It’s a simple manila folder, nothing fancy, and as yet there’s no fireproof safe, but Janet knows where it is and understands the information it contains — all the predictable stuff, like bank account numbers, passwords, car titles, phone numbers and, of course, credit card information.

I even called Don, my real estate agent, and had him come out and meet Janet. I told him if anything happens to me, I want Janet to be able to make one phone call and all her house and property concerns would be taken care of. He agreed. Don’s phone number is in the folder.

When this folder-creating process becomes a bit overwhelming, I take a breath and smile, knowing I have not saved a single canceled check.

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

Now, at 75, I am
creating my own folder.

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HSRC News

Quietly Supporting Independence, Nurturing Dreams

By Samantha Day

Often referred to as “the best kept secret in Humboldt County,” the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP) at Humboldt Senior Resource Center provides much-needed assistance to keep older adults living safely in their homes and remain in the Humboldt community.

Well, here at Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC), we don’t like to keep secrets, so why not let the cat out of the bag?

MSSP offers individualized, long-term care management to Medi-Cal recipients age 65 and older in Humboldt County. The program is voluntary and completely free to its participants.

Each MSSP participant is supported by a social worker and a nurse care manager, who provide high-quality care coordination to meet a range of needs, including:



GET CREATIVE! — MSSP participant Diana Jefferson with some of her artwork and her new illustrated children’s book. Samantha Day photo.

- Home and personal safety
- Socialization
- Personal care and chores
- Minor home repair
- Healthcare coordination
- Behavioral Health
- Transportation
- Nutrition
- Money Management
- Advance Planning

MSSP participant Diana Jefferson just celebrated her first year with the program. Having enrolled right in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, her main goal was simply to maintain her physical and emotional wellness

despite health and isolation challenges.

She says she is able to not only to maintain but improve her overall wellness, while fostering a new talent in the process.

Throughout the past year, MSSP has offered her a friendly ear, provided her with needed personal care, safety and home items, and arranged for temporary assistance to defray the cost of caregiving support during a provider shortage.

Perhaps even more importantly to Diana, MSSP helped cover the cost of her art supplies, helping her nurture a new talent for painting. She has created numerous pieces and even wrote and illustrated a children’s book that is available in both printed and electronic formats.

Are you interested in learning more about how MSSP can help you or someone you love? Call MSSP Program Manager Thea Rowan at 707- 443-9747, x1271, or email MSSP@hum senior.org.

As Diana Jefferson can tell you, there’s nothing to lose, and a lot to gain!

—
Samantha Day, DSW, LCSW, is director of Social Services at Humboldt Senior Resource Center. Contact 707-443-9747, x1259, or sday@hum senior.org.

Words to Live By: ‘Don’t Stop. Keep on Moving’

By Janet Ruprecht

You may know Kay King as the proprietor of the Old Town consignment shop, What’s New?

Earlier this year, at 81 and just eight days into her retirement, she took a bad fall in her kitchen, breaking her hip and shoulder, and fracturing her skull. Kay spent three weeks in the hospital, then went into rehabilitation, and from there into a nursing facility.

When she finally got home three weeks later, she still couldn’t use her right arm and leg and was in a wheelchair for three months. She lived alone and now was homebound.

During her recovery, Kay had help daily from her

“adopted daughter,” Anne Schomus, whom she had met in her shop. “Anne came to the shop almost every day to help, for free, out of friendship,” Kay said, and then helped her through her convalescence.

Kay joined two Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) programs: she receives Home Delivered Meals and care management services through the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP). She made a vow to be out of the wheelchair by Halloween, and she kept it.

“I can walk outside and pick up the paper!” she rejoiced.

Twenty-seven years ago, when Kay arrived in Eureka, she was physically, emotionally and financially bankrupt. She had just lost her daughter to cancer, and drove out to the coast from Colorado seeking a new life.

Approaching the city on 101, she saw a billboard that said, “Eureka, you’ve found it!” The very next day, she discovered the empty storefront for what became her consignment shop.

Kay loved the shop and her customers. She never sat down. She kept in mind the advice an older woman had given her, “Don’t stop. Keep on moving.”

Continued on Page 14

Humboldt Senior Resource Center Is Open and Here to Serve You



Humboldt 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.



**Humboldt Senior
Resource Center**

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

Eureka

1910 California Street

HSRC

Arcata

321 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy.

707-443-9747 • www.humsenior.org

Caregiver Input Needed

Humboldt Senior Resource Center (HSRC) is in the process of developing an updated strategic plan that will guide the agency's programming and services in the upcoming years.

In order to ensure that this plan meets the needs of all seniors in our community, HSRC is reaching out to families, friends, and area professionals who are involved with caregiving for adults age 55 and older.

We hope for input from those involved in any facet of caregiving for a senior who needs assistance, whether that be providing direct full-time care, respite or family care, arranging for care, or trying to find care.

Those who are involved in caregiving are invited to participate in a virtual Caregiver Forum. This focus group setting is an opportunity to provide input regarding the challenges you face and the kinds of services and support

that would fill all the caregiving needs of older adults — and their families — in our community.

Our goal is to hold these Caregiver Forums in January; exact schedules will be determined based on the availability of those who wish to participate.

If interested, please call HSRC at 707-443-9747, x1267, and leave your name and phone number, or email your contact information to adm@humsenior.org.

If you are unable to participate in a Caregiver Forum, you can still provide input by completing our online Caregiver and Family Survey; visit humsenior.org for more information and the survey link.

The HSRC leadership appreciates your assistance in shaping the future of caregiving for older adults in our community.

—René Arché

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

Arcata

Thurs., Jan. 20, 10:30-11 a.m.
Arcata Community Center
321 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy.

