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December 2017

Vol. 25 ~ Iss. 7

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Cover Photo

Ruffed grouse, by J. Foster Fanning.
See accompanying article on page 16.

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Random Acts of Community

Three Powerful Wishes

By Christine Wilson

*"When night comes on with song and tale we pass the wintery hours;
By keeping up a cheerful heart we hope for better days."
~ Traditional*

As a child, I loved the Christmas edition of the Sears catalog. My mother would give each of us a chance to leaf through the pages and identify items that could fulfill our hearts' desires. Those memories are inexorably tied to a longing each December for good things to happen. I have no recollection of my batting average on those wish lists, but they definitely got me into the habit of wishing. Each of the two years my granddaughters were born, I wrote out my wishes for them. After the divisiveness of the last circle round the sun, I'm offering up a wish list for the readers and neighbors of the *North Columbia Monthly*.

First of all, I wish for all to diminish the dividing lines between people of divergent beliefs. We don't have to stop believing what we believe; we just need to remember that what we have in common is much greater than that which divides us.

Over the years I have worked with many people from a wide range of lifestyles and belief systems, and from that diversity I have learned to genuinely see the deeper humanness of all of us. Years ago I worked with an avowed racist who was not about to shift from his position and was unwilling to recognize the connection he had with others. My training and maybe my propensity for such things allowed me to find his deep and real self underneath his anger and fear. That was quite the stretch for me, to be honest here, but it was a profound lesson I continue to cherish and strengthen.

I realize it is not easy; we seem to be hunkered down in some seriously rigid tribalism these days. However, I know we can each work on having a heart for each other no matter how rigid we think our lines of demarcation are.

I have been fond of quoting C. S. Lewis, an Englishman who fought during one world war and then lived through a second. He said, "If you are working on forgiveness, don't start with the Nazi SS." What I have only recently settled into with my understanding of that quote is that we eventually ought to try even that deeper effort. I haven't worked out all the details myself on how to achieve such an honorable goal. What I know for sure is that we don't have to say that what the Nazis did was OK and that we are fine with horrific cruelty against humanity or any

heartlessness.

A psychologist once described his visit to one of the German concentration camps. It was set at the bottom of a hill. Toward the top of the hill was an apartment complex for guards and their families. He wondered what mental gymnastics allowed them to go home to their families whom they no doubt loved and then return to such acts of cruelty in the morning.

Phillip Zimbardo, in *The Lucifer Effect*, says that if you put good apples in bad barrels you'll get bad apples. Thinking there are bad people, impervious to goodness, and good people, impervious to badness, is not borne out by research and is a risky form of binary thinking.

So, we are all a work in progress, and my biggest Christmas wish is for us to work on recognizing the humanness of the humans around us.

The second item on my wish list, in my imag-

*"...it can be easy to be angry and mean,
especially on faceless social media or when
surrounded by people you agree with..."*

inary ethereal Sears catalog, is an increasingly mature and community-wide management of anger.

I doubt there is a therapist around who will not tell you that anger is secondary to some other feeling. I work on a daily basis teaching people to say their more honest and real feelings, buried under that anger. I know it can be easy to be angry and mean, especially on faceless social media or when surrounded by people you agree with and who support your rage. I also know that sinking into those deeper feelings forces you to feel them and that can be painful, since it puts you in such a state of vulnerability. It's enough to make you feel like crying and that in itself is much more real than smug and righteous indignation.

Some of us have to unlearn a pattern of passively saying nothing and others of us have to unlearn lashing out, but somewhere in the middle is the "perfect temperature of porridge," to mix metaphors here. Basically, I'm just wishing for a more real level of honest discussion, under all the grumpy mutterings we are prone to these days.

My third and, for now, final wish is for us to promote hope.

Howard Zinn said, "To be hopeful in bad times

is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places – and there are so many – where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory."

So, there you have it: an underlying recognition that we all want the same thing underneath the noise of our current state of affairs – the courage and kindness to talk about what lies beneath our anger, and hope, which is the glue that holds all these expectations together. Never give up, never stop looking in the mirror, never stop remembering we are all goofy humans just trying to function together in our lives through the "infinite succession of presents." And may you find some joy during this holiday season and may it last through the year to come.

Christine Wilson is a psychotherapist in private practice in Colville and can be reached at christineallenwilson@gmail.com or 509-690-0715.



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A Life Just Saved

By Dr. Barry Bacon, MD

I sat in a quiet cubicle on an ordinary emergency room day in a country town a long way from here. I was reading some routine EKGs for patients preparing to undergo various procedures, endoscopies and surgeries. The secretary unceremoniously dropped an EKG on the pile

without saying a word. Thinking it was just another to add to the stack, I glanced at it briefly and prepared to set it aside, but it caught my breath. The EKG indicated that the patient was in serious danger. I picked it up and walked immediately to the desk.

"Where is this patient?" I asked. "Is this someone waiting for surgery?"

"No, that's our new patient," she replied. "He's in that room over there."

"OK then, that's where I am going."

I met a slender 43-year-old man who was clutching his chest, sweating profusely and gasping. I explained my concerns based on his EKG and what we planned to do, and asked him a few questions about his symptoms. Crushing chest pain, escalating over two days, not relieved by valium and marijuana (his treatment of choice), associated with shortness of breath, dizziness, vomiting and sweats.

Literally two minutes into the interview, as we were preparing our therapy, he said, "Oh, I don't feel good," and collapsed. He was so sweaty, we couldn't get any of the monitor pads to stick, so we couldn't tell what the rhythm was. He was completely without any signs of life.

We called a Code Blue, and immediately an entire team came in to help. In a small hospital, everything else comes to a standstill when a Code Blue is called. All hands focus on saving this one life. We started chest compressions and breathing assistance while we hooked up the defibrillator. We started IVs. After shocking him, we started giving him life-saving medicines like epinephrine. We put a tube down his throat to maintain his airway.

I stepped out momentarily to talk with his young daughter. Her gentle smile and naïve trust made my heart sink. I knew what she could not. There was no way we could save her father. But we couldn't quit. We had to try everything we could.

The man's wife arrived and I stepped out again. She worked in the medical field, so she was realistic about what we were up against. His heart wasn't budging. We weren't seeing any response to our interventions, no matter how heroic they might be.

Back at the patient's bedside, I looked around at my team. They were working incredibly hard. I was ready to throw in the towel. The problem in such a situation is that if you save someone's life after a long resuscitation, you may have a heart, but the brain may not recover. Still, looking at my team and remembering the innocence of his daughter, I couldn't quit.

Those with a medical background, and certainly many without a medical background, will understand the gravity of what happened next. We worked for a total of 50 minutes, eight doses of epinephrine, eight defibrillations, two doses

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Life Matters

es of vasopressin and 450 mg of a drug called amiodarone. Then, suddenly, his heart returned to normal. My immediate silent response was “what have I done?” I wasn’t sure at all that we had done the right thing.

His heart rhythm was normal, but his blood pressure was very low and he was in shock, likely because of the trauma of the resuscitation, and because his acid levels were very high after that long with only CPR keeping him alive. His pH was 6.8, hardly compatible with life. We gave him more epinephrine through a drip to maintain his blood pressure and we gave him heparin to thin his blood.

He started to wake up. “Good news,” we all said to each other. “His brain is probably going to be OK.” We gave him some medicine to put him to sleep so his brain could rest, still hooked up as he was to the tube and ventilation. We cooled his body so his brain would have its best opportunity for recovery.

We called for a helicopter to carry him to the referral hospital in Seattle, but fog kept the helicopter down. Then the fog thinned and the transport people were able to come in with an airplane, load him up an hour and a half after we stabilized him, and take him to the cardiac cath lab. They found a blockage in the artery that supplies the front wall of the heart and put in a stent to keep the artery open. With time, he woke up.

It struck me that this patient was the reason why we had gone through all those years of training, testing, practice, work, review. It struck me also how important it was for the whole team to be trained. There is no way that one person, no matter how talented, could pull this off. It takes all of us together. Eight people and more working as hard as they could, all pulling together to save one life. Kind of amazing.

Because I believe this is so important, I would like to honor all of the men and women who have dedicated their time, lives and money, investing in their community by getting the training necessary to save someone’s life in an emergency. You



have to know what you are doing. An emergency like this is not the time to be looking things up in a book or on the internet. Many emergency personnel serve without pay, and many more serve with far too little pay. They do it not because of the honor or the adrenaline or the curiosity, although all of those things are part of the job. They do it because it represents a chance to help someone, a stranger or a neighbor, who needs their help. They do it because they can. They are worthy of our recognition and honor.

I am putting out a call to you to consider how yours can be a life of service, a volunteer or not, who helps in such a way. If you ask them, you will find that the emergency responders are short-handed, and the ambulance services are struggling. It’s important work, and worth doing.

And what about our patient? Sometimes you get the chance to ask the questions that matter. Did he survive? Recover? Understand how close he was to death and beyond?

As it happened, I found myself back in that small town on another day. Before I had a chance to ask any questions, one of the nurses came to me and asked, “Do you remember that guy in the cardiac room?” Of course. Who could forget. “He wandered in here a couple of days ago and wanted to say thank you to everyone. He is doing OK,

but his kidneys are struggling.” Maybe I should call him. “Yeah, he’d probably like that.”

I picked up the phone and called. On the other end was his wife. He was undergoing a medical procedure at the time. How is he doing? I asked. “He’s doing great, except for the kidneys. It was a rough few days. His brain took a while to wake up, but it is perfect now. He picked up his flute and started playing again, and that’s his therapy. His heart is strong.”

And what about his daughter? How is she doing? “She is fine. She feels very lucky to have her daddy back.” Tell him we are thinking of him and we wish him well. And then I said goodbye.

My thoughts are spinning. Was it worth it? When I think about that little girl who stood by, trusting that we would do our best to save her daddy, it seems like the wrong question.

The holy books record this mantra: “To save one life is to save the world.” I don’t know if that’s exactly how it works. I do know that for one little girl, her whole world is saved. And that, I believe, is the answer.

Barry Bacon is a physician who has lived and practiced family medicine in Colville for 27 years. He now works in small rural hospitals in Washington state, teaches family medicine, and works on health disparities in the U.S. and Africa.



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The Gift of a Blanket

By Eileen Delehanty Pearkes

This year marks 150 years since the confederation of Canada. Originally intended to be a celebratory year, the anniversary has been fraught with events that point to the complex relationship between Canada and its tribal (First Nations) people. One moment that stood out for many people was the decision of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to honor Canadian rock star Gord Downie, the lead singer in the band Tragically Hip.

Late in 2015, Downie was diagnosed with an incurable brain cancer at the age of 51. In 2016, he gave a few final concerts, one called "The Secret Path," which he hoped would bring national awareness to the story of Chanie Wenjack, a 12-year-old Ojibwa boy who ran away from residential school in 1966. Wenjack died before he could complete the 400-mile walk home on foot. Downie described the government policies toward indigenous people as a "dark part of Canada's history." His music and lyrics struck the heart of the nation.

At a ceremony in December, 2016, the AFN presented him with an eagle feather, gave him

the name "Man Who Walks Among the Stars" and wrapped him in a specially crafted red blanket quilted with a giant white star. Visibly frail from treatments, Downie was turned to the four directions while leaders placed their hands on his shoulder and sang a tribute to his courage. He held back a river of tears. Many of us watching wept for him.

His death in October called to my mind the potent cultural symbol of the blanket.

Our trans-boundary region has its own story of Green-Blanket-Feet, the Sinixt woman who walked from western Montana back to the Colville valley in the 1860s, after a failed attempt to reunite with her children. When her moccasins wore out on the seemingly impossible journey, Green-Blanket-Feet used strips of a green blanket to protect her feet. That same blanket had acted as camouflage while she hid from pursuers, and it had kept her warm at night as she slept on the damp ground. Both her desire to be with her children and her return to her tribe were protected by the green blanket, her one enduring possession.

Trade blankets have woven their way around and through the dramatic changes, great challenges and complexities of European settlement for over three centuries. Wool blankets manufactured in England were an important and favored trade item, as far back as 1688.

Two years after blanket trading began, an English charter named what became Canada's oldest corporation: the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). This charter granted the HBC exclusive rights to trade in a vast territory. Then known as Rupert's Land, it included the large inland sea called Hudson's Bay. The assertion of colonial domain over 15% of North America's land mass eventually impacted the upper Columbia landscape, with the arrival of cartographer David Thompson in 1807 and the establishment of fur trade posts in the "Columbia District."

Of all the goods offered in trade for furs – metal pots, needles, guns, beads, etc. – blankets became one of the most highly desired items among the indigenous people. According to Harold Lee Thichenor, author of *The Blanket*, blankets were

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North of the Border

making up more than 60% of all trade goods by 1700. They were durable, quicker to dry than buckskin, easier to sew than most hides and, perhaps most importantly, they offered warmth even when wet. The densely woven wool was both wind-resistant and breathable.

For the tribes of the upper Columbia and northern interior plateau, blankets were similar to the pre-contact outdoor sashes that criss-crossed over deerskin clothing. Women had long woven the sashes from spun strands of the shaggy white fur of the mountain goat.

Hudson's Bay blankets came in several colors: indigo, scarlet, green and light blue. In 1779, the HBC commissioned its first multi-stripe blanket, with blue, yellow, red and green stripes repeating twice at each end on a field of otherwise creamy white wool. On the selva edge, near the bottom of the blanket, manufacturers added a series of black lines called "points," visible even when the blanket was folded. Most common during the trade were blankets of 2.5 to 4 points, today roughly equivalent to a blanket for a twin-sized bed.

The white and multi-stripe blanket quickly became known as a "chief's blanket," indicating its prized nature. According to some historical accounts, the tribes appreciated the white wool as good winter camouflage for hunters. It's also possible that the striped blankets were less common than others, giving them more value.

