

Journeyman and VISD Announce Band of Brothers

By Alex Craighead

Journeyman announces the launch of Band of Brothers, a youth mentoring course in partnership with the Vashon Island School District. Band of Brothers is offered to all Vashon boys in grades 4 through 12 and is free of charge.

Band of Brothers will put into practice Journeyman's mission to encourage compassionate, inspired, and resilient young men through nature-based rites of passage, mentorship, and community engagement - a mission that's more important than ever as we navigate the rapidly changing landscape of life during a global pandemic.

Piloted during Spring Quarter of 2020, Band of Brothers has been a great resource for Vashon's young men - and their families - for creating and nurturing open, healthy connections and opportunities for growth in a fun, safe space.

"Journeyman is changing the future for this community by inspiring and



educating young men about the power they hold to impact their own fate and that of the world around them." says Superintendent of schools Dr. Slade McSheehy.

Band of Brothers is now scaled to serve hundreds of Vashon boys during the 2020-2021 school year, making it possible for them to meet weekly both virtually and at in-person meetups, per Covid-19 guidelines.

Tapping into themes that are

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Vashon Group Takes on Suicide Prevention, Pandemic Mental Health

VashonBePrepared has launched a suicide prevention campaign to support the mental health of islanders, burdened by months of struggle and isolation stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign begins September 10th, World Suicide Prevention Day, with a free live broadcast titled: "Tales from the Edge: Suicide Survivors Share Their Stories." Weeks of public education will follow, to help Vashon residents and island mental health practitioners learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide, what to say to a person in need, and how to take action to help them.

"Our community has done well so far at containing the virus, but islanders face a potentially grave threat as the pandemic drags on," said Jinna Risdal, leader of Vashon's Community Care Team and an island mental health practitioner. "We are seeing a surge in substance abuse, domestic abuse, loneliness, and depression as our clients look down the road, and it feels like there's no end in sight. All these mental health challenges can build up to deadly consequences, and that's why we're focusing initially on suicide prevention."

To launch the suicide prevention campaign, veteran Voice of Vashon host Susan McCabe will lead the broadcast discussion, helping three panelists share their lessons from confronting suicide in themselves, in their families and in their mental health clients. Everyone can tune in to the broadcast at no charge at 7:00pm, on September 10. Vashon Center for the Arts has provided the space and technology for the broadcast, and viewers can access it at: VashonCenterForTheArts.org.

"Pandemic pressures have weighed heavily on Vashonians, and we hope this broadcast will start giving our community tools to help each other deal with its devastating impacts," McCabe said. "The pandemic has touched us all in one way or another. This is a time we can all pull together by watching for signs of trouble among our family members, friends, and colleagues."

The pandemic has touched us all and this is a time we can all pull together by watching for signs of trouble for our family, friends and colleagues."

The Vashon Emergency Operations Center reports that a quarter of all Vashon workers have applied for unemployment benefits at some point since the pandemic began, and a Chamber of Commerce survey showed that 40% of island businesses went dark at the peak of lockdown. Hundreds of families are worrying about getting enough food, keeping their homes, being forced to choose between essential work paychecks and COVID safety. Isolated seniors are descending into loneliness and depression, according to reports from island mental health workers.

"We will raise public awareness and understanding using the L.E.A.R.N. suicide prevention tools," said Wren

Tales from the Edge: Suicide Survivors Share Their Stories

Vashon faces a pandemic mental health crisis...

- How do you recognize the signs?
- What do you say?
- How can you help?

Suicide Prevention Day
September 10, 7:00pm

Tune in to a Live Broadcast
Susan McCabe Talks with Suicide Survivors
Go to: VashonCenterForTheArts.org

VashonBePrepared + Community Care Team + Vashon Center for the Arts + Voice of Vashon

Hudgins, one of the campaign organizers. "We will be supporting the work of mental health providers and social service agencies by offering free advanced suicide prevention training so they can be a vital safety net for those seeking help."

The campaign has been built around the L.E.A.R.N. suicide prevention program, developed by Forefront Suicide Prevention at the University of Washington. The island suicide prevention campaign is a project of the Community Care Team, which is the mental health arm of the Vashon Medical Reserve Corps, one of the many all-volunteer groups in the VashonBePrepared emergency response coalition.

Vashon's all volunteer Emergency Operations Center was activated on March 12th to organize and support pandemic response under the Incident Command direction of Chief Charlie Krimmert of Vashon Island Fire & Rescue. More than 80 volunteers have put in time on the emergency, working on a range of support programs for households, neighborhoods, businesses, unemployed workers, and healthcare.

KVSH

101.9 FM

Vashon's Own Community Radio Station

The Road to Resilience A Real Rat's Nest

By Terry Sullivan,

Political violence is increasing at the same time that a civic consensus on how to maintain order and protect the public is breaking down. The murder by police of George Floyd was only the "last straw" in a 400-year persecution of people of color in the US. Thanks to the wonder of cell phone video capability, the entire country has been roused to protest.

For at least 30 years, there has been a broad effort to reform police practice in cities across the country. The reform efforts, including officer sensitization, nonviolent conflict resolution, community engagement in the oversight of policing, and police engagement in communities, have had seemingly very little effect on the frequency of violent police actions, in particular against minorities and the mentally disturbed. Even the massive outpouring of protest in the wake of the George Floyd killing hasn't deterred several killings by police since then.