Eureka

Wed., Jan. 19, 10-11:30 a.m.
Humboldt Senior Resource Center
1910 California St.

McKinleyville

Thurs., Jan. 20, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
McKinleyville Family Resource Center, 1944 Central Ave.

News

Arcata
Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway

www.humsenior.org

Fortuna
3200 Newburg Road

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 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. 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.**

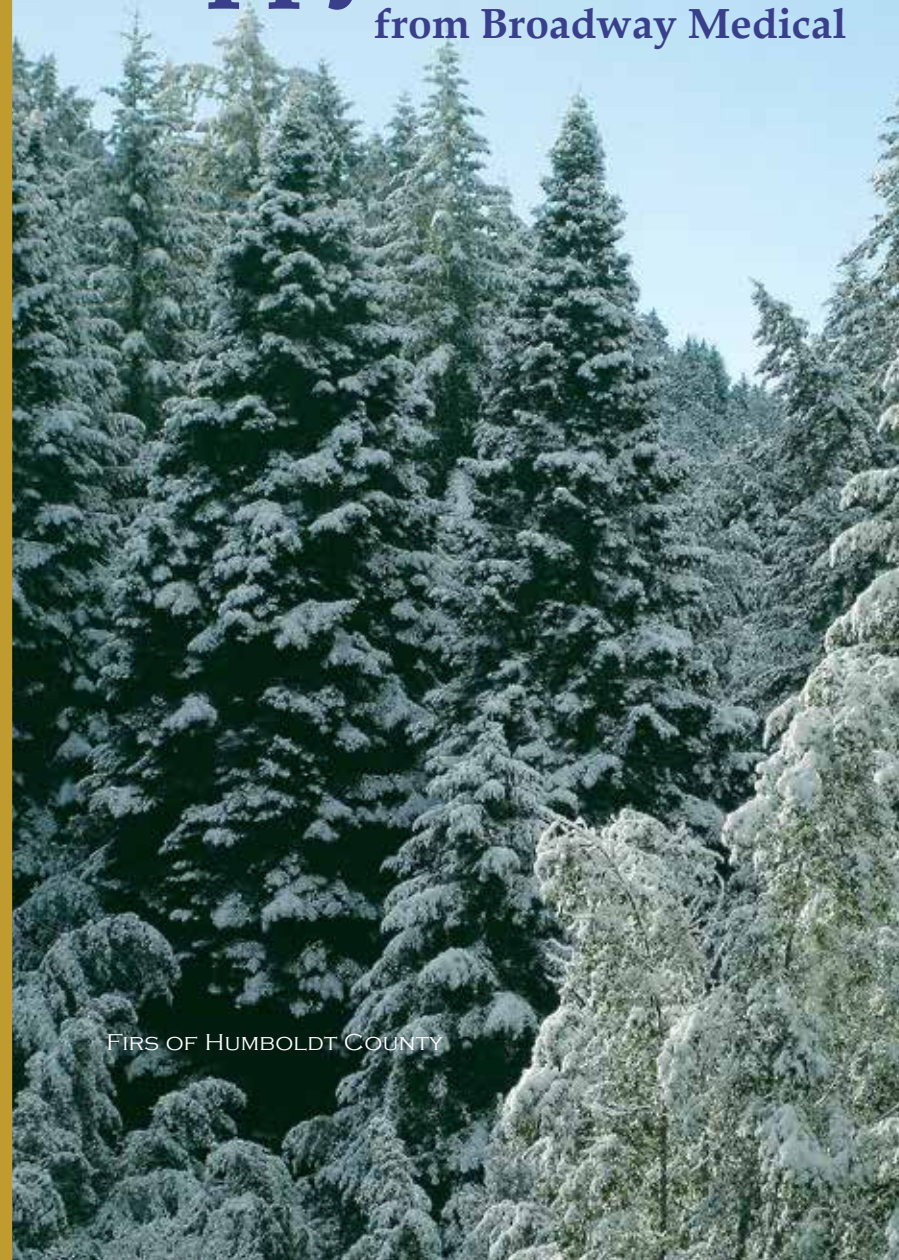
Fortuna: Gene Lucas Community Center, 3000 Newburg Road, Thursdays from 12-12:30 p.m. in front of the Fortuna Senior Center wing; staff will bring the meals to you. **Reservations: 707-725-6245.**

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.

Happy New Year!

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DON'T STOP... From Page 11

"I kept my brain and my business going by always being engaged," Kay said.

She didn't want to retire, but the pandemic shut her down. "I had a store full of clothes when I had to close the shop," she said with regret.

Kay has always had a taste for adventure. When she was 18, a boyfriend took her riding on the back of his motorcycle. She told him that if she was going to ride, she needed her own bike, so he bought her a 1936 Harley Knucklehead.

After they broke up, she gave it back. Now it's a collector's item worth about \$95,000, but she's philosophical about returning it. "In those days, that's what you did."

Kay is the kind of woman who picks herself up over and over. About five years ago, while driving her little Toyota pickup, she was hit by a gravel truck. Her sternum and left wrist were broken. She took a week off before going back to the shop.

This time, it's taking a little longer, but she's getting there.