As the fur trade established, they became part of the iconic image of a French-Canadian *voyageur*, whose favored coat was a *capote*, the French word

for a loose, hooded coat fashioned from portions of an HBC blanket.

Gradually, trade blankets became part of the indigenous culture's millennial practice of generosity. On the west coast of Canada, chiefs

The blankets had become almost universal symbols across the indigenous Pacific Northwest for warmth, comfort, leadership and generosity.

I have often wondered how the woman still known on the Colville Reservation today as Green-Blanket-Foot came to own her blanket. It was very likely a gift, from her father, a brother or perhaps, ironically, from the white husband who eventually took her children from her to be educated back east at schools far from the Columbia District. She never saw her children again. We will never know who gave her the blanket, only that it stayed with her and addressed her most basic needs.

Gord Downie's decision to dedicate one of his final concerts to the story of a young indigenous boy separated by force from his own family initiated a cultural shift in Canada. Chanie Wenjack's family spoke at the concert of no longer having to endure the painful memories on their own. "His story is Canada's story," said Downie. "We are all accountable."

As I watched the singer's moving performance of "The Secret Path," I realized that the 12-year-old boy had nothing more than a light blue windbreaker to wear and a few matches for the long, cold journey home in October. If only he had a blanket.

For more information on Chanie Wenjack's story, go to secretpath.ca.

Eileen Delehanty Pearkes lives in Nelson, B.C. Her new book on the Columbia River Treaty, *A River Captured*, was recently released by Rocky Mountain Books. For more of her explorations of the western landscape, visit www.edpearkes.com.



of the Kwakwaka'wakw tribe hosted large feasts and hereditary spiritual dances, at which chiefs performed *potlatch*, a Chinook trade jargon word for "to give away" or "to gift." A common gift at the feasts was a trade blanket, as shown in historical photos of towers of folded wool waiting to be distributed to members of a village.



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EAVESDROPS What people have written about the north Columbia region

*Unstable banks of sand and silt
in time break free and fall
giving up one shape
to reveal another.*

~ Excerpt from a William D. Layman poem

The Magnificent Bryozoan

By Jack Nisbet

In September, a couple of friends went kayaking on Shepherd Lake, six miles south of Sandpoint. It's a pretty little lake, a bit more than 10 acres in size, tucked into a classic rich Idaho Panhandle forest. The paddlers know the area well and were surprised to find that the water contained dozens of strange slimy blobs. The roughly round blobs ranged up to the size of classroom globes. Each one was anchored around a plant stem like a weaver's spindle loaded with yarn.

A striking pattern of star-like geometric figures covered each blob's surface, and their consistency was like a Jell-O salad that broke off into chunks. When the husband plucked a blob up by its plant stem for a portrait, the soccer-ball shape slumped into something more like a football.

Back home, a quick check on the web revealed that the blobs were a bryozoan officially named *Pectinatella magnifica*, which means nothing more than "beautiful bryozoan."

My friends mailed the curious photograph plus a brief version of their story to the Sandpoint newspaper. They also happened to send me a copy of the same picture, and I've been dreaming about geometric designs and gelatinous blobs ever since.

My initial thought was that the pattern on its surface looked a lot like a particular starry moss that thrives in the forest surrounding Shepherd Lake, so it made sense to learn that the Latin term "bryozoa" translates as "moss animals." In fact, the bryozoan blobs in Shepherd Lake are made up of thousands upon thousands of individual creatures called zooids, each one less than a millimeter across, functioning together as a colonial unit. Although that description fits several exotic life forms, including slime molds and marine jellyfish, scientists place bryozoans in their own separate phylum within the animal kingdom.

The imprints of early moss animals show up in the fossil record about 500 million years before the present, at roughly the same time as

the hard-shelled trilobites that distinguish several strata of our region's rocks. Like trilobites, bryozoans spread across Earth's oceans in a startling diversity of forms. Unlike the extinct trilobites, around 5,000 species of bryozoans still thrive on our planet today. Most species inhabit shallow coastal regions, but some have been found in the deepest ocean trenches, five miles below the surface. Most prefer warm water, but one remarkable member of the phylum

The species fall into three main categories.

Members of the first group develop calcified tubular skeletons. These forms encrust rocky surfaces, seashells and marine algae.

A second, more common group features cylindrical or flattened individual zooids. They use their calcified skeletons to create colonies up to several feet in size. Some of these look like coral or seaweed, growing in shapes that resemble wavy fabric, branching trees or finely tatted lace. Like the first tribe, members of this group live exclusively in salt water.

The blobs in Shepherd Lake belong to the third group. They live in fresh water and show no calcification at all. Instead, the tiny zooids transform bits of floating detritus into a gelatinous mass that binds them together – a habit that has inspired the common name "devil's boogers."

Many native shallow-water bryozoans perform important ecological work by stabilizing and binding free sediments in wetland environments. They can play a pivotal role in local food webs when they filter their sustenance from microorganisms, then make those nutrients available to fish and other vertebrates that prey on the bryozoa themselves.

The boogery blobs of *Pectinatella magnifica* can live only in warm water, and with the arrival of fall each gelatinous mass turns to mush. The only visible parts left behind are thousands of hardened masses of cells called statoblasts. Each small wheel-shaped statoblast is rimmed with jagged hooks. They sink to the bottom of the lake and enter a period of dormancy that allows them to withstand drying and freezing. They wait.

In time one of those hooks can latch on to a passing muskrat, fish or duck's foot that drags through the mud, and things begin to change. If a statoblast lands in a favorable situation by springtime, it can germinate asexually to form a new zooid. If there are others like it in the vicinity, they gather together to form a fresh blob on the water.



Pectinatella magnifica. Photo by Laura Phillips

drifts around the Antarctic ice pack. Most are rooted to the ocean floor or float at the whim of the current, but a few creep around on specially adapted individual zooids.

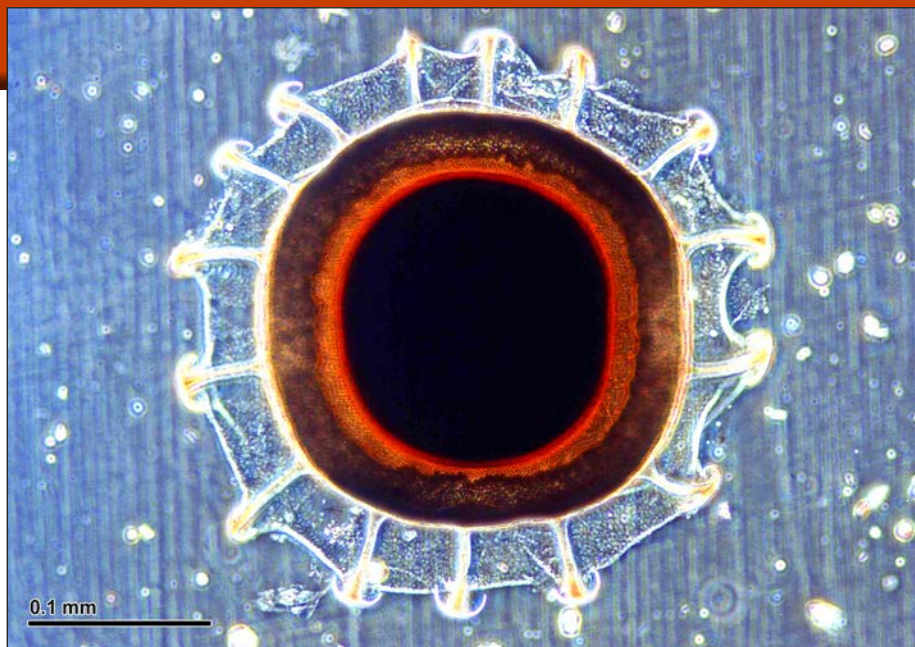
The individual zooids of all living bryozoa feed by extending crowns of fine hairy tentacles to capture particles of floating debris.

Boundaries

“Devil boogers” might sound like a joke, but bryozoans can be a nuisance. Over a hundred different marine species attach themselves to ship hulls, robbing the vessels of speed and power. Others have been known to foul pilings, piers and docks. Their freshwater counterparts can clog pump intake pipes and stormwater waste systems.

Moreover, with the help of humans, some of these ancient species are on the move. In North America, the *Pectinatella magnifica* was long considered native to warm still waters east of the Mississippi, but since 2000 it has been showing up more and more in the Pacific Northwest – first in west-side ponds around cities like Vancouver, Washington, then lately in lakes east of the Cascades. Many scientists believe this is a result of warming waters brought on by climate change, and that, once established, the beautiful bryozoan may find plenty of suitable habitat for expansion here.

Our region’s natural resource managers would like to learn more about the spread of



Statoblast of Pectinatella magnifica. Photo by Josef Reischig

these blobs, and the United States Geological Survey coordinates a Nonindigenous Aquatic Species database to track changes like this. If you know a lake where the blobs occur, or see one next summer while out on the water, you can go to the USGS fact sheet (<https://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?SpeciesID=2335>)

and make a report by clicking on the tab at the upper right-hand corner.

Thanks to John and Laura Phillips for dredging all this up.

Spokane-based author Jack Nisbet’s favorite movie as a child was *The Blob* with Steve McQueen.

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A Little Help From My Friends

By Loren Cruden

Thanksgiving is past, but I'm feeling an appreciation hangover. Still basking in the blessings, so to speak. I didn't go to town for a while – enjoyed the winter quiet around my house, chickadees at the feeder, eagles over the river, turkeys making prehistoric tracks in the snow. Inside, good books, a lap-sitting cat, popcorn in the bowl. Pretty fine. When I ran out of popcorn and had to go to town, I deemed it a bothersome interruption of solitude's bliss. But that wasn't how it turned out. Town is always a revelation.

Eastern Washington has a reputation for occupying particular positions on the political and religious spectrums, but there are transcending commonalities among us. Unpretentiousness is one. We are what we are, whatever that encompasses. And whoever we are and however we

“...however we differ, we regularly take time to acknowledge and help each other.”

differ, we regularly take time to acknowledge and help each other.

In town, people hold doors open. Strangers on the street make eye contact, nod or smile. Bank tellers greet people by name, librarians help us find books, drivers in parking lots (mostly) don't cut each other off, shoppers in grocery store lines and travelers at the shuttle bus stop make comradely comments while waiting. I've lived in places where these ordinary courtesies are not necessarily the norm – or done with such genuine ease.

An affluent friend in a Midwest town told me of getting into a real estate agent's less-than-spiffy car to go look at property. The agent casually apologized for the disorder of files on her backseat. She chatted with my friend in a natural way as they drove, and he was struck by her direct, matter-of-fact, unembarrassed disclosures about her life and its challenges. Listening to the story, what I found remarkable was not this woman, who sounded like a lot of the people I know, but my friend's assumption that less fortunate people should be reticent and embarrassed about their lives – or the state of their backseats.

Long before moving to this area some 28 years ago, I had grown used to dealing with things on my own – and maintaining an impervious front, whatever the circumstances.

For example: Over on the coast in my younger years, I paid a visit to my acupuncturist. After

an especially heavy-duty session with the needles, she suggested I might want to sit a while to recover.

“Oh, I'm fine,” I chirped, hopping off the table. (I could still hop in those days.)

“Are you sure?” she asked.

“Yes, all set,” I assured her, smiling breezily. I gave her a hug. Turned and opened the door. And briskly strode into her closet.

For a moment I considered staying there, not coming out. Waiting for her to align with my theme of departure and go away, showing some solidarity. I stared at the rear of the closet, wondering if, Narnia-like, there might be a magical exit there.

“Still sure?” the acupuncturist asked when I backed out of the closet and faced her.

“I always wondered what was in there,” I said. Imperviously.

She escorted me to the front entry. Rattled but still determined, I marched across the yard to my car, which was parked on the street, and got in. It was dark out, raining. I fastened my seatbelt, turned the key. Briskly reversed into the car parked behind me.

I thought about fleeing the scene out of sheer mortification, but didn't. I examined the damage, trudged back to the acupuncturist's house and left my insurance information with her, and in a Ziploc bag tucked under the damaged car's windshield wiper, and slunk home.

Now that I'm a senior citizen, I'm less insistent on the reflexive, defensive “I'm fine” when I'm not. We all know that pride goeth before a fall (or an interval in a closet), but I've recently discovered it also goeth before refusal to accept help, meaneth I can't get the packaging in my box of crackers open even after savaging it with my teeth, for instance. (Most boxed food in my kitchen looks like wolverines have been at it.) Pride goeth before a lot of things. I still find solitude a blissful thing, but am enchanted by the ordinary wonders found in encounters, too. (Is “pervious” a word?)

Oftentimes, holiday encounters take the form of family gatherings. For my far-flung family this involves much pleasurable conversation and catching up. But as we head for the December holidays, my appreciation hangover still lingers, extending back not only to Thanksgiving, but to Halloween. And silence.

It was my custom, when my son was growing up, to have a silent dinner on Halloween, to remember our loved ones who had passed. My son and his wife now carry on this tradition. Silence is not my grandchildren's forté, but they

are respectful of the occasion.

Chili and cornbread and sautéed apples were served up for this year's Halloween feast as we took our places around the table. Grace was said. Then there was silence as we ate (except for the inevitable, if muted, clink-clink, clatter-clatter, munch-munch). After a while our silence became less self-conscious, more communally spacious. The granddaughter beside me was dressed for trick-or-treating in medical scrubs. She gazed at a picture of her beloved, now deceased, rabbit as she ate. There were other photos around the table, of parents, siblings, friends who are gone but felt present among us, included in the silence, embraced in our thoughts.

When we finished, there were words of sharing, then kids dashing around, adjusting costumes, getting coats on, voices excited as they went out the door with their parents into the night: the doctor, the ballerina, the skeleton and the cat. I went home, savoring life's bustle and silence, its together and aloneness – and the place here that holds it.