The broad racial fear and resentment in our society is, of course, reflected in police behavior, i.e., "stop and frisk" or "driving (or anything else) while Black." The ethic of policing as a protective function has given way to coercive one-way control techniques. As a result, there is an adversarial relationship in which citizens fear police and police fear citizens. Except for the shockingly casual killing of George Floyd, most of the killings that I have seen included vocal and physical behavior on the part of police officers which belied a high level of fear and panic before the shots rang out.

As a result, we now have a love/hate relationship in which we want the police to provide for our safety, but we hate the bullying and unnecessary

use of force. It isn't just a problem for Black people, although the onus is very disproportionately on them. I expect that very few of you have not had a chill run down your spine when you saw a police car close behind your vehicle. Even the appearance of a police officer walking down the street with their arms held out away from their sides because of all the hardware, including their gun, they have hanging off their belt is a bit scary. For a young Black man, it is horrifically scary.

The knowledge that police have limited liability for their behavior definitely adds to the perceived threat. This status needs to be changed, but there are enormous barriers to this happening. First, there is a long history of police being sued, rightly or wrongly, for their actions. The public has a right to redress if they are abused by police, but the police will be hesitant to act in a situation in which they might be held liable. In any case, the police now have a long-held assumption that they have free rein in the use of force and violence in pursuance of what they see as their duty. This prerogative is strongly backed up by their police unions, which make it extremely hard to take punitive actions against bad cops. A recent article in the Seattle Times looked at consequences for police for serious misconduct. Of the 400 officers fired in the last four years and sent to the state Criminal Justice Training Commission for decertification, only 52 were actually decertified. All the rest have gone on to get jobs in other jurisdictions. Many officers on the streets today with the power to kill have been repeatedly cited for serious misconduct and yet are still in a position to offend again (and the record shows that most do).

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Do you have an event or Public Service Announcement? Email questions or submissions to Steven Allen, editor of the *Loop*, at editor@vashonloop.com. Photos are welcome as jpeg or pdf attachments.

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VIPP Virtual Dog Walk

Grab your leash and go!
Traditionally held at Jensen Point at the end of every August, VIPP's annual Dog Walk is going virtual this year due to Covid-19. Because the walk is VIRTUAL, you can walk, run, hike, kayak, paddle, or go on any adventure anywhere you want with your four legged friends anytime between now and September 13th.

We won't be with you, but we would love for you to share your experience (cats are welcome, too!) by tagging us on Facebook. Alternatively, you can send photos to VIPPDogWalk2020@gmail.com. We'll feature your adventures (and your pets!) throughout the duration of the event!

When? Anytime between now and September 13th.

During these challenging times, nonprofit services are in high demand. Because VIPP remains committed to helping islanders and their pets during the Covid-19 pandemic, your donation is now more important than ever.

Know someone who could use a little extra assistance with food for their pets? VIPP's No Hungry Pets Program will be distributing pet food for islanders in need on the first Wednesday of every month at the Vashon Food Bank. The next distribution is this Wednesday, September 2nd. Help us spread the word!

In honor of the joy and happiness our pets bring to us during these uncertain times, please consider making a gift today so that VIPP can continue to ensure the health and safety of companion animals on Vashon Island.

More info at VIPP.org



Food bank closure week of September 21st

To provide staff and volunteers a reprieve and to allow staff time to prepare for the impending seasonal shift, the Vashon Food Bank will be closed for the week of September 21. Grocery pickup, on 9/25, and Home Delivery, on 9/26, will be cancelled.

But fear not! We are committed to 1) offering customers extra food in the weeks before the closure, 2) there will be extra boxes of non-perishable emergency food at select locations across the island, and 3) we are prepared to offer folks information about food and groceries that are available through partner programs.

Please, call the office at 206-463-6332 or email admin@vashonfoodbank.org with questions or concerns.

Expanded EBT benefits available for families to feed children who are learning from home

In order to reduce the impact of the pandemic on our community, many school districts have opted for remote learning, meaning many students will be learning from home this year rather than at their school. While this important decision reduces the risk of families contracting or spreading COVID-19, it also introduces increased financial burden to families that relied on free or reduced-price meals at school and now must adjust their finances to feed their children at home.

To lessen this burden, Washington state, in partnership with the federal government, has introduced the temporary Pandemic EBT (Emergency School Meals Program), or P-EBT, program to increase the amount of food funding available to families with K-12 children who qualify for free- or reduced-price school meals.

Families with children who are eligible and approved by their school district for free or reduced-price meals and who do not currently get SNAP/Basic Food benefits, can apply for P-EBT before 5 p.m. Friday, September 11th. Families can apply online at <https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/> or by calling the DSHS Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

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On Approval



John Sweetman leveling the Tesla coil.