—
Janet Ruprecht is development manager at Humboldt Senior Resource Center. Contact: 707-443-9747, x1231 or jruprecht@humsenior.org

Fortuna Senior Center Activities

3000 Newburg Road, Suite B, Fortuna, CA 95540
707-726-9203 • fortunasenior.org • Mon-Fri 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

DAILY All Day Books & Puzzles, Lobby

MONDAYS

8 a.m. Walk the Riverwalk Levee (meet at the Riverwalk)
10-11:30 a.m. Tai Chi, Main Room
1-2 p.m. Beginning Ukulele, Main Room
2-3 p.m. Book Club, Main Room (1st Monday only)

TUESDAYS

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

WEDNESDAYS

8 a.m. Walk the Riverwalk Levee
10-11:30 a.m. Tai Chi, Main Room
12-1 p.m. Brown Bag Lunch (bring your lunch) followed by sing-along with music
1-3 p.m. Art, Art Room (supplies provided or BYO)

THURSDAYS

9-11 a.m. Cribbage, Upstairs
10-11 a.m. Aerobics for Seniors, Upstairs
12:30-3:30 p.m. Mah Jongg, Upstairs
1-4 p.m. Pinochle, Main Room

FRIDAYS

9 a.m. Bike Club (call Pat Greene, 707-725-3602)
9 a.m. Hiking Group (call Lynn Crosthwait, 707-725-7953)
9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Pinochle, Main Room
1-3 p.m. Scrabble, Main Room
7-9:30 p.m. Camera Club, Art Room (last Friday only)

Happy New Year!
New to Medicare?

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The Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program provides free and objective information about Medicare with trained counselors.

HICAP helps people everyday to save money and to understand complex issues giving our community members a little peace of mind.

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AREA 1
Agency on Aging



The production of this document was supported, in part, by grant number CFDA 93.504 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. The contents are solely the responsibility of AIA/HICAP and do not necessarily represent the official views of ACL.

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New Hip, New Eyesight — Wish I'd Done It Sooner!

By Ken Miller

For years, friends and other observers of my limping gait encouraged a new hip. “You’ll wish you had done it years ago,” they said.

During those same years, I suffered more and more pain when walking, but had a hard time distinguishing leg pain from back pain. Or was it coming from my sciatic nerve, irritated as it passed near inflammation caused by my hip arthritis? A steroid shot in the hip failed to resolve the confusion, and X-rays of my back are as bad as those of my hip.

I procrastinated in diagnostic confusion until I had to rely on my bicycle for even the shortest trips. The pain at night took a couple of hours to subside. Why does it hurt to lie down?

When it took me an hour to inch my way up a hill, the time had come to seek out the second commonest, and one of the most successful, surgeries in the world. I had seen the remarkable results in a friend who has had two hip replacements, and 100% of commenters said, “Hey, it’s a piece of cake. You’ll walk out of the hospital.”

Osteoarthritis destroys the cartilage of the joint surfaces resulting in “bone on bone” and “bone spurs,” accompanied by ever more restricted and painful range of motion.

Efficient minimally invasive surgical approaches

that result in tolerable pain, excellent results and rapid recovery have now largely replaced the older technique that dissected the big, vascular gluteal (butt) muscles. Resurfacing procedures preserve bones by replacing worn-out cartilage with high-stress plastic-ceramic, but are generally reserved for the active young (<60).

On the day of my surgery, I took BART to the hospital at 7 a.m., reminded the surgeon to “make them even” (he replied, “That’s the plan”), and asked the anesthesiologist to omit opioids from the IV in deference to my colon. I entered the operating room at 9, exited at 9:45, and was discharged to my ride by 4 p.m., having already walked a few steps on my new appliance.

I convalesced for three days in the Bay Area until I could ride home. In two weeks, I progressed from short 5-minute walks with a walker to using a cane without taking anything stronger than Aleve for achiness, along with a lot of ice, rest and leg elevation.

Seven weeks later, thanks to my very own home physical therapist (thank you, Medicare!), and attentive friends who supplied me with dinners, I am back to yoga and practicing “purposeful walking,” meaning using my whole body, especially my hips,

to generate my gait. My physical therapist employs Feldenkrais techniques to help re-educate, reorganize and reconnect my whole mind-body that has been limping and out of synch for over a decade.

New bone will grow into and stabilize the chrome-alloy-titanium spike pounded into my femur and into the plastic-ceramic-titanium socket where the cobalt-titanium ball articulates. This takes a few months, and there’s no hurrying it, but it’s good for 30 years, and I’m 76.

Before modern techniques and materials enabled surgeons to meet the three requirements for a reliable hip joint replacement — mobility, pain reduction and stability — people with degenerating hips suffered chronic pain and progressive immobility.

No more! After that experience, I was well prepared to endure the same counsel when I finally underwent the most common of procedures: cataract surgery (“You should have done it years ago! You’ll see clearly right after the operation.”). They were right.

—
Ken Miller, 76, is now nine months past hip replacement and seven months past his cataract surgery. His eyesight is excellent as the new puppy walks him around McKinleyville every day.

THE BEACH OWL . . . From Page 1

the “beak” and “eyes” in place. But something was missing. Then, while on an afternoon stroll, a eucalyptus leaf wafted down in front of me, landing among several others that had dried on the sidewalk.

Perfect feathers! So I picked up a handful, hurried home and glued some on. A piece of a silver plastic fork became a foot, so the owl could perch on a stick. Voila! the owl was done.

Now that I’ve gotten that out of my system, I’ll be waiting to see what turns up on the beach for my next venture. I wonder what I could make out of broken sand dollars . . .

—
Carla Newton is an artist, beach-comber and writer living in Arcata.



Call Mr. Goodwrench

Patty Holbrook of Eureka offers this:

“If my body was a car, I would be trading it in for a newer model.

“I’ve got bumps, dents, scratches and my headlights are out of focus. My gearbox is seizing up and it takes me hours to reach maximum speed.

“I overheat for no reason and every time I sneeze, cough or laugh either my radiator leaks or my exhaust backfires.”

And the Gadfly chimes in:

“Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me. I want people to know why I look this way. I’ve traveled a long way and some of the roads weren’t paved.”