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Holding It All Together

By Tina Tolliver Matney

A few years ago I had the opportunity to meet a woman who struck me as the ultimate crazy bird lady. I've had a few people jokingly refer to me as a crazy bird lady, but this woman ... she was the real deal.

She skidded in here one blistering hot day in a beat-up Chevy Blazer that looked like it would fall apart if you blew the top layer of rust off the hood and back bumper. I came from the garden to greet her in the driveway after my dogs announced her arrival with a little too much enthusiasm and anticipation. I think they could sense it, the menagerie she had brought, before she even opened the passenger-side door and scooted herself across the seat to get out because the driver-side door apparently had a malfunction.

I would have guessed it was the passenger side that malfunctioned, since it was the one held together with duct tape. I love duct tape and in that instance I saw an even broader scope of its infinite possibilities.

In the back of her zoo on wheels were various boxes and crates mostly held together with tape or baling twine. Baling twine ranks right up there with duct tape in my book.

I stood by in anticipation, wondering which

box held the red-tailed hawk that she had brought to me. She had nursed this particular hawk back to health but lacked the flight space to get him strong enough to release, so I was to put him into one of my flight bays. She grabbed a box and handed it to me but then quickly took it back as she said, "Oh wait, not that one, that's a raven on ice." Apparently there was a lucky biologist out there who would receive that gift later.

She had tied a nice little baling twine bow on top. I knew then we better keep the visit short – it was a hot day. She bumped a big plastic tote reaching for another box, which set off a cacophony of screeching so loud the dogs whimpered and ran back to the porch.

I stood on my tiptoes to peer over the edge of the tote to see a brood of little black balls of feathers with mouths wide open. "Raven babies?" I asked. "Uh, no, those are starlings. I was hoping you would take them too, I've run out of space."

I'm afraid the snort and doubled-over laughter escaped me before I realized she was serious. I then politely used my excuse that I am licensed for raptor rescue only. I use that line a lot these days. Perhaps it's the fine line that keeps me from becoming a truly crazy bird lady, I don't know. I just know that

I have my limits and as I stood there and looked at this rather frazzled woman with her car full of birds and two baby squirrels in a wire cage, I was grateful for my ability to just say no.

But I was also grateful for her, this woman who has a heart of gold and the willingness to take on the birds and animals that others cannot or will not.

I took the hawk to his new temporary flight bay and then continued with my own busy life of taking care of other injured and sick birds while I attempt some semblance of order in my home and gardens and make time for my family and friends. Sometimes I feel so on top of things. Other times I feel like the sky has fallen and I'm squished under it with all the things that are pressing in on me. All the things. And then I wonder if I've taken on too much. Or maybe it's time to let some of the things go. Or perhaps I need more discipline to keep a better schedule.

Recently, or six months ago, I bought a pretty spiral-bound calendar that promised 18 months of planning and organizing and doodling in the little designated doodling spaces. It came with a little set of gel pens, sticky labels printed in a cute little font, numbers to keep track of days and weeks and months and even some washi tape. Apparently washi

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tape is a popular thing for some people. To me it's glorified duct tape and duct tape has a glory all its own without having pretty designs on it that cover up the silver promise of unlimited repair potential.

I tossed the pretty tape in the corner to give to one of my little grand-girls. I poured a mug of coffee one morning and settled in to organize my life. I started by labeling the months. Perhaps it was too much caffeine that made me miss July and so now I have a spiral calendar that is just wonky because I couldn't peel off August without tearing the paper. But I figured that was OK because I'm generally so busy in July I wouldn't have time to look at it anyway. I even doodled a little in the little designated doodle space.

I took my new calendar to my plant shop, where I thought it would be a perfect place to keep track of the daily business receipts and transactions. It has an awesome little pocket in the front and another one in the back. Perfect!

It didn't take long for the spiral wires to start popping out of the holes. I haven't opened the calendar portion of this book since the day I messed up July. I only opened the front or the back to shove the receipts into the pockets and now it's so full it won't hold any more. So it just sat on my table at work.

One day my daughter picked it up and suggested the obvious need for a better bookkeeping system. It was at this point that I remembered the glorified duct tape and now the calendar-turned-receipt-holder is secured until that day when I can't ignore it any longer.

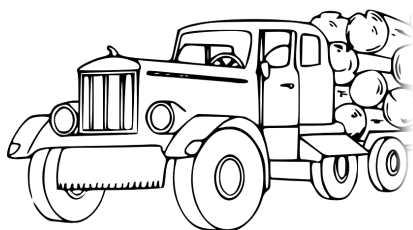
This is how I do things. I tape them together or I tie them with baling twine, and while I have moments of feeling squished under the sky with all the things, I also have the ability and fortitude to take care of

business and get things done when they need to be done. On this day, with the holidays approaching and so much that needs to be done, I have to first tend to a little screech owl that is in my care.

I opened the bathroom door this morning to see this tiny little owl perched on the rim of a candle jar that sits on the back of the toilet. Apparently he escaped from his box on the floor. Maybe I am a little bit crazy. Or maybe I should have used more duct tape.

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The Hardy Drummer of the Forest

Article & Photo By J. Foster Fanning

Years ago an urban friend was staying at my mountain home. One morning he said to me, “your neighbor is having trouble with his chain-saw.” I gave him a puzzled look. “Well listen,” he said. And sure enough a few moments later a sound, much like an old combustion engine trying, and failing, to start sounded from the aspen grove below.

“That’s been going on since I came outside,” he said. I smiled and he knew something was up. “Listen closely,” I said. A moment later we were again treated to the sound of a ruffed grouse “drumming” his wings and sounding very much like an old John Deere tractor trying to spark.

The ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*) is listed as the most widely dispersed resident game bird in North America. This ground-dwelling bird has habitat throughout all of the Canadian provinces and in 38 of the U.S. states. On the Pacific Coast, ruffed grouse occur on both sides of the Cascades and in the coastal ranges into northwestern California and north to the Yukon River Basin in Alaska.

“Mochiyehs” is the North American Passamaquoddy tribe’s word for “grouse.” Grouse are used as clan animals in some indigenous cultures. Tribes with grouse clans include the Chippewa with its grouse clan totem, Aagask, and the Prairie grouse clans of the Mandan and Hidatsa. Grouse is used as a clan crest in some Northwest Coast tribes as well, such as the Tsimshian, and can occasionally be found carved on totem poles.

Bonasa umbellus was first formally described by the Swedish scientist Carl Linnaeus, who classified it as *Tetrao umbellus*, placing it in a subfamily with Eurasian grouse. Later the subfamily *Bonasa* was applied by British naturalist John Francis Stephens in 1819. Ruffed grouse is the preferred common name because it applies only to this species.

Misleading vernacular names abound, and it is often called partridge, pheasant or prairie chicken, all of which are other species of birds. Other nicknames for ruffed grouse include “drummer” and “thunder-chicken.” The name

“ruffed” is derived from the long, shiny, black or brown neck feathers prominent on the male. When the cock is in full display in defense of his territory, or showing off to an interested hen, these feathers are extended into a remarkable ruff which, together with a fully fanned tail, makes him look twice his normal size.

The most important portion of the range and population for these non-migratory birds is wherever snow is abundant during the winter. The ruffed grouse is a hearty, snow-loving, bud-eating native, thriving during severe winters that reduce flocks of partridges, quail, pheasants and turkeys. The survival strategy of this unique bird? Well, first of all, it is an omnivore. The ruffed grouse’s ability to digest foods high in roughage contribute to its ability to survive in severe winter conditions.

In the northern reaches of its range, ruffed grouse feed on buds and twigs of aspen, birch and willow. Another unique survival trait is that they grow projections off the sides of their toes in winter, making them look like combs.



The projections are believed to act as snowshoes to help the grouse walk across snow and more successfully reach food sources. Ruffed grouse can digest bitter, often toxic plants that many birds can't handle. Levels of defensive plant compounds in buds of quaking aspen, a major winter-time food source for ruffed grouse, reflect the cyclic rise and fall of grouse population.

"The dappled, grayish or reddish ruffed grouse is hard to see," declares the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, "but its 'drumming on air' display is a fixture of many spring forests. It can come as a surprise to learn this distant sound, like an engine trying to start, comes from a bird at all. This plump grouse has a cocky crest and a tail marked by a broad, dark band near the tip. Displaying males expose a rich black ruff of neck feathers, giving them their name."

Ruffed grouse have fairly small bodies compared to other members of their family tree, with a short, triangular crest and a long, fan-shaped tail. Markings include intricately patterned dark bars and spots appearing on either a reddish-brown or grayish background. Dark bars down the side of the neck continue and widen onto the belly. The tail is finely barred, with one wide black band near the tip.

Ruffed grouse habitat usually occurs in mixed deciduous and coniferous forest groves with scattered clearings. These birds also live along forested streams and in areas growing back from burning or logging.

Back to that drumming sound. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, "the male ruffed grouse's signature drumming display doesn't involve drumming on anything but air. As the bird quickly rotates its wings forward and backward, air rushes in beneath the wings creating a miniature vacuum that generates a deep, thumping sound wave that carries up to a quarter of a mile."

Though the secretive ruffed grouse can be difficult to observe, lace up those boots, stuff the field glasses in the pack and head out into the great wide open. To track one down, note the locations where you hear drumming males – this is generally most frequent very early in the morning. In addition, you may encounter foraging birds simply by walking slowly and quietly through the forest or along narrow forested roads. In winter, watch for ruffed grouse feeding on deciduous tree buds in bare treetops.

J. Foster Fanning is a father, grandfather, retired fire chief and wannabe beach bum. He dabbles in photography as an excuse to wander the hills and vales in search of the perfect image. His photography is currently on display at the Coulee Dam Credit Union and Brown Bear Real Estate, both in Republic, WA. Learn more at <http://fosterfanning.blogspot.com>.

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Dec 1-3: "An Evergreen Christmas" tours of the Keller House and the Museum, 700 N. Wynne St., Colville, featuring the annual Gingerbread House Contest (pick up applications at Happy's Gift Shop), Mitten Tree (bring mittens and hats for area children) and live music in the Keller House music room. Dec. 1, 4 -7 pm, Dec. 2, 2-7 pm, Dec. 3, 2-6 pm. Call 509-684-5968 for more info.

Dec 1-3: Deck the Falls in Metaline Falls with a tree lighting, Redneck Christmas Light Parade, Santa, Fireworks, Bon Fire and free hotdogs, s'mores and warm beverages, starting at 5 pm on Friday. Arts & Craft Faire and live music from 10-4 on Saturday (still accepting booth registrations), and a decorated tree auction as a benefit for the Cutter Theatre (still accepting tree donations). Heidi Muller in concert on Sunday, 2 pm. Tickets are \$12. Heidi will also do a workshop on Monday with the elementary students. Call 509-446-4108 for more info.

Dec 2: Kettle Falls Lady Lions Christmas Craft Fair, 9-3, at the Kettle Falls Middle School. A can of food for the food bank would be appreciated.

Dec 2: Farmers Market Classic Christmas Faire, 10-4, Aaron Huff Cultural Center, 241 E Main, Chewelah.

Dec 2: Free breakfast with Santa & Mrs. Claus, 10-Noon, Chewelah Civic Center.

Dec 2: Kitten Adoption Event & Santa Claws Photo Shoot, 11 am at the Country Store in Colville. Colville Valley Animal Sanctuary has many kittens available for adoption just in time for Christmas. Special appearance by Santa Claws so you can capture the moment with a photo.

Dec 2: Festival of Trees at the Sadie Halstead Middle School in Newport, featuring free crafts, face painting, cookie decorating, live entertainment, decorated trees, and free photos with Santa, 10-3. Following is a benefit social with food, beverages and live entertainment by Justin Sherfey. Proceeds benefit Newport Hospital and Health Services Foundation programs. Call 509-447-7928, ext. 4373 for tickets and more info.

Dec 2, 13: Boards In Gear training at WSU Extension, 986 S. Main, Colville. Learn about the five main areas of strong board practice: connection to cause; roles and responsibilities; how to build a great board, sustain a great board; and engage board members in fundraising. Register for one

of two dates (Sat. Dec. 2, 1-5 pm or Wed. Dec 13, 9am-1pm) at washingtonnonprofits.org/calendar. Light snacks provided. Presented in partnership with the Washington Office of the Secretary of State, WSU Extension, and Washington Nonprofits. Call 509-675-3791 for more info.

Dec 3: Northport Lions Club BINGO at the Northport School Cafeteria, Noon - 4 pm. Early Bird, Regular, Fast Pick and Blackout with a \$500 Jackpot. A portion of the proceeds benefit the NHS girls basketball team. Refreshments available. Must be 18 or older to play. Call 509-690-2158 for more info.

Dec 9: Colville Chamber Gala Dinner Dance, 5 pm at the Colville Community College. Featuring dinner, dancing, raffle drawing for a Christmas tree and gifts, no host bar. Call 509-684-5973 for tickets and more info.

Dec 10: 16th Annual Christmas Party, 4-6 pm at the Northport School Cafeteria. Cocoa, cider and cookies, a ride on the Polar Express bus, community tree lighting, and free pictures with Santa.

Dec 22-23: Stevens County Swap Meet Winter Sale, 9-4, Chewelah Faith Community Church, 313 N. 4th St. W, Chewelah.

Dec 31: New Years Eve Fireworks Show at the Northeast Washington Fairgrounds in Colville. Donations are still being accepted for this free community event at P.O. Box 282, Colville, WA 99114. The event is sponsored by Carter Toyota and the City of Colville and will feature games from 4-6 pm, dinner by donation at 6 pm, fireworks show by Rocketman at 7 pm, and dancing to live music from Juke Box Review at 8 pm.

Music, Dance, Theater & Film

Dec 3: "Joy to the World," Christmas and seasonal music performed by Chorale Coeur d'Alene, Crescendo Community Chorus, and the Mansfield Family Bank with special guest Skyler Colvin, 2 pm, Abundant Life Fellowship Church, 2nd and Clay, Chewelah. Tickets are \$12.50 at Colville House of Music, Akers United Drug and Valley Drugs in Chewelah, or online at chewelahartsguild.org.