By Sean Malone and John Sweetman

As kids, we didn’t waste much time seeking approval, my grades would prove that. I was more interested in reading comic books than doing the chores. In fact, there was an advertisement in the back of my “Superman Comic” offering a glittering collection of “stamps on approval,” which I sent for. I used the stamps as trading material and they were soon all gone. My stamp collection was pitiful to start with, but about a month later, here comes a letter from a lawyer, a big deal for a ten year old. The lawyer wanted me to pay for the stamps. Considering myself to be quite smart for a ten year old, I answered the lawyer’s letter: “Since the stamps were ‘on approval’ and I had approved of them, I didn’t have to pay.” So much for a “child’s logic!” Threatening letters came at regular intervals after that. They were all ignored.

John and I were out on the deck smoking our cigars and discussing the Tesla coil we are building and the mutual cost of the materials, some of which came from Ace Hardware. John asked: “Are you using your Ace reward cards?” “No,” I replied. “They are always expired when I remember to use them.”

The moon was high in the blue sky over Tacoma as if it had no place to go; when the subject of S & H green stamps came up. John offered, “We didn’t collect Raleigh cigarette coupons because nobody smoked except Grandpa and he smoked Cuban cigars. My Father was in Cuba in our army air force but working for Boeing ..on the B-29 VHB..which was the ‘very heavy bomber’ which was the atomic one.

And we kids fought over who got to paste “green stamps” in the books we later redeemed. Goodness knows what the poor workers at the redemption centers thought of our messy books that they had to redeem.”

“My Mom got a toaster for a bunch of ragged books and the toaster lasted for forty years.”

As for my own family, everybody or nearly everybody smoked in the 1950’s including our Mother who smoked Camels. Aunt Pat and Aunt Verna smoked Raleigh’s and saved coupons which came one to a package and an extra four coupons if the cigarettes were bought by the carton. The coupons were redeemed using the Raleigh Gift Catalogue which was full of all the items necessary for a mid-income household in the 1950’s.

For 1,420 coupons Aunt Pat got a Sun-Beam steam and dry iron and for a Starlight watch by Elgin, it cost 1,875 coupons, or 37,500 cigarettes. Aunt Pat threw her coupons into a large Chester drawer.

The Carahers lived in a big white house, 300 feet south of the Portage store which was owned by the Lavenders’. Cousin Sue remembers going to the store and telling Cliff Lavender that her Mom had sent her down for a package of cigarettes, when they really won’t for her Mom. Cliff handed Sue the cigarettes and the charges were then added to the Caraher’s account, while Cousin Jim and Mike and I were giggling on the front porch, waiting for Sue. Hence we ran to the wooden stairs leading to the beach, where we hid behind a pile of beach boards and smoked Aunt Pat’s cigarettes. We stuffed the left over cigarettes between the boards and took off looking for further adventures.

Mom smoked Camels and Grandma Ollie smoked Chesterfields. When Grandma got up in the morning, the first thing she did was to put her feet on the floor and light up a Chesterfield. When we kids asked why she smoked, Grandma said, “I have four sisters and it stops my coughing.”

Mom’s brother Tom lived in Hillsborough, Oregon where there was no sales tax on cigarettes. Mom would collect orders for cartons of cigarettes from neighbors as far south as Colvos and then we would go visit her Brother Tom and our Aunt Aileen where they

Spiritual Smart Aleck

By Mary Tuel

Joyful Resistance Redux

Dear Hearts,

This column is a rerun. It first ran in 2016, soon after our current president was elected. I am dealing with medical issues and have not been able to write a new essay. Here’s the old one:

This morning the cat gingerly, tenderly, on little cat feet, balanced on top of my radio and inserted his head into the dog biscuit bag, and came out with a dog biscuit in his mouth. He carefully backed off the radio and over to the hutch where I feed him, broke the biscuit up with his teeth, and ate it.

The dog watched this action intently. You could almost hear her say, “Nooooooooo!” when the cat’s head came out of the bag and there was a biscuit in his mouth. I had given the dog three of those little biscuits moments before in our morning ritual: “Sit.” (biscuit) “Spin around.” (biscuit) “Lie down.” (biscuit). Dogs are not capable of saying, “I just had three biscuits. It’s okay if the cat has one.”

Dogs do not think like that.

Nor do dogs and cats worry about who won the election. I envy them.

Our president-elect is appointing people in his administration who will work together to make the rich richer, and the rest of us poorer. This crew will also attempt to step on the necks of the poor, women, the LGBTQ population, immigrants, people of any skin color other than white, and people of faith who are other than the right kind of Christian. I apologize if I missed your group.

This oppression has gone on for years. Now there will be no stopping it. The bullies have the power.

I am sad that the idea of public service has been so far forgotten that our government has public bullies instead of public servants. Being a public servant seems like such a quaint, antiquated notion now, straight out of that 1939 Jimmy Stewart movie, “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington,” which, by the way, protested against political corruption and cronyism in its day. I am trying to decide if it is any consolation that corruption and cronyism were part of the US government eighty years ago. Whether it is consoling or not, it tells me that each new generation must be vigilant and fight for freedom.

The initial stun of the election’s



outcome is wearing off. I have stopped flinching every time I hear the term “president-elect.”

I heard today that the Army Corps of Engineers is backing off from at least a piece of their pipeline through sacred land in North Dakota, perhaps in response to the veterans who have shown up to stand with the First Nations people in the freezing cold.