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January 5th & 19th, 1:00 pm-3:00 pm

MUGS & VIRTUAL HUGS

ZOOM Video Conferencing or *Call-in* via Telephone (*Open to everyone*)
2nd & 4th Fridays
January 14th & 28th, 9:00 am-11:00 am
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For link to join or more info contact: Erin McCann, MSW, Family Consultant
Mobile: 707-230-4046 Email: exm@redwoodcrc.org

Humboldt Transit Authority - HTA

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Fortuna Transit

For people 50+ & the disabled
Wheelchair Lift 707-725-7625

From Legal Pads to iPads

By Michael Bickford

The right piece of bark makes holding your charcoal much easier when drawing on cave walls. Hey, it's a pencil!

Cuneiform was scratched onto soft clay tablets. Easy to erase!

Dye (blood?) was used to write religious code on beaten animal skins. Indelible!

India ink (invented in China) was used with quills to write the Constitution on parchment.

This evolution took place over thousands of years. With the invention of paper, writing settled down for a few hundred years of what is still familiar today: pens and pencils on sheets of paper, usually organized into notebooks. Who knows when the little blue line lines were introduced?

Since the 1980s and '90s, we older writers have witnessed not just more evolution, but a true *revolution* in how we write.

In the mid-'90s, when my writing group began meeting on the Mattole, we all hand-wrote our poems and stories with pen or pencil on paper — a lot of yellow legal pads and wads of rejected pages. Oh, the trees! We had all seen the changes coming: from WordStar with its manuscript-murdering dot-commands on mainframes in college, through those now-quaint-seeming first home computers with their slow B&W printers (4 megabytes of RAM!).

I remember the summer I borrowed

a crazy thing called a "laptop" from a colleague at work and scandalized the Luddites in my response group. Without a printer, and its tiny screen showing only partial paragraphs, my excitement at its clunky modernity and half-hour battery life seems naive today. We still have no Wi-Fi at our retreat, but nearly everyone uses a laptop with gigabytes of memory, and we share a laser printer that produces 60 sheets per minute.

For hundreds of years, from its beginnings in hazy history, the pen-and-ink era has endured, and persists today as students head to Staples for notebooks and markers. Many older writers hold dear the warm nostalgia of the bygone sensuality of writing realia — the scratch of nub on velum, the scent of paper, the expressive freedom to emote and scribble out one's heart, literally writ large across sheets of foolscap, and the authorial power to crumple and toss one's darlings to the bin.

Though most have joined the revolutionary advance from MS Word though Google Docs and on to cloud-based writing apps, many skipped that e-ticket ride altogether and continue to merrily scrawl with pencils on legal pads. How they organize their rewrites, I can only dimly recall.

— Michael Bickford, 69, taught middle school for 35 years. He lives in Arcata and writes with the Lost Coast Writers' Cooperative.

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."

—Maya Angelou (1928-2014), poet

Know That Spring Will Come

By Peter Jain

What makes one feel creative, and what has been one's biggest life change? These two questions come together and there's no easy answer. But let us dance with them just the same, with the hunch that it is a dance with suffering and pain.

For this January month of International Creativity, let us acknowledge the darkness of winter with the hope of creating peace and comfort for the new year.

For me the biggest life change was the death of my son, David — it seemed like the end of my own life. A parent's worst fear, losing a child. So much promise in a bright and big-hearted boy.

After his sudden death from being struck by a car while walking in Eureka, life seemed wrecked for a number of us, especially his father. For me, everything was changed, and sad. Everything seemed so fragile, so vulnerable, so terrifying.

It was the month of daffodils when he was killed, the same time of year as his beautiful birth almost 14 years earlier. Like a green sprout in spring, he'd come bursting into life, later running full strength in the halls of the house or the through the mud puddles in the street.

Then, suddenly, his healthy, loving body was gone.

Looking back and writing now, I'm aware of people who are in a dark time. The death of loved ones, loneliness, physical pain, anguish, anxiety over aging — this is part of the mystery we share.

Young people, too, are not exempt, and have their own pain. The cycles of nature are in and around us — living and dying, birth and death, the dark of winter and the growth of spring creating new possibilities.

Like a daffodil emerging from the winter ground, regeneration appears, and one gives thanks.

A stranger shares a smile or a new person says hello. Out for a walk, one might notice the return of hummingbirds doing their diving courtship flight, honey bees bobbing in and out of blackberry blossoms, willow trees budding along the marsh, or the delight of young children splashing in mud puddles.

Living with darkness and loss, with faith, one shares in creation and says, thank you.

Peter Jain, 63, is a retired elementary school music teacher living in Trinidad.

Come Out, Pull Some Ivy

The North Coast Redwoods District of the California State Parks invites the public to help remove invasive species from Trinidad State Beach Park on Saturday, Jan. 8, from 9 a.m. to noon. Meet at the corner of Stagecoach Road and Anderson Lane in Trinidad.

Next to habitat loss, invasive non-native species are the greatest

threat to natural diversity.

Wear sturdy shoes and long pants, and bring a hat, work gloves and water. All ages are welcome.

Participants receive a free day-use pass to Sue-meg State Park (formerly Patrick's Point).

Contact: Katrina Henderson, 707-677-3109 or katrina.henderson@parks.ca.gov.

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Step Outside for Inspiration in the Open Air

By Nancy & Paul Rickard

For International Creativity Month, we are honored to share a slice of our lives with Senior News.

For us, plein air art is what we do every day on the precipice, in the fog and on the mountaintop. We are driven to paint the mundane and magnificent, and interpret the beauty of Humboldt through our art.