Dec 3: Heidi Muller, an award-winning songwriter, guitarist and mountain dulcimer player, 2 pm at the Cutter Theatre, 302 Park St., Metaline Falls. Call 509-446-4108 or visit cuttertheatre.com for more info.

Dec 5: Performing Arts Trail Presents, Lizzy Hoyt, 7:30-10:00pm at the Bailey Theatre, 1501 Cedar Ave, Rossland, B.C. Lizzy Hoyt is a classically-trained multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, fiddler and mandolinist, and step dancer who describes her style as Celtic folk rooted in traditional music. This concert will feature a collection of well-known and obscure holiday carols. Call 250-368-9669 or email info@trail-arts.com for more info.

Dec 8-10, 15-17: The Pend Oreille Players present *A Christmas Carol, Revisited*, the classic tale of redemption by Charles Dickens, brought into today's world. Fri. & Sat. shows at 7 pm, Sun. shows at 3 pm at the Pend Oreille Playhouse, 236 S. Union, Newport. Visit www.pendoreilleplayers.org or call 509-447-9900 for more info.

Dec 13: Rotary Club of Trail presents Rotary Carol Festival, 7:30-9pm, at the Bailey Theatre, 1501 Cedar Ave, Rossland, B.C. The show is a fundraiser for their Christmas hamper campaign and features the Maple Leaf Band (starts at 7:15pm), Trail Harmony Choir, Rossland Glee Club, Twin Rivers Community Choir, Kootenay Women's Ensemble, Salvation Army Choir, St-Michael's choir. Entry by donation.

Dec 17: Dances of Universal Peace, simple, meditative, joyous, multi-cultural dances, 2-5 pm at the Colville Library basement. Donations appreciated. Potluck following. Call 509-684-1590 for more info.

Music at Northern Ales, 325 W. 3rd Ave., Kettle Falls, northernales.com, 509-738-7382:

1st: Christy Lee and the Broken Rosary Whisky Thieves, 7-10 pm
7th: Sara Brown, 6-8 pm
8th: Kettle Creek, 7-10 pm
14th: Borderland Blues Band, 6-8 pm
15th: Open Mic, 7-10 pm
21st: Justin Johnson, 6-8 pm
22nd: Chipped and Broken Gone Country, 7-10 pm
28th: Michael Pickett, 6-8 pm
29th: Northern Aliens, 7-10 pm

Music at Republic Brewing Company, 26 Clark Ave., Republic, republicbrew.com, 509-775-2700. Note: some shows require tickets.

2nd: Nathaniel Talbot, 7-10 pm
9th: Nancy & Loni's Christmas Singalong and Ugly Sweater Contest

Music at The Flying Steamshovel, 2003 2nd Ave., Rossland, B.C. Visit theflyingsteamshovel.com or call 250-362-7323 for more info.

4th: William Prince w/ Justin Lacroix, 8 pm
9th: Sack Grabath (Black Sabbath Tribute Band), 9 pm
13th: Michael Bernard Fitzgerald w/ Guest, 8 pm
31st: NYE with Shred Kelly & Guests, 9 pm

Arts & Crafts

Dec 9: Santa will visit Gold Mountains Gallery, 600 S. Clark, Republic, at a reception from 12-4 pm. Bring your kids and cameras, and enjoy refreshments while checking out the wide assortment of unique hand-crafted gifts available for every budget. The show runs Tue-Sat, 10-5 through December.

Dec 9-10, 16-17: Shoshana's 22nd Annual Holiday Craft Show, 10-5 Saturdays, Noon-4 Sundays, at Shoshana's pottery studio in Northport, 616 South Ave., behind the Matteson House Bed and Breakfast, and one block off Main St. Large selection of locally made quality crafts and gourmet foods for sale (cash or check). Refreshments will be served. Call 509-732-8863 for more info.

Featured Artist Richard Taylor's hand-made paper pieces are on display at the gallery at Meyers Falls Market in Kettle Falls.

Classes at E-Z Knit Fabrics in Colville: Open Workshop, bring projects you need help with, first Saturday of each month. BERNINA Embroidery Software master class, registration required, second Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. Machine Embroidery Projects, different project each month. Check with store (165 N Main St, Colville) for projects, samples, dates, times and costs (some classes are free). Call 509-684-6644 for more info.

Colville Piecemakers Quilt Guild meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Assembly of God Church in Colville at 6:30 pm. Visit colvillepiecemakers.webs.com.

Cross Borders Weaving Guild meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the VFW Hall, 135 Hwy 20, Colville. Email woodtick50@aol.com for more info.

Colville Valley Fiber Friends, (CVFF) meet every Monday at the Ag Trade Center, 317 W. Aster, Colville, noon - 3 pm. All interested in spinning, weaving and other fiber arts are welcome. For more information, contact Sue Gower at 509-685-1582.

Literature & Writing

Dec 5: Book Launch Party of *Love Elisabeth*, by Christy Martenson, 4-7 pm, hosted by The Steam Engine Shop & Coffee at the Old Apple Warehouse, 130 E 3rd Ave, Kettle Falls. The book is set locally in Barstow, Washington.

Dec 6: Book launch party, *A Phantasmagorical*, by Melanie Rose Huff with illustrations by Traci Manley, hosted by Quartzite Brewing Company in Chewelah, 6 pm. Grab a delicious beverage

and some food from KISS Gourmet, pick up a copy of the book and chat with the author and illustrator. There will be a short talk starting at about 7 pm. The venue is child-friendly.

Dec 8: *Hannah's Journey*, by Carmen Peone, book signing at Coffee and Books at Town Center Building, Colville, 11-1. Carmen Peone lives on the Colville Reservation with her tribal member husband. She teaches archery to youth in the school system, competes on her horses, mentored under tribal member Marguerite Ensminger, and writes fiction that includes Colville Tribal culture and traditions.

Writers' Group: Open invitation to writers of all skill levels and categories of writing, to a writers' group facilitated by author Loren Cruden. Regular gatherings for feedback on one another's work and help in developing skills. If interested, don't be shy; call 509-675-8644.

Farm, Field & Forest

Dec 2: NE Washington Haygrowers' Association Annual Meeting, 8:30-3, at Deer Park Diesel in Clayton. Two pesticide applicator recertification credits are available if attending both sessions. Registration at the door or to preregister, visit <http://extension.wsu.edu/stevens/event/ne-washington-haygrowers-association-2017-annual-meeting/> or contact Paul Kuber at 509.477.2185 or pskuber@wsu.edu.

Dec 5 & 12: Pesticide Education Classes, 3-5:30 pm. Dec. 5 topics will be Weed Control in Alfalfa and New Pasture Fields; Weeds and Plants that Could be Making Your Animals Sick; and Identification of Weeds in Stevens County. Dec. 12 topics will be Controlling Noxious Weeds in Rangeland; Managing Invasive Weeds on Rangeland and Wildland Landscapes; and On-line Tools and Mobile Apps to use in Weed Control. Contact Nils Johnson at 509-684-2588 or nils.johnson@wsu.edu for more info.

Dec 16: Colville Christmas Bird Count. Participants will meet at 7 am at the Colville City Library, downstairs conference room before spending the day in the field. New participants are welcome! Call 509-675-6591 (Barbara) or 509-684-8308 (Warren) for more info.

MORE LISTINGS & DETAILS AT NCMONTHLY.COM

ALSO: Check previous editions for usual, reoccurring listings that may be missing from this edition due to shortness of space.

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A Good Read

All the Light We Cannot See, by Anthony Doerr

Reviewed by Loren Cruden

"What do we call visible light? We call it color. But the electromagnetic spectrum runs to zero in one direction and infinity in the other, so really, children, mathematically, all of light is invisible."

One of the protagonists, a blind French girl in Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See*, perceives more, perhaps, than most sighted people. She grows up in the Paris of the 1930s, fleeing with her father to the Brittany coast when the Nazis invade.

Paralleling Marie-Laure's story is that of the orphan Werner with his sister in a mining town in Germany. He too ends up in Brittany's walled town of Saint-Malo, tracking the French resistance as a radio whiz-kid trained by the Nazis.

Doerr worked on this book for a decade, a gestation delivering something unflinchingly history-based but told almost like a fairytale: "*Her Majesty*, the Austrians call their cannon, and for the past week these men have tended to it the way worker bees might tend to a queen. ... One of the soldiers, he realizes, is singing. Or maybe it is more than one. Maybe they are all singing. Eight Luftwaffe men, none of whom will survive the hour, singing a love song to their queen." And as destruction begins: "A dozen pigeons roosting on the cathedral spire cataract down its length and wheel out over the sea."

This captivating prose unrolls a world fully alive, detailed, sense-rich. The reader entering it becomes privy to complex mysteries of radios and keys, seashells and gems, while war and hatred's seeds are watered, erupting from darkness into day.

As if in disregard of what is occurring, though in fact in emphasis, a texture of magic continues to infiltrate Doerr's conjuration of this world, making it both familiar and not, illuminating life and death, fidelity and aberrance. There is not a sentence lacking in some nuance of luminosity; Doerr seems to craft his story the way the earth forms jewels, "By adding microscopic layers, a few thousand atoms every month, each atop the next."

Most chapters are only a few pages long. They flip back and forth between Marie-Laure and Werner – as children, as adolescents – as though the reader straddles the French-German border, standing first on one foot, then the other. The two lives incline closer and closer until the membrane between them ruptures, as if previous distance was an illusion. The story whisks along, yet inhabits 500-some pages; how can there be so much to say, yet take so little time to read? Another magic Doerr pulls off: an episodic flow as scintillating and alluring as a mountain stream – or as the 133-carat blue diamond that, as it must, is also part of the

flow.

At times, immersed, we forget about the di-amond as the occupation of France grates ever closer to the bone with its malignant indignities, corruption and betrayal. The poetry of Doerr's narrative intensifies these sinister tensions. "The walls creak, the window between the curtains is black; the town prepares to sleep. Somewhere out there, German U-boats glide above underwater canyons, and thirty-foot squid ferry their huge eyes through the cold dark."

Glide becomes vortex, lives sucked into icy fanaticism, and still Doerr's prose flows on, radiant. "It seems to Werner as if all the boys around him are intoxicated ... with a spirit that leaves them glazed and dazzled, as if they ward off a vast and inevitable tidal wave of anguish only by staying drunk on rigor and exercise and gleaming boot leather." Like Werner and Marie-Laure, cause and consequence march closer and closer to convergence. But the story is not linear; it draws in from all sides at once – the tension is concentric, communal. "The quiet is fretful, unnatural. It's what a mouse must feel, she thinks, as it steps from its hole into the open blades of a meadow, never knowing what shadow might come cruising above."

None of the characters' fates are hard to predict; the suspense is in the when and how. A consistent aspect, variously expressed in the back-and-forth chapters, is the juxtaposition of nature – and the curiosity underlying study of natural sciences – and the deadening, incurious machinery (mental and physical) of terror and destruction.

Germans will never be free of World War II, whatever genocides before and after have riven other countries. There continue to be no end of books and movies, Doerr's included, mining that war's terrible drama, its legacy still darkly encumbered, restless. But *All the Light We Cannot See* may offer a vantage from which suffering is finally encouraged, at least, toward rest.

Some miscellaneous recommended short story and essay collections:

Eula Biss, *Notes from No Man's Land* (essays)

Jhumpa Lahiri, *Unaccustomed Earth* (short stories)

Barry Lopez, *Desert Notes* (essays)

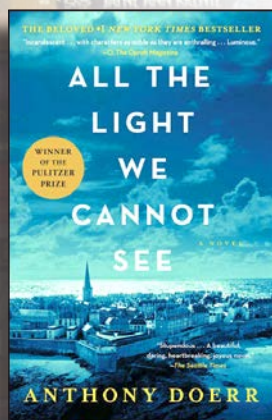
Colum McCann, *Fishing the Sloe-Black River* (short stories)

Susan Orlean, *The Bullfighter Checks Her Make-up* (essays/profiles)

John McPhee, *Silk Parachute* (essays)

Kim Stanley Robinson, *The Best of* (short stories)

George Saunders, *The Tenth of December* (short stories)



And More Good Reads

You Don't Have to Say You Love Me

by Sherman Alexie

Reviewed by Loren Cruden

Over the years I've read a lot of Sherman Alexie's output: poetry, stories, novels. He's no doubt the literary world's most widely known American Indian. And given his penchant for outspoken autobiography, one would think him the most thoroughly known too. But his memoir *You Don't Have to Say You Love Me* gives both a wider and deeper vantage.

The book, with its poems and short chapters, contains his usual biting, funny, painful window into what it was like for him, growing up on "the rez," but this time it orbits around Alexie's fraught relationship with his intensely complex mother. Her death seems to have tapped Alexie's psyche open like an egg, and this book is what spilled out.

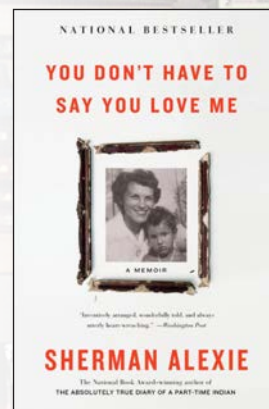
"I am an Indian trying to be unashamed," he says, and the reader feels that he might like us all to be unashamed, which was not an intention particularly projected by his previous books. He still calls himself an "anger-junkie" and "bitter son" but over and over in this book one feels his heart unclench, tears fall. His usual blistering full-court press lifts to a breakaway move of transcendent grace and reach: He becomes a writer airborne, unguarded.

Though he still can't resist performing. Nonetheless, it feels spacious. He says things like, "I am greatly amused by the white folks who believe that being Indian means you automatically fit like a puzzle piece into the jigsaw of your family and tribe." And then adds, "I'm even more amused by

the Indians who believe that too." Even more expansively inclusive is an observation that, "Perhaps everybody, indigenous and not, lives on their own kind of reservation." It is no small thing for the serially wounded to acknowledge the suffering of others.