I shall wait to see what happens at Standing Rock, and on other native lands. Pardon my cynicism. The behavior of the Army Corps of Engineers, etc., up until today, not to mention the various levels of government all the way to the top, has looked like Indian Wars, circa 1875, to me. The behavior of this country’s rulers toward indigenous peoples has been consistent for centuries. Forgive me if I have a hard time thinking that everything changed this afternoon.

Not taking much for granted these days. I am watching, and waiting.

Meanwhile, the sun continues to come up, the world is still beautiful, our loved ones still bring us joy and pain, the cat still steals dog biscuits. Life goes on, and we find beauty and joy and humor in it, and each other.

Therefore, cynical as I am feeling right now, I exhort you to love your life and your people and your animals and your plants and your world. To be deeply joyful in your good work every day, and to resist the encroachments of the evil and stupidity which are running amok in the land. Recognize one another as the embodiment of a human spirit that does not give up, and does not accept less than the human dignity that exists within each of us.

Oh, yeah: and don’t forget to breathe.

In my faith, I am taught that my goal is not to succeed, but to be faithful. I’m an old human. I’m a mess. My knees hurt and I get tired fast. Within the confines of my limitations I am called to be faithful. I am called to do what I can. These days I feel called to a joyful resistance, because what’s a life for, anyway?

If our government does not serve us, we must serve each other. We must start where we are. I don’t know if signing petitions, making phone calls, sending emails to politicians, singing songs, writing essays, and protesting will make a difference.

I will do those things anyway, because a rock could not stay silent now, and neither can I.

played canasta while us kids played behind the apartment house, putting pennies on the railroad tracks for the engine to run over; when the boxcars were pulled onto the siding to unload peanuts, some of which didn’t make it to the silo.

On the way home, the back seat and trunk were filled with grocery bags of cigarettes bound for the neighbors of Vashon, barely a place for us kids to sit. We were never told that Mom was breaking the law, smuggling cigarettes. Though we heard an “audible sigh” of relief when we crossed the bridge into Washington. Mom responded in her own inimitable way: “I’m getting away with murder.”

Sean@vashonloop.com

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Island Life Postal

By Peter Ray
pgray@vashonloop.com

“You give out hope like it was candy in your pocket....”
Abby, in ‘the Postman’

I can’t say exactly when it was that I became a bit fascinated with the United States Postal Service. I can say it is not an obsession- fascination works perfectly well here. I can remember in the fifth grade how we sent letters to embassies and state information agencies and soon enough we would get envelopes back with information about some foreign country or state monument, or most important crop or product. I don’t think it was until during my summer at the Penland School of Crafts in the North Carolina mountains that I combined the photography I was doing with written communications acts out of that isolated mountain home to friends and family around the country. At some point I decided that a postcard would be better than a letter back in those pre-email times, and so I would take a print that was somewhere between a five by seven and an eight by ten, break out my rapidograph which had ink that would adhere to the back of those plasticky, resin coated papers, write a note and an address and slap on a stamp and send it off.

Generally those photos held up really well to whatever the mail sorters and the rigors of postal travel could throw at them. And for a while- actually I think it was the entire time I was up on the mountain- I used postcard stamps to send them. It made perfectly good sense to me- postcard stamps for postcards. But as it turned out, it wasn’t that simple. There was this size thing that I just wasn’t considering. There were many prints that went out that were on full eight by ten sheets, where your average postal card clocks in at somewhere around four by six inches. It was a bit embarrassing to find out that, in the end, I’m fairly certain that all of those cards (one of my friends called them lephos: letter-photographs) arrived with postage due and nobody that I sent them to ever said anything to me about that. When it did come up in a conversation years later, I did ask one friend why he never mentioned it, and he simply said he just enjoyed getting them and that the couple cents overage that it cost him was totally worth being able to bail them out from delivery purgatory.

I continued to send more lephos out once I left the mountain, and I corrected my incorrect postage metering. And instead of sending out random photos I had taken, I would occasionally create a photo scene that was an illustration for a simple story I would invent. Sometimes It got fairly complicated, where I would shoot the photograph and then create a letter stencil with graphic arts film and then print both on the front, then I would make a silk screen of words and drawings and screen that on the address side, so all I would have to do is add the address and the stamp. Making a few cards would sometimes take a couple of days.

A while after that, postcard things kind of wound down when I began a year at landscape design school. For some reason, around that same time, it was Mr. Zip, the cartoon postal mascot, who then caught my interest. The whole zip code thing had been around for a while, but I think maybe he had been trotted back out around then because the post office was adding four more numbers to all zip codes to more accurately enumerate where the mail was going. As it was, I started to draw in the likeness of Mr. Zip to the corners of my design drawings, partly because I thought it was funny and partly because it agitated my instructor. I recall one time when Mr. Z had an unusually

prominent place on one of my drawings, and during my review of that effort the teacher remarked: “that little bastard shows up on everything you do....” Well, not really everything. Sometimes he had a stand alone panel all to himself. I think the thing I am most proud of from that period had to do with a one panel comic I came up with as a comment/ statement about the new, longer zip codes. I had Mr. Zip in the center, grimacing in pain and shock as a mystery battle-axe came in from out of frame, lopping off his pinky finger, which was being levitated through the air with motion lines. The caption for the panel was, of course, “Mr. Zip goes to nine digits”.