A comment we often hear while out on the landscape is, “You are so talented and creative. I could never do what you do!”

This is such a misconception. We are all our own worst critics. In spite of this, we never lose that spark of creativity and imagination we had as children.

Nancy’s experience is a good example. She began her adventure in plein air painting three years ago at the age of 67. For years, she watched Paul paint on the landscape until one day she picked up paper and pastels, and her creative adventure began.



PLEIN AIR PASTEL — Nancy Rickard’s plein air medium of choice are pastels to evoke tone and place, as in this work, “Autumn Light, Stone Lagoon.”

Nancy is now recognized as an important pastel artist in her own right in Humboldt County. Her colorful work can be viewed on Facebook and Instagram.

For Paul, the journey in atmospheric watercolor painting has brought many unexpected rewards and adventures, including shows at the Morris Graves Museum, Harvard University, in Maine and the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan.

Paul’s work can be viewed on Facebook and at paulrickard.art. His watercolor technique is shown in a video titled, “The Wonderful World of Watercolors with Paul Rickard” (archive.org/details/ah_media_lab_wonderful_world_of_watercolor).

We invite the senior community to participate in our weekly Sunday Paintout, exploring the natural beauty of Humboldt County and supporting participation in the arts. If you are interested in joining in on a Sunday plein art paintout, check Paul’s Face-

book page every Saturday morning for the Paintout Location Announcement and directions.

As artists, we will forever remain works in progress. Wherever your passion lies, make a New Year’s Resolution to find it; then, just go out and do it.

Nancy and Paul Rickard are artists living in Arcata.



Crossword Puzzle is on page 20.

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ASK THE DOC . . . From Page 5

feeling when the report comes back with a very limited selection of antibiotics that might work, especially when that antibiotic can only be used with an IV, or if the person is allergic to it.

If any of us develops a serious infection and no antibiotics work for it, we are back to the pre-antibiotic era, where doctors could do nothing but watch their patients and hope for the best — like pictures of Norman Rockwell-era physicians at the bedside, wringing their hands.

I am curious why people are quite accepting of taking antibiotics even though they are known to have side effects that are annoying at best and life threatening at worst, but at the same time will not take vaccinations that are quite safe and shown to provide real protection to individuals and society as a whole.

To be clear, I am grateful for antibiotics. I just recommend that they be used sparingly, only when needed, and that people better understand that when they are told antibiotics are not needed, it is an act of good medical care. Similarly,

when your doctor, NP or PA recommends a vaccine, they are doing it with the aim of preventing illness, which, after all, is the mission of people who serve in health care.

The federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that each year in the U.S., about 47 million courses of antibiotics are prescribed for infections that do not need antibiotics — almost one-third of all antibiotics prescribed! Meanwhile, up to 35,000 people die each year in our country from infections that have become resistant to antibiotics.

Let's work together to reverse this trend, so antibiotics are still around to treat the next generations.

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



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Crossword Puzzle

It's Happening! by Drew Schmenner • Edited by David Steinberg

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ACROSS

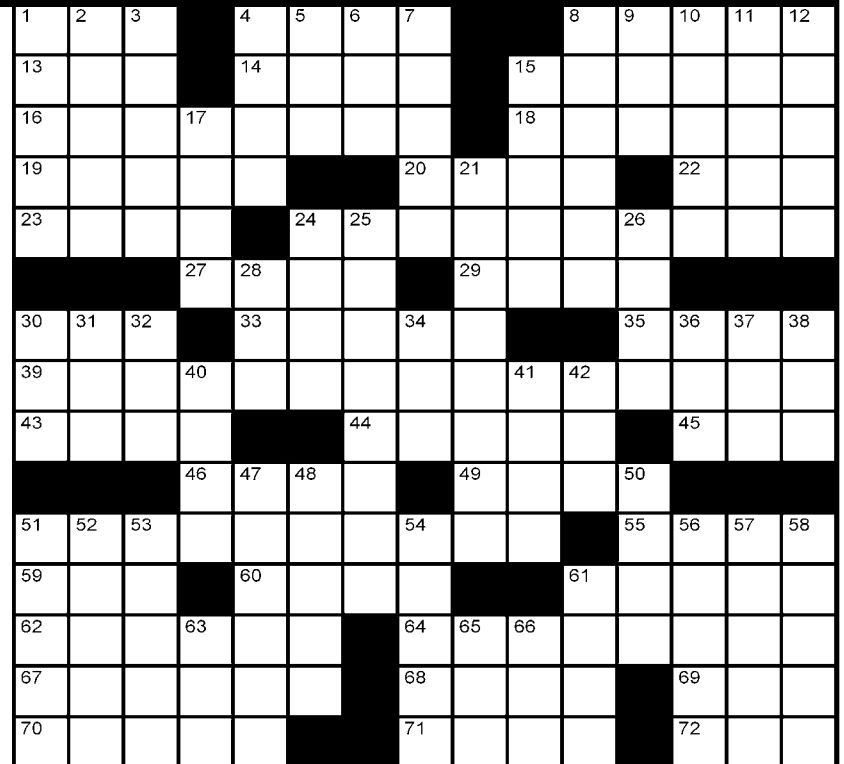
- 1 Book drive organizer, for short
 4 Explosion sound
 8 ___ Food (Ben & Jerry's flavor named for a band)
 13 Longtime email provider
 14 BMW competitor
 15 Wasn't honest with
 16 Cold Southern drink
 18 More creepy
 19 State that's not to be messed with
 20 Russian Revolution target
 22 Name hidden in "tenant"
 23 Historic periods
 24 What orderlies could aptly be?
 27 Short-armed dino
 29 Votes in favor
 30 Catch in the act
 33 Font modeled after Helvetica
 35 Duo
 39 Blow a gasket
 43 In ___ of
 44 1970s teen idol Cassidy
 45 Sneaky
 46 Spiced Indian drink
 49 Website for film geeks
 51 Low-rise jeans
 55 Wedding dress fabric
 59 "SNL" alum Gasteyer