By the time he was a teenager Alexie, with astute parental consent, began forging his own path, off the Spokane reservation, building "a ladder out of the bones of my fallen family in order to climb to safety." These turned out to be game-changing choices for an oddball Indian kid, going to a White school, becoming an urban Indian in Seattle, distancing himself from a mother who was "wildly intelligent, arrogant, opinionated, intimidating, and generous with her time and spirit." A woman of layers and contradictions and wrenching polarities, like her son, who admits: "I'm the child with all her vanity and rage."

Alexie was a hydrocephalic baby and a bipolar adult, and very smart, sensitive and self-directed ("Self-preservation was my religion."). I have the feeling no other mom but his could've handled him – and let him go. "And I realized that my mother, Lilian, had dreamed me into being. And that I had dreamed her, my mother, into being. And that she and I would keep dreaming each other into being." Which sounds like a powerful invitation toward forgiveness.



LaRose, by Louise Erdrich

Reviewed by Loren Cruden

Louise Erdrich's novels have begun reminding me of John Irving's, only Native American (with an occasional German immigrant tossed in). Both authors are wily with plot, eccentric with characters, full of back-story tangents (especially Erdrich), and they plunge the reader from comedy into tragedy and back with stunning alacrity. Both also slip recurring elements into their books. With Irving it's wrestling and bears. Erdrich's thing is priests and bawdy old ladies.

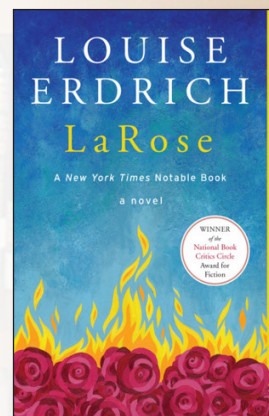
Injustice and hardship, since historical and persistent, are readily at hand in indigenously-contexted stories, but Erdrich does not take literary shortcuts. Her characterizations are richly developed, sidestepping stereotype.

LaRose, her latest novel, as usual bounces back and forth in time. The central focus is on two families – one Indian, one mixed – locked together in grief. The father in one family accidentally shoots his best friend's son. As reparation, in the old way, he and his wife give their own young son as replacement. Complex consequences ensue.

LaRose feels like a culmination or maturation of themes in her previous books, addressing retribution, revenge and estrangement as if Erdrich's fifteenth novel crests a literary and spiritual hilltop of perspective. But there are plenty of spiky, even slapstick, bits along the way. "Nola heard the command [to sit down] with a grape in her cheek. She turned, opened her mouth to give a dignified piece of her mind, and out it flew, exactly like a glob of green snot-spit, landing on the mother's broad pink nose." These ridiculous moments remind me not only of Irving, but of Mark Helprin and Sherman Alexie also, writers who intuit that high drama is ever only a slippery step away from comedy.

There's a seasoned grace to Erdrich's style that does justice to all her characters; even when it goes against the grain, there's an inclination toward redemption. "Somehow the fall had not killed him but fixed him, pushing everything back together. That's how it felt." A graciousness.

Loren Cruden's fiction, nonfiction and poetry can be found at Meyer's Falls Market in Kettle Falls, and at lorenbooks.com.



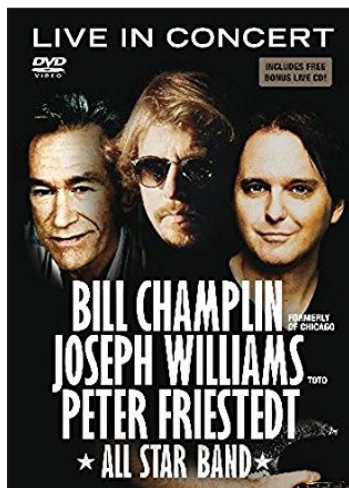
LISTEN UP

Champlin, Williams and Friestedt: West Coast Rock

Reviewed by Michael Pickett

Some sounds never regain a ton of popularity, but are timeless just the same. The West Coast Sound that draws from sounds (and members) of Toto, Chicago, Mr. Mister and others is a fantastic and classic combination of pop, rock and jazz as pioneered by some of the greater musicians of the '70s and '80s.

While this sound took a beating at the hands of post-punk plunksters who didn't let not being able to sing or play very well stop them, it



managed to grab a massive cult following in Europe, Indonesia and the hearts of musicians who loved artists who could actually play and sing.

Toto's Joseph Williams and ex-Chicago baritone Bill Champlin had a huge part in crafting that sound in its heyday, and they've teamed up over the years with other power players to bring more of that sound to CDs and – in this case – to the stage.

With Champlin Williams

Friestedt: Live In Concert, the duo once again joined with guitarist/composer Peter Friestedt, laying down a fantastic live set that combines their own material ("Goin' Home") and slamming classics penned for their other bands ("After the Love Has Gone," "Hard Habit to Break") in a nearly flawless DVD that captures a bunch of what is so great about the West Coast Sound.

The melody and harmony draw enough from jazz to go well beyond the I-IV-V progressions that underpin lots of rock. In short, this is a great cross-section of material from some of the greater players you've heard (but probably don't know their names). Grab *Champlin Williams Friestedt: Live In Concert* from your favorite music seller today.

Black Happy Albums Get the Vinyl Treatment

Reviewed by Michael Pickett

When I moved to the Pacific Northwest in the early '90s, everything was blowing up. Some bands were good, lots weren't, and some of the best bands didn't get nearly the recognition their sound and ability deserved.

Black Happy was somewhere in the middle. Locally and regionally, they got a huge following, but never saw the kind of recognition as, say, Mudhoney or Candlebox. The fact that people have been clamoring for Black Happy reunion shows and keeping their albums alive is a testament to the fantastic, improbable sound that the band created quite unexpectedly.

By adding a horn section mostly as a joke, they took on a slammin' funk sound that made their first two albums, *Friendly Dog Salad* and

Peghead, regional classics 23 years later. With that in mind, the band once again has heard long-time fan wishes and is putting both albums out on vinyl.

Vinyl treatment is the perfect thing here. This wasn't a "beep boop" electronic band. It was a rock band with horns, and songs like "Garlic," the blazing "Such Much Suck" and the still-killer "Shoveljerk" sound so made for vinyl that it would be a crime not to hear them that way.

If you want to connect with a vital, crowd-funded and cool current Black Happy



project, check out the many packages they have still open at indiegogo.com/projects/black-happy-friendly-dog-salad-peghead-vinyl#. Not only is this an opportunity to hear some of the greatest music to come

out of the Pacific Northwest, but it lets you get your hands dirty helping these guys put together these album reissues (and other fun goodies included in the process).

Stream Pickett music free on Apple Music, Spotify, Rhapsody and Beats. Just search "Pickett magnetic feedback" and enjoy a whole album's worth of music!

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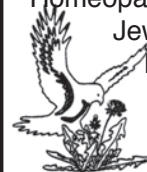
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Along the Mountain Path: The Pause That Refreshes

By Sarah Kilpatrick, E.R.Y.T.

1.2 yogah cittavrtti nirodhah: “Yoga is the cessation of movements in the consciousness.”

3.10 tasya prasantavahita samskarat: “The restraint of rising impressions brings about an undisturbed flow of tranquility.”

– Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, translated by B.K.S. Iyengar



I recently attended “The Transformation to Tranquility,” a Yoga workshop with Lynne Minton at the Moscow Yoga Center in Moscow, Idaho. We examined Sutras 3.9, 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12, which detail working with transitions of the mind, “the study of the space between the rising subliminal impressions and restraint. This is called “parinamah.”

I found it a useful reference when Lynne talked about Sutra 1.2, and discussed the word “nirodhah,” which means “peace of mind.” “Ni” to pause, “ro” to pull down or draw deep into our consciousness, and “dhah” to smooth out.” We catch our rising thought, draw it in, and smooth it out. Of course, we also did a lot of focused asana!

Breath is the bridge between the body and the mind, which is why movement with the flow of breath is so powerful in the practice. Learning to watch the breath, without jumping in to control it, takes practice. When we befriend our breath and observe its movements, flowing into poses is a bit like surfing, skillfully riding a larger force. When we tune in to our breath, we find that there is a slight pause at the end of each exhalation, and one at the top of each inhalation. Tranquility flows in the pause.

A nice way to work with “the space” or “pause” is to bring this awareness into simple sun salutations. It can be so tempting to just muscle through sun salutes, without truly reaping the peace that is inherent in all asana.

Come into Tadasana, watching the breath, and observe the pause at the top of the inhalation and at the end of the exhalation. Fold into Uttanasana. Pause and observe the breath. Step or jump to high plank, observe the pause, lower to low plank (or place the knees down, lift the lower legs, and come into a plank). Lower to the floor. Pause here before pressing up into Cobra or Upward Facing Dog pose. Pause, then press up and back into Downward Facing Dog pose. Inhale, and step or jump to Uttanasana on the wave of your exhalation. Pause. Inhale up to Tadasana. Stand in the Mountain and observe the flow of your breath. Find the tranquility in the pause. Repeat!

We can take this technique into all of our poses, finding pauses along the way, not hurrying to some imaginary destination, but enjoying the ride. We can also bring this parinamah into our lives, practicing nirodhah. Catch that “rising subliminal impression,” draw it down and in, and smooth

it out! Remember that sometimes silence is the best response. Peace is where you find it, and you can find it in the pause at the end of each part of the breath.

Speaking of pauses, the winter holidays are a good time to pause (after the madness!) and reflect on the possibilities for tranquility in our lives. The journey toward Yoga is always inward. It is the journey from the self (separate) to the Self (connected). We all share the same breath, water and earth. Everyone wants to be understood, loved, listened to and respected. We can agree to disagree, but remember the pause. As this year comes to an end, may we find a way to live in Namaste. This is a beautiful interpretation which was given to me by a beloved student, many years ago:

“Namaste: I honor the place within you in which the entire universe resides; I honor the place within you of love, of light, of truth, of peace; I honor the place within you where when you are in that place within you, and I am in that place within me, there is only one of us.”

Happy New Year!

Sarah practices and teaches at Mt. Path Yoga studio, 818 E. Columbia Ave., Colville.

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Threads of Feathers

By Tina Wynecoop

While growing up in western Washington suburbia I figured I would marry a farmer/rancher some day. I left it at that – no angst, or longing, or desire to hurry the process along – just pure curiosity about whom this person would be.

I found my rancher/farmer on the Spokane Indian Reservation. By then he had moved on from cattle ranching to mining and logging. (I should have been more specific in my outlining for the future.) Still, my farm-wife prophecy has been fulfilled by taking care of cats, dogs, red squirrels, an owl, a hummingbird, goats, mason bees, walking stick insects – and chickens.

Our chickens have a house with an enclosed pen. Being new to chicken ranching I chose Rhode Island Reds, which are known for producing really nice eggs. Little did I know that chickens don't need a rooster for egg production. There was a rooster in the bunch, and as he reached adulthood his behavior became impolite and aggressive. One afternoon our five-year-old son went out to gather eggs. We heard his cries.

Before we could rescue him from whatever was causing such terror in this otherwise very self-sufficient and brave little guy, he came running back home clutching eggs. His dad asked him what had happened to make him scream and he answered, "The rooster was attacking me and I didn't know what to do, so I prayed. Then I heard God say, 'Don't just stand there praying, Dummy! RUN! RUN!'"

There continued to be lessons learned from these feathered descendants of dinosaurs. We live among the pine and fir in eastern Washington. Coyotes, cougars, raccoons and bobcats share the same natural landscape.

One hard lesson was that care-taking poultry with tender solicitude can be deadly: I foolishly let the chickens out of their pen to range during the day since their enclosure was devoid of vegetation and bugs and I felt sorry for them. Coyote noticed this free-for-all-management style and helped himself to one of the hens. Tonka, our golden retriever, barked a warning and we both set out to chase the coyote and rescue that which, in our minds, was not rightfully his.

Escaping into the brushy tangles with his prize the coyote dropped her. She appeared to have fainted from fright. I left the crime scene with the limp hen while coyote and dog duked it out. Our brave Tonka came home victorious – his rapidly wagging tail spoke volumes about the part he played in the rescue.

The hen did not revive. The boys and I had an impromptu biology lesson on chicken anatomy (dissection) right then and there in the front yard –

followed by a solemn burial. The skeletal structure of the domestic chicken, *Gallus gallus*, closely resembles that of the dinosaur's anatomy. There is a direct link between the two species. Dinosaurs are extinct, but what follows is a recent experience involving one of their descendants.

I was raising hatchery chicks once we got rid of the source of fertilized eggs. The chicks needed a mother hen to feed and protect them and guide them to water and shelter. "Sheltering them beneath her wings" is what a mother hen does instinctively and with remarkable selflessness. My store-bought chicks had to put up with a human being fulfilling their mothering needs for several months.

Eventually, having attained the maturity of teenagers, they were capable of living on their own with the other chickens in the house specially designed

stripped of feathers and skin. Her eye was severely damaged. "Put her out of her misery" whispered a practical voice (mine). Then compassion and hope overrode practicality.

Phyllis moved into our home. She settled right in and lived in a cozy basket in the dining room. We fed her and doted over her when we weren't at work. Our jobs necessitated being away during the day and we never knew what we'd see on our return.

Her skin and feathers began to renew. Her eye opened and she could see out of it. Her legs took a month longer to strengthen and function. By Christmas she could hobble over to the Christmas tree, where she loved to sit and peck at its colorful lights. She also liked sitting on my lap and having her feathers stroked.

Winter was exceptionally mild that year and without the usual snow covering I could take her outside in her basket and help her find bugs and worms hibernating in the leaf litter. One morning while my husband was cooking breakfast Phyllis announced her presence with a loud "Cock-a-doodle-doo." She was a he. From then on we called him Phillip.