I think my postcard sending around then went to mostly finding weird cards, like tales of jackalopes or badly altered shots of giant trout on flatbed trailers. It was just easier, until of course that darn digital age came along. It was back in the early aughts when we were first going to the Burning Man that I started bringing along a digital printer that we powered off an inverter and the truck battery, and I was able to send photos of the wild and crazy playa events of the day through the Black Rock City Post Office to baffled people back in the real world. And then it was Canon that made a battery powered printer that could fit into a case the size of a toiletry kit without the toiletries, and it printed postcard size prints. Soon after, in ongoing trek’s to the desert in late summer, I was actually delivering mail for the BRCPO, which was an amazing experience that I think I wrote about here long ago. We delivered real mail and packages from the outside world to addresses that might or might not exist out in the dust of this, temporary, desert city, and it was kind of like a snipe hunt mixed with a detective story at times in order to get things to their rightful recipient.

At this point in the story we flash back to 1997 and ahead to now. It was kind of in the now of recent weeks when Kevin Costner’s 1997 film ‘the Postman’ was brought to my attention on the facebooks. I had mostly forgotten about this post-apocalyptic tale about a chance meeting between Costner’s character and a corpse in a mail truck, and how that changed the world. I had been looking for a reason to order up a copy of ‘Dances With Wolves’ on DVD, so I added the postal tale to the order, all for the price of a pricey six pack of IPA, and a few days later I was watching these flicks on consecutive nights. Having been thinking a lot in the last couple years about how westward expansion had obliterated and ignored the American Indian, I was surprised to see how sympathetic ‘Wolves’ was to an awareness of Native rights and culture, at least from Costner’s character’s perspective. In many ways, in hindsight and retrospect, the plot of ‘Wolves’ could have served as the way we white people might have assimilated into the culture that many people don’t to want to acknowledge existed here pre-Columbus. It could be seen as a “this is what we should have done” apology, even though in the end, the westward emigration and basic, capitalistic human nature most likely would have ensured that things turned out the way it did, regardless of how enlightened we might have been from the start. There is the Church and the pope and the doctrine of discovery that we talked about here recently to blame as well, but we will not rehash that again right now.

As a counterpoint to ‘Dances with Wolves’, in the post-apocalyptic world of ‘the Postman’, in which the story subtitles place the events involved there as the future past of 2013, there are not even cigar store Indians around to mess or join forces with the inhabitants of this postal tale. It is also curious that even though the story

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Journeyman and VISD Announce Band of Brothers

Continued from Page 1

relevant and engaging, dedicated teams of experienced Journeyman mentors will lead bands of boys grouped in grades 4-5, 6-7, 8, and 9-12 through age appropriate weekly challenges, facilitated discussion, peer-to-peer mentorship, community service, and dynamic team-building activities.

“Our vision is for Band of Brothers and Journeyman to be part of boys’ lives for years to come - creating lifelong, intergenerational relationships that nurture the creative spark of our youth, while tapping into the wisdom of our elders.” says Program Director Alex Craighead. “We see this work as being vital for the wellbeing of our youth and the greater island community.”

Journeyman applies our Cour Four framework to all of our offerings, cultivating strength through balance. By integrating the Cour Four - Mind, Body, Heart, Gift - boys are encouraged to test their physical, emotional, and social edges, a process that refines leadership and interpersonal skills and deepens strength of character, inspiring greater self-confidence.

Online registration for Band of Brothers opened this week, on Monday, August 31. Our first sessions will take place the week of September 14 and will continue through the school year. Journeyman is excited to be working with Vashon O-Space to host our weekly in-person meetups, with regular

community service opportunities to be offered with on-island partners. Find out more about Band of Brothers and register here - journeymen.us/experience/band-of-brothers/

Band of Brothers is offered to all age-eligible boys living on Vashon or attending Vashon schools, and is not limited to boys enrolled in Vashon Island School District. Journeyman strongly encourages families with high need for social-emotional support to register early as space may be limited.

Journeyman is able to offer Band of Brothers at no-cost to our community thanks to generous private contributions and support from Vashon Island School District. We are more than half way to our fundraising goal for the school year. To help support Band of Brothers, please contact Executive Director Nicky Wilks at nicky@journeymen.us or Program Director Alex Craighead at alex@journeymen.us, or call Journeyman at 206-429-5203. All donations supporting Band of Brothers made through September 30, 2020 will be matched 100%.

About Journeyman: Inspired by nature, we are a diverse community of young adults, elders, volunteers, guides, youth, and families wholly focused on bringing out the best in our boys. We encourage compassionate, inspired, and resilient young men through nature-based rites of passage, mentorship, and community engagement.

bit of magic in a message or a package from home or a friend. If nothing else, getting a letter out in the middle of a dust strewn and heat-soaked desert is both a strange and reassuring event. In many ways there is an intimacy and an innocence and a basic tactile sense in the very essence of a written letter that has been lost to the tubes and dungeons of the internets. Perhaps it was the fact that the postal service of our real time at the end of the last century was then such a basic institution to us, that to base a science-fictional return of civilization from the brink of extinction to its resurrection from an unnamed fate was too big of a stretch for ‘the Postman’ to imagine, as at the time I recall this film was seen as a bit of a joke. But now, with so many basic institutions under threat from those who are supposedly there to protect them, we currently find ourselves looking at a hobbled Post Office that is now framed in an essential position in this voting season to help deliver us from our current malaise . Given the current polarization of thought and actions, it is difficult to imagine an outcome similar to the one that the final battle scene of ‘the Postman’ offers, let alone a real world, sensible resolution to our current insanity. We’ll see. In the mean time, send a postcard to a friend- who knows what that surprise might kindle?