- 60 The Brat Pack's demographic, familiarly
 61 Wedding dress fabric
 62 Empty of vegetation
 64 What a calm person keeps ... or the first word of 16-, 24-, 39- or 51-Across?
 67 Hurtful remark
 68 Franc's replacement
 69 "___ you serious?"
 70 Itsy-bitsy
 71 Three wishes, perhaps?
 72 Furious

DOWN

- 1 Insert, as copied text
 2 High building
 3 Apple : Siri :: Amazon : ___
 4 Flying mammals that use sonar
 5 Not home
 6 Tribute in verse
 7 Mazda convertible
 8 South Dakota's capital
 9 ___ Highness
 10 Broadway star Menzel
 11 Rare treat, for some
 12 They're honked
 15 Full of foliage
 17 Where the sun appears
 21 Sign of poor ventilation

- 24 Maker of foam toys
 25 It indicates a way off the inter state
 26 "The Last Dance" channel
 28 Pilot officers' U.K. group
 30 Org. that currently has Lions and Bears but no Tigers
 31 Boxing legend Muhammad
 32 "Later!"
 34 "So refreshing!"
 36 Annoying pop-ups
 37 Unwell
 38 "The Last Jedi" protagonist
 40 "That hurt!"
 41 Purrs like an engine
 42 Fun ___ games
 47 To a great degree
 48 Hollywood negotiator
 50 Bo-o-ring
 51 You may break a bad one
 52 Silly
 53 Dissect, as a sentence
 54 Perform fantastically
 56 Elite group of soldiers
 57 "Goodies" singer
 58 Came to a close
 61 Jukebox opening
 63 Compete in a dash
 65 Yes, to a monsieur
 66 Sites for surgeons: Abbr.



Crossword answers are on page 18

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What Should I Know About COVID-19?

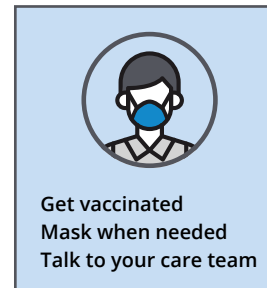
Two of a series of four

How are we stopping COVID-19?

There are several ways to prevent spread of COVID-19, but the best tools are vaccines. The US Government worked with the pharmaceutical companies to develop, manufacture, and quickly distribute vaccines across the country. There were no shortcuts in this process; the vaccines are safe and effective, based on years of research into similar virus types.

Why is there conflicting information about masks?

Before the pandemic, there was little real-world research into the effectiveness of masks. Last year we learned that wearing masks and social distancing really help prevent the spread of COVID-19, influenza, and other respiratory viruses.



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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 tpase@humsenior.org.

Letters to the Editor

Embrace The Journey

To the Editor:

How do you feel when life, business and relationships turn out different from what you expected?

Many of us started out with fresh vision, ideals and dreams of hope, only to find that — as John Lennon said — “life is what happens when you’re busy making other plans.”

So what do you do when you look over your life and things are completely different from what you envisioned? How do you deal with that? What’s a person to do when things turn out less than the ideal life they envisioned?

It may be the death of a vision.

We can plan all day long and have dreams and visions and ideals and then be crushed by circumstance and situation and Providence. What perspective can you carry moving forward that will help when life veers away from the pre-conceived notion and pre-existing dream that you had about yourself and others? Will you be able to flex? Will you be able to love? Will you be able to trust and believe in positive outcomes for yourself and others?

The answer involves having a strategy about tragedy to determine whether you become better or bitter. We must accept what we can’t control when it comes to those we love. We must accept settling for something less, and understand that everyone is on their own individual journey.

The journey thing is pretty important to understand. Everybody has choice points all the way through life until their dying breath, and those choices determine their path. We all are on journeys that involve family, relationships, chance, preparation, parenting, education, faith, God and so much more. This journey is the backbone of life.

Many people embrace us along the way — how can we possibly not return the favor? Enjoy your journey and let others have theirs. Trust God to work all things together for the good for those who love others and Him.

Let it go and surrender to the journey!

Scott Hammond, Eureka

Local Climate Activism

To the Editor:

While reading through the November issue of Senior News [“Yes, Books Do Make a Difference”], I was happy to read an article by Mark Larson titled “Finding Hope About Climate Change in Sci-Fi” [page 4].

Mark writes of a webinar that featured Bill McKibben, the co-founder of 350.org, an international climate action organization. Mark mentioned two organizations seniors can get involved with. Maybe he and many of your readers are not aware of 350Humboldt, an affiliate of 350.org. We are a local climate action organization that meets monthly (online since COVID); we have a website and are working on many issues.

On Nov. 6, we sponsored a rally in Eureka for The Global Day of Action. We also have a monthly book group that chooses climate-related books. We have a speakers’ series that offers talks by local and distant experts on the climate.

We welcome students and the younger generation, but mostly we are of retirement age. All are welcome and people can find out about us at 350Humboldt.org.

Gail Coonen, Eureka

Wonderful

To the Editor:

Thank you for “The Stocking Stuffer Issue” [December Senior News]. It was jam-packed with wonderful personal tales of Christmases past.

I especially enjoyed Mary McCutcheon’s story about giving away a Christmas tree to a neighbor’s family without one [“True Holiday Spirit,” page 1]. Mary and I were co-workers for several decades, and it’s fun since we retired to learn more about her younger life.