As the rooster's legs strengthened and we could spend more time outdoors foraging, I noticed he kept gravitating toward his former home. He seemed ready to move back in with his feathered family.

I tried to closely supervise the reunion. The other chickens sensed he was still vulnerable and attacked him while we were at work. This time, returning him to his basket for recovery was not the arrangement my husband

was willing to put up with. He suggested getting it over with and shooting Phil. I disagreed.

With additional house-pitality his health was re-restored and Phil was able to hold his own among his relatives. He walked. He fit in with the group. At bedtime he was able to jump to the roosting perch with the others.

In the spring I watched Phillip hop over a little pine tree his same height. He has since fathered some of his own chicks. His nape feathers flow beautifully. There is no sign that he had been scalped and blinded.

Another Christmas came and went. Phil did not get invited in to spend time under our family's tree. But a wreath hung on the chicken-house door honored the Creator of all things, including the dinosaurs and their descendants – and caretakers. This is the Creator who guided a terrified little boy to escape by prodding him with the sharp admonition to "Don't just stand there praying, Dummy! RUN, RUN!"

The rancher/farmer's wife continues to appreciate the adventure-filled unfolding of her childhood dream/vision.



for them. Several chicken generations later, which by then included another rooster, our banty hen, Yellow-legs, hatched her own clutch. (I was relieved I didn't have to be the surrogate mom this time. The responsibilities are enormous.)

One of Yellow-legs's babies distinguished herself from her siblings with her pure white feathers and by sitting on her mother's back at bedtime instead of seeking warmth and protection beneath her wings.

With the splendid mothering taking place, all the chicks thrived. But one evening, when it was time to close up the chicken house, it was apparent that Phyllis (the white one) wasn't able to jump up to roost alongside the rest of her family. Night after night she remained on the floor. One of her sisters stayed at her side, placing a protective wing around her. Phyllis's legs had ceased to function. During the day, she navigated by using her wings as crutches while she "walked" on her knee joints.

For reasons I don't understand chickens will harass and attack one of their own who is down and out. I found Phyllis near death – her skull

Creating Your World: Setting

By Linda Bond

When writing a large story and creating a fictional world, whether it is part of the real world of the present, or located in the past, or set in some near or distant future, your goal, even before you start writing, is to learn as much as you can about your chosen setting. The more you know and can mention or describe in detail, the more realistic and believable your story can be. And that's where research comes in.

But just how deep will you have to dig to discover all the details you'll need for your setting? There are a number of factors that you may want to consider and we'll cover some of the more essential ones here.

Locale

You'll need to choose a location for your story. Things to consider:

- Large backdrop: Will this be on Planet Earth or Mars or somewhere else in space?
- On Earth: What continent(s) and country(s) will be involved?
- Countries: For each country you include, what cities or towns or other places will be the primary ones where your narrative takes place?
- Cities/Towns/Neighborhoods: Develop details about the city or town in your story and perhaps a particular neighborhood and maybe even a house or apartment. For instance, if your story takes place in New York City, are your characters living in Manhattan? The upper east side?

Other unique locations:

- If your characters are traveling circus performers, you'll need to describe the circus and perhaps some of the cities they visit along the way.
- Or if a good part of your story takes place in a restaurant or a bar, you'll need to be able to describe such a locale accurately.
- How about outside? On a farm or in a forest?

As you can see, there are numerous potential scenes to describe in any story. And the more accurate your description, the more believable your story can be.

Historical Period (Time)

Though locales can be identified by name and a few details, no location stays the same over time. Here are some potential scenarios related to time:

- Historical eras: Your story may involve priests in the Middle Ages (like in a small town in *The Name of the Rose*), or artists during the Renaissance, or soldiers in the American Civil War.
- Modern era: Many stories take place during the last part of the 20th century and extend into this century, right up to the present.
- The future: Science fiction writers love the future, and why not? It offers the greatest freedom to improvise. Yet they still have to make sure their projections are realistic and don't put the reader off.

Geography & Environment

One of the ways to make your setting come to life is with details about the environment.

- Natural geography: This might include things like rivers, lakes, mesas, mountains and other landforms and topography, soil, forests, plants, even the rocks in the landscape.
- Human influences: Concrete dams, roads and buildings, steel or wooden bridges, and the shaped stone of monuments and cemeteries, for example, can bring important solidity to a narrative.
- Damages: A story may include the scars from mining or bombing, or things like

tornadoes or hurricanes. Even rampant agriculture can alter the land in ways that shape the story.

- Climate: Even before the debate about climate change became a big issue in the news, major changes were occurring in different periods of the past. In addition, certain parts of the world see cold temperatures and snow for long periods of time. Jungles have high humidity; deserts are dry and hot; every part of the planet has its own unique climate to be considered.

Cultural Considerations

Who are the people in your story?

- Are they largely of one race or ethnic background? Does your story take place in a city like Seattle or New York where ethnic neighborhoods are the norm?
- Culture is not just about demographics, but also things like holidays and celebrations, religious rites, expectations of generations of people (older and younger).
- Culture affects clothing, hair styles, food preferences, and myriad other details of daily life.

As you can see, developing your setting may be a somewhat daunting challenge, but one that is well worth the effort. Do solid research and you'll reap the benefits in a believable story.

Linda Bond is cofounder and leader of the Inland Northwest Writers Guild and Outreach Coordinator at Auntie's Bookstore in Spokane, WA. Write to her at lindathewriter@gmail.com.

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Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire

By Louanne Atherley

I am especially fond of this most iconic of Christmas carols. Just the mention of chestnuts evokes an image of Bob Cratchet with Tiny Tim on his shoulder, making their way through the streets amid holiday revelers, past the chestnut vendor on the corner.

I wish I could say that munching on chestnuts is equally pleasurable. Over the years I have tried roasting them both “on an open fire” and in the oven. Maybe it’s just the texture that fails to live up to my expectations of a nut. Although I did read that the Italians of Modena soak them in wine before roasting them. I may give it one more try, and see if wine helps.

I have, however, enjoyed chestnut puree as an ingredient in soup. My first mother-in-law

important role as a food staple. Early people relied on the chestnut for carbohydrates before the introduction of the potato. Chestnuts could be ground into flour and made into a gruel. During some ages in Europe they were considered a poverty food.

In many places chestnut vendors can still be found along city streets. The French use a sixteen-step process to create another Christmas tradition from chestnuts that they called *marron glacé*. Chestnuts can also be pureed and served in desserts.

At some point the phrase “old chestnut” came to mean something that had been heard so many times that it didn’t bear repeating. The origin of the phrase has been traced to an 1816 melodrama in which one of the

Marilyn’s Turkey Soup

Turkey carcass
3 TBSP flour
Water
¼ cup uncooked rice, washed
2 bay leaves
½ cup chopped celery
Salt
Leftover turkey meat, dressing and gravy
Pepper
2 cups fresh mushrooms, chopped
Generous pinch each marjoram, thyme and basil
1 lb. chestnuts (or canned chestnut puree)
1 can consommé or two cups chicken stock
½ cup cooking oil
Butter
3 TBSP Madeira

Remove all meat from carcass, break it up and put it in a pot with bay leaves, salt, pepper and herbs. Cover with water and simmer slowly for 3 to 4 hours. Strain through a sieve and reserve stock. It should amount to 1½ to 2 quarts.

If you are dealing with whole chestnuts, while the stock simmers, prepare them. With a sharp, pointed knife, cut the skin on the flat side of the nuts in a criss-cross fashion. In a large skillet, heat the cooking oil and cook the chestnuts over high heat for 4 or 5 minutes, shaking or stirring all the while. Drain and cool chestnuts until just cool enough to handle. With a sharp knife, remove shell and skin, place in a saucepan with consommé and cook until tender.

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a saucepan and stir in the 3 tablespoons of flour until smooth. Gradually stir in the reserved stock and bring to a boil. Add the rice, celery and additional salt and pepper to taste. Simmer gently until rice is cooked, about 25 or 30 minutes.

While that is cooking, sauté the mushrooms in a couple of tablespoons of butter for about 5 minutes and add them to the soup. Rub the chestnuts through a sieve (or open the canned chestnut puree) and add to the soup, along with diced turkey meat and any leftover dressing or gravy. Simmer gently until ready to serve. Just before serving, stir in the Madeira.

May your holidays be a cozy time filled with the spirit of chestnuts roasting, if not the real thing.

Although born into a farming family and raised on a meat and potatoes diet, Louanne Atherley has made exploring the diversity of foods from other cultures a lifelong passion.



was infamous for a turkey soup containing chestnut puree that she made at least four or five times despite mixed reviews from her family. She said she and her mother both “adored” the soup so she kept serving it.

On the much-folded and nearly transparent, hand-typed copy of the recipe she sent me, I have her final comment on the subject: “I refuse to make this soup ever again because Ed [her husband] doesn’t like it.” But I sided with my mother-in-law and grandmother-in-law in their appreciation of the soup. It is rich and hearty with a very satisfying, slightly sweet flavor thanks to the chestnuts.

Chestnuts come from the beech tree family and are found in Europe, Asia and America. In many parts of the world they played an

characters proclaims: “A chesnut, Captain, a chesnut ... Captain, this is the twenty-seventh time I have heard you relate this story, and you invariably said, a chesnut, till now.” In 1954, Bing Crosby published a Christmas album titled *Some Fine Old Chestnuts*, speaking of another Christmas icon.

Here is my former mother-in-law’s recipe. It is a great thing to do with leftover turkey. If you are not quite ready for turkey again, you might want to either freeze the carcass and some of the leftovers for soup later or make the stock and freeze it with the leftovers to be enjoyed later in the holiday season, maybe for Twelfth Night. It is festive. If you can’t manage the chestnut puree, it is still a pretty good turkey soup without it.

Christmas Stories on the Farm

By Michelle Lancaster

Someone asked me recently what made me want to become a farmer. I believe I was born that way – hugging and playing with strange dogs and cats any time I saw one. Dreaming of different animals, telling my first-grade teacher that I wanted to be a dolphin trainer. Working for a vet as a young adult and transitioning a few years later to “real world” experience over book learning.

I remember learning at age six that my family would be moving to the country. I had visions of being surrounded by animals on a farm, loving life. Sure enough, those dreams became true.

One Christmas Eve, settling onto my family's new farm, I (being ever-addicted to animals) received the perfect gift. I still remember the event well. Each year, our family followed a tradition of attending the Christmas Eve service at the Free Methodist Church in town, dripping wax as we each held a candle and sang “Silent Night” with a church full of people. Sometimes we drove around afterward to look at front yard lights and decorations in town.

Upon returning home, we always got to pick one – and only one – gift to open. I tell myself now that Christmas is not ultimately about gifts, but as a kid, it's hard to get past the excitement of opening a gift. This is a treat withheld for all but two very special days out of the year (Christmas and birthday). So sure, I had, prior to Christmas Eve night, thoroughly checked out each gift – weighing the pros and cons of each package. Strategically, which would be best to open? Not the largest one, for sure (there needs to be something exciting to open on Christmas morning, right?). Not the smallest one (need more thrill than that for the one singular gift of Christmas Eve to get me through until morning). So, I picked out one in my mind and went with my family to church.

When we got home, I ran in through the front door, through the kitchen, and slid onto the living room floor like I was scoring the winning run. “I want to open this one!” I yelled excitedly.

My parents ever-so-slowly walked into the kitchen and no further. “No,” they said.

Hmm, this was something new to experience in my young life – what did I do wrong? Aren't we allowed to pick one gift, any gift, to open?

Again they said, “No, you can't open that one!” I was beginning to get bummed out, and more than a little confused.

Suddenly, my siblings started laughing at me. I think they saw the confusion on my face and they all realized something I didn't – I had run right past my Christmas Eve gift without even

noticing it. Starting to clue in, I slowly walked back toward the kitchen, trying to figure out in my young mind what was going on (youngest siblings often fall prey to older siblings' antics, so I was wary, you see).

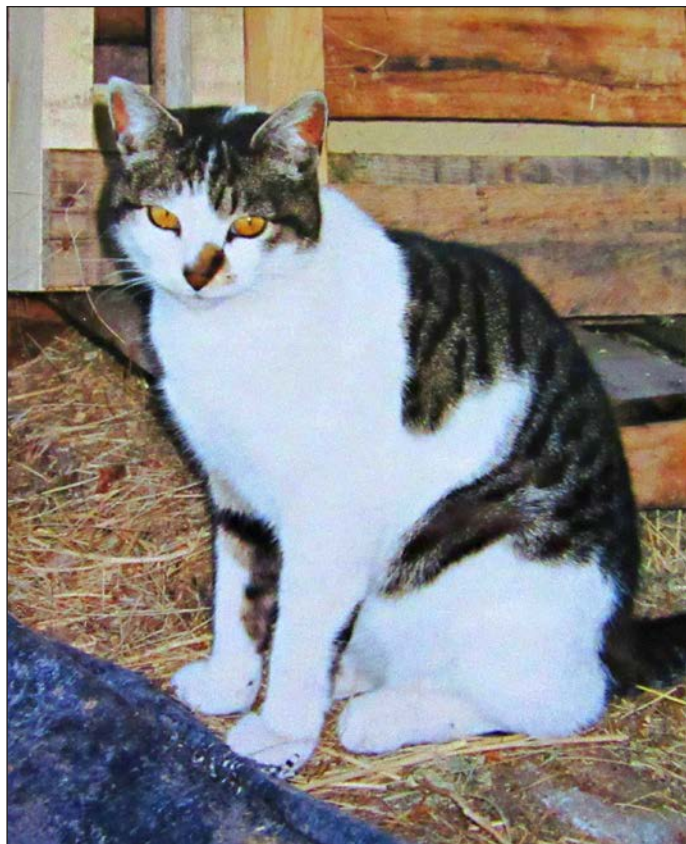
In the kitchen, right next to where I ran past, a large cage sat on the floor looking out of place. Inside, I spied two little kittens! One an orange tabby and the other a Holstein white with black tabby patches. “We had the owners keep them until today so that we could surprise you with a Christmas gift,” said my parents.