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By Marj Watkins

Huzzah for Hamburgers!

You could make a package of ground lean beef or bison into meat loaf, but then you’d have to heat up the oven. and the weather is seldom cool enough for that yet. You could grill the meat at a picnic as burger filling. But evenings have cooled off quite a bit, and we’ve even had some showers and rainy nights as I write this for you to read near the end of August. Can you remember back from present global warming to when we sometimes got frosty morning in late August?

It is cool enough now to cook in my kitchen. The other night for my grandson James and me, I made hamburgers like these, using half a pound of the leanest ground, grass-finished beef. You could use ground bison, turkey, or chicken.

- Beef or Bison Burgers
- Makes 3 or 4
- ½ lb leanest ground beef or bison meat
- 1 teaspoon salt or to taste
- 1/3 teaspoon coarse-ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon finely minced garlic or ½ teaspoon garlic granules
- ½ teaspoon crumbled sage
- 1 teaspoon dried crumbled oregano or

- 1 Tablespoon fresh oregano leaves
- ¼ cup water or ¼ cup each water and burgundy wine
- Mix well with fork or wooden spoon.
- Add
- ½ cup oatbran
- ¼ cup olive oil or bacon grease
- Mix in the oatbran. Heat the oil or grease in a wide skillet. With a heaping tablespoon put blobs of meat mixture in the hot pan. Gently, though. You don’t want grease to splatter and burn you. Flatten and shape to the size of your hamburger buns.

Cook on medium high until browned on underside. Flip. Reduce heat. Cook on, until there’s no pink left inside any of the meat patties. An instant read thermometer should come up to 170 degrees. This is to insure that all the bacteria the meat picked up in being ground and worked with by butchers and cook get fried or grilled to death.

To assemble the burgers, tear off the top three or four inches of as many dark great or “red” lettuce leaves as you have buns. Cut the same number of beefsteak tomato slices. Assemble mustard, ketchup, mayo, a small dish of sliced pickles, a platter of cooked meat patties, another of big tomato slices and lettuce leaves, and another of halved whole-grain hamburger buns.

Let each diner assemble his or her own hamburgers, choosing the accessory ingredients of their desiring.

If it’s a warm enough evening to grill the burger patties outside, enjoy them in the fresh air. If the weather turns cold or rainy, serve them indoors as an easy buffet supper. For desert may I suggest diced nectarines, peaches, or blueberries with spray-on whipped cream or raspberry or strawberry ice cream decadently drizzled with melted bittersweet chocolate? (If uninterested in gaining weight, you might skip the dessert except for the fruit.)

Leo and Riley Needs A Home

Darn, we just missed “Ginger Cat Appreciation Day” on September 1! If you adopt us, we’ll give you plenty to celebrate when that holiday rolls around next year.

We’re orange tabby brothers, and as you can tell from our photo, we’re inseparable and as cute as can be. Our foster mom has pronounced Riley the friendliest cat she’s ever met. Leo is trying hard to catch up!

Playtime with people is one of our favorite things. We love dogs (other cats - we’re not so sure about them). Living with older kids would be fine. We definitely want an indoor home,



and if it had a catio, that would be perfect. Let’s get together and start making plans for “our” holiday next September 1!

Go To www.vipp.org
To view adoptable Cats and Dogs

Road to Resilience

Continued from Page 1

This apparent ability to act with impunity has not gone unnoticed by prospective abusers. Although it may be that most police officers are relatively well adjusted and not prone to violence, there is no doubt that a large number of them are people that joined the force to commit violence rather than to protect citizens. No doubt even the officers that joined with the best of intentions get calloused over time, and the general acceptance of using more force rather than less tends toward abuse. There is also the affinity of white supremacists to police culture today and a worrying alliance that seems to be forming between them.

We now have calls to defund the police as people rightly perceive that reform has not worked and we need to rebuild anew. In reaction, the police are selectively refraining from taking action to protect the public, just so

people remain aware that they perform an important service. Now we have a massive reaction from the public to not defund the police. Obviously, the situation is much more nuanced, but the police are framing it as take us as we are or not at all.

We need much greater accountability for police behavior, much better training in de-escalation, removal of police from duties that are more properly given to social service workers, more involvement of communities in the policing of their own neighborhoods, and a marked decrease in the quantity, lethality, and use of military hardware. We know that police officers in many other countries patrol without guns. Officers that abuse or act on racial preconceptions must be barred from police work. The new image of the police officer needs to be that of a protector and friend of the vulnerable, not the opposite that we have today.