**Teresa MacClelland,
Humboldt Hill**

How About Some Equal Time?

To the Editor:

As I read the current issue of Senior News [“The Stocking Stuffer Issue,” December 2021], I was struck by the fact that the issue was dominated by Christmas.

There are many religions in America besides Christianity. Christianity may have the most followers, but Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, among many others, also have many followers. Senior News gives the impression that Christmas is the only thing worth acknowledging.

That Christmas has come to have an enormous commercial overlay with any religious element mostly for show seems not to matter to most people. That Christmas is based on the beliefs of pre-Christians is not known to most of the believers. If an entire edition of Senior News is given to one belief system should there not be acknowledgment of other such systems as well as to those who have no religious beliefs?

Interestingly, none of the other belief systems has the huge commercial overlay of Christmas. Jews have some gift-giving with Hanukkah, but that is a secondary aspect of the holiday.

Could it be that Christmas gets so much media notice because of its commercial value? That doesn’t seem very Christian to me.

Perhaps that thought should make a news source like Senior News more open to sharing information about the many belief systems in American, not just the ones that push people to spend money.

Let’s all say Happy Holidays instead of Merry Christmas.

Sylvia De Rooy, Eureka

Editor’s Note: *We certainly agree that all faiths are equally deserving, and happily accept articles from anyone. Our December issue focused primarily on personal and cultural (not religious) aspects of the end-of-year holiday season.*

'It's a State of Mind'

By Barry Evans

I'm often asked how I come up with topics for my columns, which I submit, on average, seven times a month.

Every other week, I send in to the North Coast Journal a "serious" science piece called "Field Notes" (well-researched, a month or so in the making); and every week, I submit a more spontaneous outpouring (OK, a rant on "Growing Old Ungracefully") that's published online every Sunday morning on the Lost Coast Outpost website.

My usual response to the question is, "I don't come up with the topics, they come to me." So far (nearly 500 columns in the Journal, 400 for LoCO), I've never been stuck for a subject.

I think how it works is that, having taken on these obligations and deadlines, my unconscious mind is permanently on alert, ever vigilant for items of potential interest — which my world abounds in! COVID, Bitcoin, space telescopes, monarch butterflies, ancient ruins,

local history, God, the multiverse, meditation, Greek myths, psychedelics, UFOs, wokeness . . .

Notice a pattern? Me either! My unconscious, apparently, thrives on variety. The world is a cornucopia of opportunities for this curious, skeptical scribbler.

So, creativity? For me, it's a state of mind: openness, without actively *trying* to make it happen.

Now I wonder, is this how it works for *real* writers? For artists? For composers?

I'm so lucky to have these two parallel-but-not-the-same gigs that keep me mindful of my environment.

Barry Evans' latest compilation, "The Humbook," is available at local bookstores and from the author, barryevans9@yahoo.com. Read his columns at: northcoastjournal.com/humboldt/field-notes/Category?oid=2124591 and lostcoastoutpost.com/categories/growing-old-ungracefully/.



On Second Thought

Some people re-read favorite books annually, getting "something new" out of each reading.

Ernest Hemingway's "The Sun Also Rises" delighted me in my late teens. The guys were adventurous, unattached to "responsibility." And Lady Brett was so attractive, so generous with her femininity and sexuality.

I read it again in my late 60s, and

loathed all of the characters and their activities. Self-pitying losers, each of them.

Changes in interpretations clearly reflect changes in our personalities and intellects . . . meaning that I had "grown up" and "settled down," and was a grumpy old man, not a lusty young (and inexperienced) man.

—Peter Mehren

Confessions of a Pleaser

By Roy Grieshaber

I've considered myself an introvert all my life, with little to say and clumsy relating to others in social situations.

When my life partner and I owned a business together, he took the lead and was the public face of our partnership. He was the alpha male and born leader. My work was behind the scenes, keeping the details of our business and personal life together. I had little to say in meetings, few opinions to express. I was invisible in many respects.

I remember my high school counselor saying to me, "Roy, don't be so concerned about what other people think of you." I did not understand what she meant, but she had seen an aspect of me that would take me years to discover.

When I was about 55, with the support of a life coach, I realized that all my life I had tried to make people like me by being nice to please them. My mother had raised me to be a nice boy, and I believed that niceness was one of my best qualities. Being nice was my attempt to control what other people thought of me, and my high school advisor had seen that.

Being nice had fundamentally shaped my relationship with myself, and was a deep layer that had kept me from living authentically all my life. I had been playing a role instead of being an authentic person.

This façade of niceness likely made me less likeable. It also hid my true feelings from friends and myself.

Most importantly, it had stifled my creativity.

Realizing this was immensely freeing for me. I soon seemed to have opinions about everything. I felt at ease to be who I was, and a willingness to engage with the world.

One outcome of this huge shift was my 15-year stint on the Board of Directors of the Redwood Art Association (RAA), including eight years as president.

I had moved from working behind the scenes to engaging and leading.

The RAA had lived a nomadic life for more than 50 years, renting storefronts for members' art exhibitions. But the Association had a long-held and un-fulfilled dream of someday owning its permanent home.

Working with a talented and experienced Board of Directors, we re-visioned and restructured the RAA so it could purchase the charming building at 603 F St. in Eureka for its permanent home.

My time as president was the most creative experience of my life. I discovered that leading, collaborating and creativity were fun and energizing. I had a good time and formed many close and lasting friendships.

I had learned to be Roy and unconcerned about what other people thought of me.

—
Roy Grieshaber, 79, lives in Eureka and still often feels clumsy relating to others in social situations.