I dropped down to the cage, opened it up, and pulled the two soft kitties into my arms. I forgot all about “bought-en” gifts, as these kitties were so much better!

Buddy and Mittens, as I named them, became my barn pals for many years. The cats were – and still are – a good reminder of the value of well-thought gifts. I knew my parents cared about me because they took the time to pick out a really special gift. They knew me well enough to know that I would cherish these animals.

As I think of giving this Christmas season, I am reminded of a few very special gifts I have received over the years. Finding the right gift to show someone how you feel about them is difficult. I am always excited to find a gift I think the recipient will really appreciate. As an adult, I have transitioned from excitedly opening my own gifts to now watching my nieces and nephews and younger cousin open their gifts.

My tastes have changed, in that now my favorite gift is the gift of time together with my family. My happiest Christmas memories are with family. I eagerly anticipate the end of this month – when many of my family members join to celebrate Christ's birth and the joys of being together. We will share some sad reminiscing, thinking of the special people who no longer



are here on earth to share in this time together.

Then we'll go sledding, make hot chocolate (if the cow calves in time...), play games, pop popcorn for movie time, bake and cook all sorts of luscious foods, laugh, hug and enjoy. All on the same farm that I moved to when six years old.

Michelle Lancaster homesteads with her family on Old Dominion Mountain in Colville. She writes at Spiritedrose.wordpress.com.

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Imagination Blueprinting for Positive Action

By Daisy Pongrakthai

"Some describe what they see. I see what I describe."

~ Rev. Michael Beckwith, agapelive.com

Deep in the hibernation of winter's call lies the heart of imagination for new beginnings. Don't you just love the sound of being renewed and refreshed? Imagination calls us to that realm of our dreams. And this is the perfect time of year to dream for those fresh spring beginnings. So, let's pretend for a moment. Let's be children again. First, let's delve into an imagination exercise using our senses.

Imagine digging your hands into a barrel of crackers. Imagine seeing a beautiful sunrise. Imagine hearing "I love you." Imagine smelling fresh-baked bread. Imagine tasting your favorite dish. Imagine a pet or child running with love toward you.

Now see a sunset ... a beautiful waterfall ... reach out and touch it with your hands, cupping water to drink ... wade in the sandy waters below. Feel rain pattering on your jacket. Look up and see a rainbow. Walk up to the shore and feel the mossy forest floor at your feet. Makes you want to stay there!

Another great imagination exercise is to participate in guided meditations. These not only strengthen the imagination but also are considered by some to be very healing. The most powerful one I've participated in was a wounding exercise. Using the imagination, I was guided through how I was wounded in my life and how to work through it and transform it into a myth, namely

because we can change our views and beliefs – what's inside – regarding our past, adding in "for every cloud there is a silver lining," albeit a lesson, an acceptance, a forgiveness or a call to strengthen ourselves.

We are highly involved in the creation of our past and our future. What images we bring up can be on either end of the scale or in between regarding output. When I have a negative attitude, negative images result. The same goes with a positive attitude – positive images shine in my mind. Try it for yourself. *How we use our imaginations affect us and others.*

Now let's roam our imagination into the realms of needs: to solve a problem, accomplish a project or help someone. Choose one. (This practice can be exercised anytime for whatever need there may be.) Let's take a journey. Breathe a couple of deep breaths.

If a project, see your project in all its fullness completed. Take some time to *sense* it with all your will, hear it, taste it, smell it, feel what it's like in its fruition. Then turn your favorite music on and dance and sing it out! A myriad of cultures have accompanying kinesthetic practices that have proven results of the need at hand. (Plus, I think it's sheer fun!)

If you need a solution to a problem, see the end result of beauty, the best outcome for all, and what that *feels* like. Again, use all senses to wrap around the result, then play music and dance it out. To help someone, imagine them well or that their need is coming to them. Bring them a flower in your mind to their heart. Imagine seeing the success of their need. Send a heart-wish. Use the kinesthetics. Finally, release your intentions like seeds sown into earth for germination: "Let it be. There will be an answer."

Another set of practical exercises are what I call *Patterning* and *Blueprinting*. It's like creating a framework to fill. First, what do I want to accomplish today? I roughly jot that down. Next, I look at the tasks like a puzzle to arrange. I bounce back and forth mixing and matching different scenarios and possibilities of works until something really clicks – cha-ching! That's it. Then I close my eyes and sequence the different project pieces through my mind's eye, like taking a journey. After they're "set" in time, I see the day with all the sequenced projects as templates of images, and really *feel* what it takes to accomplish them. In this way I create a Blueprint, or a plan for the day.

Another way to look at Patterning is to put your day together like planning a trip. You can draw up in your imagination patterns for each week and month as well. Just like building a quality home with an architectural blueprint, so mental blueprints are the drivers of daily, monthly, yearly and life attainments.

What this patterning also does is give the mind something to latch onto and set the body in motion. Many times, in using this daily patterning method, I find myself utterly propelled to fill in the blueprint created in the morning. It also curbs wandering and lostness, especially for those who have more free time. Moreover, I find this kind of patterning to a blueprint is key to motivating the discipline it takes to complete a project, but in a fun way. At last, be sure to celebrate your accomplishments!

Reviving our childhood gift of imagination can refresh and renew our life on a daily basis and help others, hence our world. In summary:

- Daily, use vivid images to solve problems, create or finish a project, resolve a conflict, help someone or improve yourself.
- Sense the desired outcome with all senses with intensity, *all of your being*.
- Use the kinesthetics of dance, song and music to assist in the creation and fruition of your goals at hand.
- Pattern and blueprint in your mind's eye, organizing actions on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis.
- Celebrate progress and accomplishments!

Want to change the world? Practice imagination.

See more From the Inside Out on Daisy's blog: www.thepartyinside.com.

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Celestial Tones

By Gabriele von Trapp

In Germany, during my early childhood, my mother had prepared for me to live with relatives in the small Bavarian village of Weidenthal. It was a far better arrangement than to continue to stay in the orphanage where I had lived the year before. The institution couldn't offer a child of almost five the opportunity to explore the freedoms of nature nor the safety and security of a family environment.

Weidenthal was the classic Bavarian village with a Catholic church on one end and a Protestant church on the other. The main road was cobbled and hugged a swirling, gurgling brook that ran through the town. The bumpy street was barely wide enough to let two cars pass and the cobbles mostly saw pedestrians or cyclists on their way to the butcher or the baker. Grassy hills rose rapidly and steeply on both sides, creating a winding valley for the town. Houses and flower gardens stepped upward quickly. An occasional path emerged leading to the deep, dark, Schwatzwald beyond.

The two-story home where I was placed was on a hillside just on the edge of town, with train tracks running in front, an old wooden barn, outside laundry and a scattering of chickens. Occasionally a stork nested on the chimney. My mother's relatives, a family of three, lived upstairs and the grandparents occupied the lower level. The family daughter, Ute, was a year younger than me and not inclined to spend much time outdoors.

My first memorable moment was sitting in the barnyard watching a fuzzy yellow chick darting about looking for a nibble. He found a worm and pulled on it with all his might to extract the long wriggling thing from the earth. With success the tiny bird gobbled the whole thing down in one effort and then spontaneously pooped. I thought it was the funniest sight, never having seen anything poop before; in one end and out the other.

A hillside became my favorite spot, under a prehistoric cherry tree whose ruby red cherries I would devour by the handful, only slowing after about an hour or two. I had never tasted anything so wondrous before. Curiosity and contentedness dissected a cherry, revealing a tiny writhing worm inside. I divided another and found it hosted a little white worm, and I wondered how many I had eaten that day.

Milky, billowing clouds would carry my imaginations on soft, warm breezes which gently stroked the tall grasses with whispering, rushing sounds. Lying in my bliss I would occasionally catch sight of an old woman walk-

ing out of the black forest carrying a basket of mushrooms and balancing firewood on her head, gently bouncing in step with the rhythm of the long, limber, bundled branches which stretched far beyond her as she descended the hillside.

The barn beckoned my curiosity. It was an old, gray, weathered building with doors that hadn't been opened for some time. I could peek through the lathes and imagine the dimmed mysteries within. Though I was never forbidden, I found myself sneaking inside.

The floorboards creaked as I slowly moved through the darkened space. A sight stopped me in my tracks. It was a large wooden rocking horse, like you would see on a carousel. He was a dashing ennobled stallion, saddled and bridled, ready to be mounted.

I spent hours riding him, rocking and swaying, imagining the fairytales I had never heard before. The floorboards groaned in continuous rhythm as I wagged the steed, losing myself in space and time. Shrouds of dust would rise to meet the sunbeams that found their way through the breaches, bequeathing the swirling bridal veils that captivated me.

My room was in the front of the house where the rail tracks came surprisingly close. Each night as I lay alone in the down-feathered bed, the train would chug noisily by, whistling. The room would rumble and lights would flicker on the walls above me. I would hide under the thick down blanket which felt as high as a mountain.

Once the train passed I would peep out of the covers and comfort myself by gazing at a small picture on the wall. It was of a mother tucking her sweet child into bed, holding the child's hands in prayer, an angel standing over them with arms and wings outspread. I still have the picture, though it is worn and fragile. It brings me comfort to know how a child's yearning found peace and solace in that image so long ago. A child that deeply longed to be with her mother and had not the chance for years before.

On my first Sunday morning the family was unexpectedly quiet and solemn, moving thoughtfully through the morning routine. Suddenly I heard the most glorious sound – church bells ringing! I ran outside and the echoing tones reflected from the hillsides, proclaiming melodious majesty in every direction. The resonant chiming exultantly blanketed the hills. It was heavenly! The vibrant tones dove deep into my heart and I felt joy and jubilation,



being moved to tears with overwhelming emotion. The proclamation seated itself eternally in my mind and deep within my soul. It was truly the voice of the angelics singing out from their empyrean thrones.

I shared these stories with my three children when they were younger. They sparingly showed interest. The response was usually a casual "cool, mom." The treasure of these memories was seemingly only mine.

In late spring of last year, my now-adult son, Eric, invited me to the campus of Gonzaga University in Spokane. We had been celebrating my day of birth of a long time ago. He showed me the walkways he had recently laid with cobbled pavers and the landscapes he planted throughout the campus, which were now blooming in layered glory. It was a serene day and the campus was nearly empty, with students on break. We strolled and talked and rested often, taking in the sweet scents and visual delights of unfurling flowers, through winding cobbled pathways laid with precision and care.

As we walked and talked we came upon a stately cathedral and he stalled his steps and lingered there.

Within a few moments, church bells began chiming, announcing the consummation of a union blessed inside. I looked into his shining eyes and I knew he had remembered the stories of my childhood, intentionally gifting me the moment and blessing the sacred memories I had shared. The ends of his lips curled upward boyishly as he passed me the warmest gaze I had experienced in a lifetime.

We stood there, together, in a bond never to be broken, surrounded by the celestial bell tones of angels announcing to hill and heaven the love they had come to witness that day.

After 28 years in Stevens County, Gabriele von Trapp is relocating to Deer Park in Spokane County with her memories, dreams and reflections in tow.

Meetings Like This

By Frank Bures

Imagine, if you will, the worst meeting of your life: The clock moves more slowly than the laws of physics should allow. Garbled strands of jargon fall from the mouths of those around you. Whatever vague goals had been uttered before the meeting are forgotten, left far behind, like roadkill on a long ride to nowhere.

That trapped feeling is probably as old as the first tribal gathering. And judging by some books for sale today (*Meetings Suck*, *Death by*

Meeting), not much has changed in the intervening millennia.

Meetings may be one of the most maligned and dreaded of humanity's rituals, but they are not going away. Nor should they. Every week, some 1.2 million Rotarians meet around the world in an effort to make it a little better. Every year, meetings, conferences and conventions across the United States inject around \$280 billion into the economy. And every day, millions of

people meet at their workplace to try to move their company toward some goal.

Clearly there is some reason we keep on meeting like this. Why haven't Skype, FaceTime and other technologies made face-to-face meetings obsolete?

As a writer, I always find meeting in person far more informative than talking to people on the phone. It has a value that's hard to quantify. One study did show that groups who met face to face came up with a larger number of creative ideas, with more variety and quality, than those who met via video or voice.

Then why do we feel so tortured, so shackled by meetings? Why do they often feel so pointless?

These days, I attend a lot of meetings, but they are mostly small and purposeful and of my own design. But in college, I belonged to several campus groups whose main purpose seemed to be to not get things done. When I was an English teacher in Tanzania, our school's staff meetings lasted several hours; any religious gathering lasted much longer.

During such meetings, I sometimes entered a trance-like state – a bureaucratic stupor – that passed for attention and preserved my sanity. Occasionally, though, it did backfire. At our school's graduation, I heard my name from a distance, then realized I was being called upon to stand up and say in Swahili, "Praise the Lord." In my daze, what I said was, "The Lord has gone away on a journey."

Many of us share this ambivalence about meetings. On the one hand, they are essential. On the other, they are essentially a waste of time. Al Pittampalli, author of *Read This Before Our Next Meeting: How We Can Get More Done*, says there's a reason for this. Pittampalli is a former executive at Ernst & Young where he became so frustrated by how little was accomplished in endless staff meetings, standing meetings and status meetings that he decided to try to unravel the problem.

"I found myself sitting in a lot of bad meetings," Pittampalli recalled when I phoned him. "I couldn't quite understand why so much of our time seemed to be wasted. When I voiced this to people, they seemed to feel it was the cost of doing business. But I refused to accept that."

Pittampalli's research led him to a counterintuitive conclusion: Most meetings are *designed* to waste time.