Comments? terry@vashonloop.com

On Our Way To Mars
The September
VALISE show

VALISE Gallery Presents: On Our Way to Mars

In our dreams some of us are boarding spaceships with our loved ones, packages

of vegetable seeds and buckling in for the long trip to Mars. Starting over on a brand-new planet seems pretty inviting right now and a great adventure is what we humans love.

So come travel to the newly re-opened VALISE Gallery on First Friday, September 4th to see the work of 3 of our intergalactic Island artists.

Melt into George Wright’s beautifully abstract encaustic paintings. Wonder at Sharon Shaver’s fantastical world of flying cat creatures and birds. And smile at Bill Jarcho’s whimsically weird paintings and sculptures.

“On Our Way to Mars,” opens September 4 and runs through Saturday September 26.

First Friday Opening Celebration with artwork both inside and outside the gallery on September 4, 6pm-9pm. The gallery will also be open Saturdays 1pm-5pm throughout September.

Protocols for everyone’s safety will be followed. Five masked visitors will be allowed in the gallery at a time.



And the Point Is



On Our Way

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Planet Waves

by Eric Francis <http://www.PlanetWaves.net>**Aries (March 20-April 19)**

It takes some experience not to get swung around by your astrology, or to get past feeling like you're a dancing marionette on strings. That is, however, the right goal. At the moment, the condition of Mars describes you under maximum stress: it is square the mighty Pluto, conjunct even mightier Eris, and getting ready to station retrograde — all in your birth sign or rising sign. This is an era-defining moment for you, set in the context of a time when everything is changing. Yet despite all the debris flying from various hurricanes and tornadoes, various earthquakes and meltdowns, you personally are the one who is developing in a way that stands apart from the planetary mayhem. In a sense, you are a forerunner of the kinds of personal changes that will be necessary for the planet to organize itself into a new schema. However, keep your focus personal. You are going through a most intimate, intense, unusual transformation, and you will need to rise to personal challenges that will be a worthwhile cost of admission to a new life.

Taurus (April 19-May 20)

Yours is the sign of tradition, which is the thing presently collapsing. You are personally in an odd position here, with Uranus in your birth sign shaking up your whole reality, and also pushing you into the future. Such changes are not always progress. Yet with your knowledge of the past, and your attachment to some of its ways, you must be the mediator of that in your life, and in whatever domain you supervise. Some things that are time-honored deserve to exist. Others are best left by the wayside, or recycled, or repurposed. I would propose that the basis for deciding is what connects you to your inherent humanity: your sensitivity, your physical wellbeing, your ability to nourish yourself and others. We could say that your primary responsibility is to not digitize yourself; to not allow yourself to be genetically modified; to not allow yourself to be turned into an avatar or representation of yourself. That means honoring your physical form and recognizing it as your anchor to life and to the Earth.

Gemini (May 20-June 21)

Your words matter, and you would be wise to measure them. Yet even as you write or speak, having done your best to be aware and cautious, speaking the truth will feel dangerous. That is how you know you're doing it. There is an actual personal risk involved, which is why so few people can bring themselves to do it. Sadly, this translates for many to censoring their thoughts, which in turn requires attempting to regulate their feelings. That is most often done through some form of guilt. The result is that many people's relationship to their personal truth is walking around like a spring about to snap. There is no drug that can solve this problem. Therapy can provide a space to open up, though even there, lack of trust can present obstacles to sincerity — though that would be the objective. The trust that could facilitate sincerity is itself daring, and requires the willingness to make mistakes, to get hurt and to experience the consequences of your ideas — whatever they may be.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Venus in your sign is encouraging you to go deep into your feelings, and to count that and that alone as being alive. Feeling is different from emoting. Emoting is an outwardly expressed gesture, a kind of psychic off-gassing. To feel is the opposite:

to be sensitive, receptive, and aware. To feel is to receive, including receiving from yourself. There is an art to this, and it's up to you to develop and master it. This could be described as the actual meaning of emotional intelligence: a degree of sensitivity that includes self-awareness and also environmental awareness. Your psychic instrument is tuned to the degree where you can not only filter out external static but also learn from your surroundings. Venus has already guided you through some challenging territory the past week or so, and there may have been days when you felt overwhelmed. I would reckon, however, that you were not at any point unable to handle the flow of events, and that you responded appropriately most of the time. The thing to be mindful of is any past sense of being injured. Do not take that out on the present.

Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)

There are some matters for which there is only a spiritual solution. The whys and wherefores of the world do not give answers. The tactics and strategies of the world do not get a desired outcome. It is therefore necessary to refer to another kind of intelligence, another source of knowledge and of healing. The purpose of the spiritual path, of the whole spiritual project, is to prepare a person to have access to this type of intelligence all the time. One of the most distinctive features of Leo is that Aries, the sign of self, is in the 9th place, that of the higher self, of the spiritual force, and of religious orders. If Leo is said to be a self-centered sign, that could be about the Sun (the luminary that is said to rule Leo) being located at the center of the solar system. It could be that yours is the only sign associated with a star, and not an orbiting body. However, to place the sign associated with self-determination in the house of spirit means that you approach cosmic matters with a measure of autonomy. This may not make the quest any easier, only more meaningful.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)

Something in you is pushing its way out, though you may be experiencing this as a sense of nervousness, of feeling lost, or a little odd. You will feel better when the Moon enters your sign later this week, followed by the Sun, though feeling better is not necessarily the thing you want. Some irritation, agitation, or other impetus for change and progress will help you at the moment. That may come in the form of not knowing something, not understanding, not having the answer, and the resulting state of provocation. If you are confused, feel your confusion. If you are disoriented, feel yourself spinning a little, wondering which way to go. That you might be in this state also means that you are not in the state of false certainty. That's the one thing you don't want. It may seem that there is a fine line these days, or a whole valley full of fog, between knowing and not knowing; certainty and false certainty. I'll give you a clue: knowing rarely comes with the sensation of being certain. There is always a little hesitancy.

Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)

You would be wise to step back and observe what a close partner is going through, rather than jumping in and getting involved. Observing can include listening, watching, noticing, and making gentle inquiries when you think you have an opening to do so. Yet it's crucial that whoever may be involved make their own decisions, and have their own basis for doing so. There may be much you don't know about the inner process of someone close to you — actually, that is the safer

bet. So when it comes to their choices and the foundations they rest on, that is where you need to be at arm's length. Meanwhile, there is some quality of all this unusual activity in your opposite sign Aries — including Mars conjunct Eris — that is influencing your whole environment. You might choose your companionship by noticing those who are fully committed to living their life on Earth and in their senses, and those who are uncertain and who seem like they may someday be seen walking around wearing virtual reality goggles.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

Take note of an unexpected professional opportunity that becomes available. This may be something you thought was past its prime, or an offer that had expired. Actually it was just on hold. This may be something that comes to you, or something that you reach toward. Either way, it would come with the observation that you were not too late, though you thought you were. Meanwhile, keep your focus on what you're doing. You are someone who is capable of taking actual pride in your work, and now would be an excellent time to dial that in. You're uniquely situated to notice something that would blow past many other people, stump them, or seem irrelevant. You can recognize its true significance. This is likely to be something in the digital realm, and could range from anything like a marketing idea to noticing a security flaw. This same astrology could be described as making a profound discovery about yourself, particularly how you relate to the work you do and why it is so important to you.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)

Let go of the anxieties of your family, particularly your mother. Before you do that, though, you might want to translate them into some exaggerated cartoon form, so you can see them for what they are. Write down the five things she said to you that in some way propagated self-doubt. Most of them were probably small, and happened fairly young. Then use those five ideas to create a psychological profile of her. Then for the final step, ask yourself if this really describes you. Does this represent the person you want to be? What progress have you made through your own growth and spiritual exploration? You have indeed covered territory, though there might be something holding you back, or some thread that connects you not just to your own past but to hers. This could be a single idea, a self-concept, a notion about relationships. You might not even think it limits you in any way, though you could say that is a matter of point of view.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

How have the past few days been for you, emotionally and as you relate to your sense of grounding and safety? Said in spiritual terms, how is your root chakra doing lately? This could be going a few ways, none of them particularly subtle. You might be feeling radically insecure. You might be feeling the drive to finally get grounded and call yourself fully present on the physical plane. Ultimately this is the thing your whole being is craving. You might be noticing that opportunities for experience and advancement in physical reality are fewer and further between. So you will need to be attentive when it comes to spotting them, and resist the temptation to do absolutely everything in some form of digital (artificial intelligence, out of body) state. Staying close to the Earth is important. Staying close to the people you care about is perhaps more important, though they can go together. This is about remaining human under considerable pressure not to be so.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

This week's New Moon in your opposite sign Leo will draw back a few

layers of a relationship, and you'll be able to get a look at what is going on inside. You may not find out everything, though you will learn a lot more than you knew, including a few things you were not expecting. Some you will like, and some you may not. One thing is central to the discussion: you cannot compromise who you are at your core for the sake of another person. And you cannot expect anyone else to do so. You can make choices about what you emphasize. You can find the best meeting places in any relationship and work with them. But you must be who you are, and let others be who they are, for there to be any common ground to stand on. This may seem like an increasingly strange concept in a world where so much is based on fantasy. It will also be one of increasing value.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

Place an emphasis on your long-term finances this week, and through the duration of Mars retrograde (from Sept. 9 through Nov. 13). Your new and evolving financial orientation must realistically fit the actual conditions of the world you live in, which places you at an advantage. Yet you will need some guts to make the most of this, and also to act on what you know is a good idea in a timely fashion. Your state of awareness is your cue: once you have a grasp on something and have eliminated the other possibilities as not being viable or worthwhile, that is the time to take action. You are accustomed to things taking a long time, though at a certain point even a delay turns into forward motion. But you are the connecting bridge, the continuity, and the organizing principle. Keep that in mind even as society seems to descend into a strange form of disembodied chaos. Maintain your connection to what is tangible: time, space, direction, voice contact, eye contact.

Read Eric Francis daily at
www.PlanetWaves.net

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PANDORA'S BOX

Corrine’s grand Rumspringa comes to an end with another cross country drive with her Momma.
ALSO in amazing news, I’ve been married 30 years and the hubster turned 60. Yes, 60!!

Bo’s Pick of the Week: Big sale on new Kong dog toys as well as a great deal on a new dog food that we may or may not carry, try it out and let us know.

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