PIANOS COME BACK TO LIFE. . . From Page 1

Sure, Professor David G. Hankin, Ph.D., is the author or coauthor of some 70 scientific research papers, served as director of the Humboldt State University Marine Lab, and chaired the Fisheries Biology Department four different times since joining the faculty in 1976.

In his piano shop on South G Street in Arcata, he waves a hand dismissively. What really makes his eyes light up are the insides of a 128-year-old piano. Specifically, an 1893 Steinway upright — “Hankin’s Folly” — that he’s been lovingly restoring since buying it sight-unseen from a guy in Michigan in 2013.

“It was a disaster when I got it,” Hankin said, one hand caressing its (now) warmly glowing mahogany case. “My hunch is that it was really played hard in its time. I would guess that it lived in a bar and was just banged on constantly for decades and decades.

“I think it was just sitting a garage in Michigan for 20 years and hadn’t been played. But I wanted an old Steinway with a pretty mahogany case,” and the water damage, “bashes” and need for entirely new innards were no deterrent.

The 1893 Steinway is one of seven vintage pianos in Hankin’s shop, where he has passed tens of thousands of hours in the dedicated and painstakingly meticulous pursuit of bringing life back to aged and mistreated objects of sculptured wood and mechanical genius.

“You have to be extremely meticulous, an OCD type,” to enjoy this kind of work, Hankin says. “You have enjoy repetitive tasks and getting everything just right, otherwise you’re totally not suited for it.”

Indeed. A Steinway grand has 12,000 parts (including 10,000 moving parts), and Hankin’s shop has “about a million” specialized tools and piano gizmos.

He got hooked on piano repairs and restoration after buying a piano at a yard sale in Corvallis in the 1980s — a “honkytonk” upright

that had been finished in black Naugahyde and silver stars. Soon he connected with Greg Granoff, a master piano technician from the Bay Area now at HSU, who has mentored Hankin on his journey to become a piano restorer and rebuilder.

“He really knows his stuff,” Hankin said.

Granoff returns the respect, pointing to Hankin’s skills as a woodworker, his “boundless curiosity” about the piano and how it works, a mind for details and, overarching everything, a love of music.

“He really is a Renaissance man,” Granoff said. “He does it all.”

Most of Hankin’s instruments date from what he calls the “Golden Age” of pianos, a period from the end of the 1800s to the Depression, when the workmanship and quality of materials were unparalleled.

“From a mechanical contraption standpoint, this is all technology that really has not materially changed since the time those pianos were made, so if you bring a piano that’s 100+ years old back to life, it will rival the best piano built today.”

Protected from dust by sheets and shrouds, three uprights and four grand pianos in various stages of resurrection await the doctor’s attention: The 1920 Mason & Hamlin grand has a new sound board — rebuilt and installed with Granoff’s help — and awaits everything else — pin board and strings and hammers and

There’s the 6-foot-11-inch 1917 Steinway grand, shipped from Florida; “I always wanted one of these. It’s going to take a huge amount of work — may replace the sound board, plus strings and hammers Who knows when I’ll get to it.”



FINE-TUNING — Dave Hankin, right, and Humboldt State University piano technician Greg Granoff go through the precise and laborious process of installing a new sound board in a 1920 Mason & Hamlin grand piano. Submitted photo.

There’s a 1935 Chickering baby grand that came from his wife’s family, “a beautiful thing,” at 86 years old, the youngest instrument in the shop.

“I just love them,” he said

Hankin’s pride and joy is at home, a beautifully restored 1918 Steinway A that he bought in 2004 from a private owner named Herbert Hoover (“not-the Herbert Hoover”) in Rochester, New York. He plays it every day.

“The most fun part of it all for me,” he said, pointing at the Steinway upright he brought back to life, “is that this guy was just a dead animal when I got it. And now it’s beautiful and it sounds nice.

“Everything else these days, you use it for a while and then throw it in the Dumpster and it’s gone,” he said. “It’s just not true of these things.

“It’s cool — the idea of something that looks and plays like new but it’s 128 years old and it’s alive again.”

—

Ted Pease, *editor of Senior News*, plays “Chopsticks” with difficulty.



You Can Be in Senior News

- **FEBRUARY** is Friendship Month (& also includes both Valentine's Day and National Marriage Week), so let's talk about love and friendship. Who's your best friend? Oldest friend? Most unlikely friend? What makes a good friend. And why?
- **MARCH's** focus will be ageism — the many ways, large and small, that we feel marginalized, minimized and like we don't matter as we age. Do you feel invisible? Do people talk to you like you're a child? What are your experiences of aging and ageism?

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

Senior News

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LIFE CARE HUMBOLDT

A local project to design and build a LIFE PLAN community for older adults in Humboldt County.

GETTING PSYCHED UP TO DOWN-SIZE

Quite a few people I talk to express reluctance to move to Life Care Humboldt because it would mean leaving their lovely homes and gardens, places they have enjoyed for years.

They do admit that their home is too big, that it would not work if their mobility were impaired, that it could be a burden on their family if they were suddenly disabled. In fact, 70% of us over 65 will need personal care services at some point. But change is hard to contemplate!

I would like to suggest a mantra that can help you get used to the idea of downsizing and moving to a vibrant life plan community. Whenever a light bulb goes out, your roof leaks,

your toilet stops up, the sink won't drain, a tree falls on your driveway, your dishwasher breaks, or any such inconvenience or expense occurs... whisper to yourself, "Just call maintenance."

That is what you can do when you live at Life Care Humboldt. These homeowner's problems will not be your problems. Think of all the time you will have to have fun!

We will begin accepting deposits for reservations around December 2022, so you have some time to get used to the idea.

"Just call maintenance!"

Ann Lindsay

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