"The meetings I would attend lacked any kind of clear purpose," he said. "It took me a long time to figure out that this was intentional. This lack of an outcome to meetings is not a bug, it's a feature. It allows us to escape the hard work of making decisions, which is essentially what the whole meeting problem is all about."

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We hold meetings because we know we should consult our co-workers before making decisions. Making decisions is hard, and decisions have consequences. So we hold meetings to postpone decisions, rather than to make them. We call a meeting to discuss a new marketing campaign rather than to decide to launch that campaign. If we did the latter, it would be a clear outcome. We would know whether the meeting had been successful.

This is why, by one estimate, half the time spent in the 11 million meetings held in the United States every day is wasted, and why workers are said to “lose” an average of four workdays a month to meetings.

So meetings *are* a waste of time.

Actually, Pittampalli says no – in fact, they are quite the opposite.

“I’m all for the idea of in-person debates and conversations,” he says. “We’re designed to reason with each other in person. There’s this great feedback loop that happens when you talk something out. You say something and the other person interprets it and responds verbally or nonverbally, and you get this really rapid exchange that can help you get to good ideas quickly.”

Certainly, many meetings are destined to fail. Even when goals are set out clearly, it doesn’t mean those goals will be met or that those decisions will be made. And there are other reasons your meetings can get stuck in productive purgatory.

Someone in the group, for instance, may be heeding the advice of a pamphlet called the *Simple Sabotage Field Manual*. This handbook, put out in 1944 by the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (a precursor to the CIA), suggested ways ordinary citizens could sabotage a hostile power. Under the section “General Interference with Organizations and Production,” the OSS identified techniques for bogging down organi-

zations – including “Insist on doing everything through ‘channels,’” “Talk as frequently as possible and at great length,” “Illustrate your ‘points’ by long anecdotes and accounts of personal experiences,” and “Bring up irrelevant issues as frequently as possible.”

Sound familiar?

If you are concerned about workplace saboteurs, you can consult the 2015 book *Simple Sabotage: A Modern Field Manual for Detecting and Rooting Out Everyday Behaviors That Undermine Your Workplace*. Many of those unhelpful behaviors start out as good things – trying to get input and follow procedures. But when they are seen as ends in themselves, they start to bog things down. Recognizing (and calling out) this kind of sabotage is a first step. Beyond that, keep expectations clear, don’t let fear of risks and failure guide you, and set deadlines for committees to complete their work. (Also: Never, ever CC everyone on an email.)

“...a group’s collective intelligence bears no relation to the average or maximum intelligence of its members.”

Other times, however, it is not the sabotage that is simple, but the group itself. There is a metric known as collective intelligence, which is the ability of a small group to function well and to complete the tasks set before it. Researchers have found that a group’s collective intelligence bears no relation to the average or maximum intelligence of its members.

Rather, it’s related to those members’ social sensitivity. The study, published in *Science*, found that groups with more women were more collectively intelligent and that “groups where a few people dominated the conversation were less collectively intelligent than those with a more equal distribution of conversational turn-taking.”

So even if you’re the smartest one at the meeting, wait your turn. If you try to ram your brilliance down other people’s throats, you’ll make the whole group dumber.

Most of us are familiar with this dynamic in mundane, everyday meetings. But it can also be a problem in critically important meetings such as peace talks, says Daniel Shapiro, a professor of psychology at Harvard University and the author of *Negotiating the Nonnegotiable: How to Resolve Your Most Emotionally Charged Conflicts*.

“The term ‘peace talks’ can be deceptive, because the most important part of the talks is listening,” he told me. “The reason peace talks fail is that everyone talks and no one listens. And if people don’t feel heard, they’ll say, ‘You don’t know us. You don’t know our pain.’ Once those at the table feel their stories truly have been heard, you can begin to move forward.”

The stakes of most of our meetings are not nearly as high as peace in the Middle East. But lessons can still be learned from those meetings. Shapiro advocates thinking through what he calls “the four P’s” before any meeting starts. Purpose: What are we trying to achieve? Process:

How is this meeting going to function? People: Who should be there? And Product: What needs to happen by the end of the meeting?

He also cautions those in emotionally charged meetings to avoid what he calls “vertigo,” in which they get so consumed by a conflict that they can’t think beyond it. But in the end, sitting across from the other side is the only way everyone can move forward together. “When you’re building something as fragile as peace,” Shapiro says, “nothing beats human interaction.”

Frank Bures is the author of The Geography of Madness, a book about cultural syndromes, and a columnist for The Rotarian Magazine, where this article originally appeared. Reprinted with permission and gratitude to the author.



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The Nitty Gritty of Writing a Business Plan

By Barry Lamont

If you want to see an entrepreneur's eyes glaze over and roll back in their head, just say, "You need to develop a business plan."

Entrepreneurs want to start right now so they can realize their dreams about how successful they will be. But in reality, time spent planning your business venture will greatly improve the odds that you will realize your dreams. You can't build a house without a good set of plans; building a business is no different.

Small businesses fail because of shortcomings in their planning. Plans must be realistic, as accurate as available information allows, and have well-thought-out projections for the future. An initial business plan is a key factor in deciding whether your business will be viable or what you need to adjust to make it viable. In addition, a business plan is a necessary tool to acquiring business capital, attracting investors, and setting and measuring performance goals.

There are two types of business plans. The first is your plan that is usually brief but lays down the basics of the business with a focus on financial analysis, marketing and competition, operations, and future goals. This is the type of plan you develop when you are self-funding your startup expenses and operating costs. It is a document

that is internal to the business and should be updated on a regular timetable to measure progress toward sales and growth goals along with financial status.

The second type is a public plan that is shared with potential investors and lenders. This plan is much more detailed so that someone external to your business could read it and understand the purpose of the business plus the expenses (equipment, supplies, overhead) and potential revenues.

I am not aware of any bank or loan program that will loan money to a startup without seeing a business plan. Now, "detailed" does not mean something the length of a novel. No one wants to read a twenty-page plan full of editorials or "stories." But the necessary details can include attachments such as photos of equipment, business locations, buildings and products, and copies of licenses or permits and supporting financial information.

Your internal plan can be a free-form document and guide for you when starting up. For this month's article we'll concentrate on the public business plan that can be used to attract investors or convince lenders of your viability. It has three basic components: business description,

marketing plan and financial plan.

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

This portion of the plan should include the following:

- Business status as either a startup, expansion or existing
- Legal form as a sole proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company (LLC) or S Corporation
- The business type, such as retail, service, manufacturing or other

After this intro, briefly explain why you are or want to be in the business and your qualifications. Outline your short- and long-term goals for the business. State what your product or service is and its features, who your suppliers will be and what outside support will be provided, such as legal, accounting, insurance. State how the business will be managed and the experience of the proposed manager/managers. Summarize the personnel/labor plans, and what facilities and equipment are currently owned or leased or will be needed.

MARKETING PLAN

In just about any business, the key to success is making the potential customers know who you are and to encourage them to spend their money on your products or services. Secondly, your customer should be pleased enough to become a return customer. To make this happen you have to research your competition and be competitive, offer a good product or service, and provide excellent customer service. So, starting out, you need market research and planning.

Your business plan should define your particular market and its status (growing, stable or declining). Identify your competition in your market area and their level degree of success. Based on your research, you determine your pricing strategy such as a percentage markup, manufacturer's suggested retail, equal to the competition or cut rate (below the competition). Explain your advantages and weaknesses in comparison to the competition.

Understanding your competitors and the market conditions will help you in creating an advertising plan and a promotional plan. Yes, there is a difference between advertising and promotion.

Advertising is making the public aware of your products and/or services. The most common examples are businesses that have multiple product lines – we all get fliers from those types of businesses, such as the grocery store or hardware store that advertises sale items.

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Promotion is making the public aware of your company and what it does. Naturally, there is crossover between advertising and promotion (you can't advertise product lines without telling people where and who is selling them). But promotions emphasize the company brand, which the public can then associate with the product line. Nike with its "Just Do It" tagline is a good example.

Your plan should indicate what types of advertising and promotional media you are going to use, such as web page, social media, newsprint, brochures, etc., and the percentage of each type that will be used. A budget for marketing should be provided with some clear reasons for the choice of media.

FINANCIAL PLAN

Since we are focusing on attracting investors or loan funds, this section should be detailed enough for someone to understand the cost of the business and its potential income stream. There are two fantasies new entrepreneurs have: (1) an investor or bank will hear my idea and write me a check that week, and (2) they will fund 100% of the business development. Those fantasies are just that, fantasies. You need to provide enough

details so an investor can judge the risk of their investment, and no investor is going to come in if you are not also investing your own money in the business. Typical lenders expect you to invest 10% to 25% of the funds needed. Real property you are putting into the business can count toward your share of the investment.

Details in this part of the plan should include a listing – with their values – of facilities, equipment, supplies and inventory currently leased or owned that will be part of the business. Accompany this with a list of items to be acquired in the same categories.

In addition, most lenders or investors want to see a month-by-month line-item budget of revenue and expenses for twelve months with projections for another two years. This information should back up what you indicate is the dollar amount you are requesting and the amount of collateral available to back up the loan. Typically lenders expect at least 20% more than the value of the loan in collateral.

You can also expect that lenders will want a personal financial statement in addition to your business plan. They usually have fill-in-the-blank loan application forms that will ask for your personal finances and other details about your

request, so you do not have to create your own financial statement.

After you have put together the three components of the business plan, you need to write an executive summary that briefly outlines the key points. Keep this summary to a page if possible and no more than two pages.

Once the potential entrepreneur realizes the amount of information needed to develop a business plan, the eyes usually do glaze and roll back. It can seem overwhelming. Fear not, it is not as daunting as it appears. There are numerous free planning templates available locally and on the internet that are quite good.

A wonderful resource is SCORE, a nonprofit association dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals, through education and mentorship. SCORE has been doing this for over 50 years. Going to the SCORE website, score.org, and clicking on the "browse the library" button will take you to an amazing array of topics and templates.

An excellent local resource is the Tri County Economic Development District's website, tricountyedd.com, which offers a wide variety of resources and templates and local in-person advice.



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Mountain Meandering



Photos and text by Patricia Ediger

We have some early snow this season on Mingo Mountain. Although the migrating birds have mostly left, I still regularly put out bird seed to help the wintering birds make it through the long cold winter. A wide variety of birds remain all winter, including some of the most commonly seen chickadees, nuthatches and downy woodpeckers. What a delight to see even some of the larger birds, including the wild turkeys, taking advantage of the provision.

We have wild turkey tracks all around our place. Surprisingly, even deer will seek out the bird seed. I caught a doe licking the seed out of the hanging feeder in our maple tree. She was hungry enough to tolerate my presence to take her photo. Indeed, the daily sightings of the wild things here in the Northwest make living up here worth every inconvenience, even the snowy roads, the cold winters and slower internet.



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The Tradition of Traditions

By Becky Dubell

Where did this last year go? And now it occurs to me that my great-grandson will soon be turning one year old – how did that happen?!!

In the holiday season my thoughts turn to my family and how things have changed over the last year. We now have a fiancé in the family. My niece and family have relocated to the Spokane area after Hurricane Irma flooded them out in September – Florida Keys, young family (should be fun). Grandson, fiancé and great-grandson going to WSU. Changing job possibility. House hunting. Broken pipes in the bathroom so ... gotta get a whole new bathroom of course, during the holiday season? Really? Life sneaks up on us all to say, "Hi there. Whatchya doin'?"

With these changes come some adjustments that need to be made. While making these adjustments in our lives it is soothing to know we can still carry on our family traditions.

In our house (well, Darcy's house) the Thanksgiving dinner crowd grew and we just had to work around the torn-up bathroom. Rosa and family will have to get a new Christmas tree – hey, maybe even a real tree with needles that fall off! The most important tradition involved in every adjustment we will make this holiday season? Family and friends.

I have spoken to a few friends about their holiday traditions and would like to share:

Theresa: Hubby makes a "crazy" big breakfast on Thanksgiving. Eat light in preparation for the big dinner? Not in this house!

Lanie: Tinsel goes on the tree one strand at a time and then is removed one strand at a time and saved for next year. Pick out your special ornament for the year.

Yvette: For over 10 years, Christmas tree hunting in the woods with friends. Campfire, hotdogs and marshmallows involved. But fire destroyed their hunting area, so now it is Chewelah tree farm and

then home to the campfire. Kids are carrying on the tradition.

Barb: Spritz cookies and smoked oysters for the family gatherings – go good with Dummy Rummy card game.

Becky: Baking gingerbread houses, with my grandson, for friends. Had to add daughters to the list. Oops! Planning a new tradition – baking with my niece and her kids.

Dan: Santa builds a "fort" for Christmas morning play time. The coffee cake is cooking in the oven.

My Mom: Forty years making Christmas tree ornaments for grandkids, great-grandkids and the great-great-grandson. Running out of ideas. Got any?

Jerry: "Your Mom started it!" Oreo cookie ornament year – she gave the girls each an ornament and they figured a new ornament every year would be nice. So ... (continued on next line)

Jeanette (the Grandma): The grandkids and great-grandkids receive a new ornament for the tree each year. Picked up while traveling around the states.

Reese: Tamales on Christmas Eve.

Patti: New traditions? Very distinct possibility. A first grand-baby!

Rick: Christmas Eve dinner with all the family. Christmas day is for their own family

Lola: Christmas Eve "Stinky Christmas" potluck with the family – 20+ laughing, stuffed people.

Dick: The "Christmas Pickle" is on the tree somewhere!

Cindy: Sledding at midnight. Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding.

Carey: Thanksgiving, dinner and FOOTBALL. Christmas, snowmobile trip.

Brenden: Apple Cup!

Boy, talk about taking a walk down memory

lane! Continue with your traditions and maybe sneak a couple of new ones in there somewhere. My daughters still like to get PJs under their bed pillow on Christmas Eve.

Whatever your plans are for the holiday season, I am wishing you the very best. Make it safe and full of memories. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from me to you.

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