

# School Bond Daze

By Marc J. Elzenbeck

It’s that time in the decade when a school district’s thoughts naturally turn to bonds, and next February, the Island will be asked to approve a \$19.5 million capital raise. The math works out to a 20¢ increase per \$1000 of King County-assessed property values. Those property values went up a philanthropic 17% this year, so now anyone interested in buying the Rock wholesale must scrape up a spare \$4 billion.

Still, for school tributes, Vashon compares surprisingly well overall at \$2.51 assessed per \$1000. Nearby North and Central Kitsap punch in at \$2.24 and \$2.82, respectively, burgeoning Port Angeles at \$3.69, and Mercer Island – which, as everyone knows barely tolerates children – at a dollar-store \$1.56. This capital bond, the fourth in this century, comprises no new buildings, only renovations, compliance, and upgrades.

The proposal’s innards center on \$10 million investment in Americans with Disabilities Act and Title IX compliance upgrades to the Vashon High School gym, including an elevator to the 3rd floor wrestling practice room, and subdividing locker rooms that could currently serve as sets for an 80s teen movie. Next up is \$4.5 million to replace the HVAC system that came with the 1994 Chautauqua Elementary School building. VHS could use a new parking lot for \$1.5 million and the elementary playsets would get a nifty \$500k upgrade from Playground Creations. Rounding out the total, McMurray needs asbestos abatement, and it and other buildings get paint and preservation.

Some criticisms have been raised about these projects. Is the elementary school furnace really bellowing demands for sacrifice like something out of a Steven King novella? How many disabled wrestlers will benefit from an elevator? Do we need 4 locker rooms when no one has showered in them since before the pandemic? Why is the word “maintenance” repeated in a building bond?

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# An Incurable Trickster

By Seán Malone and John Sweetman

John Sweetman and I were sipping beer in front of a roaring fire in the cozy confines of my log cabin overlooking outer Quartermaster Harbor. “Why don’t you write about that thieving raven you had in Republic,” John suggested.

I laughed like hell when the raven tore out of the barn that I lived in on Lambert Creek. He had John’s keys in his beak and was headed for the six-inch space under the shop building. John had been shaking his keys at Tukatah, to intimidate him, when the raven grabbed them and ran out the door. “Stop him, Stop him,” I yelled, as the raven dove underneath the shop.

The raven is an “incurable trickster,” or so the Indians say. They were right in every aspect, the raven revealed. I had a stand of dead tamarack or larch about four miles up Lambert Creek at the cutoff to the old Stagecoach Road. There were about 50 trees in a swale that was only accessible during the dry months, when I could cut a road into the stand with due diligence so I wouldn’t have trouble coming out. Road building consisted in finding the easiest way in and out, and doing the least amount of work to make the wood logs available for cutting and hauling to town for firewood.

There was lots of wildlife in this neck of the woods – deer, rabbits, the occasional bear, and even trout in Lambert creek. I stopped one day to gas up my saw and heard a commotion in the tree canopy. The ravens were awfully excited, and I

climbed up to where they were diving and calling at something on the ground. A young raven was hiding under a fallen log when I scooped him up. Only later did I learn that ravens literally kick their young out of the nest and feed them on the ground for six weeks before they can fly to any extent. Before flying, the young can only flutter from branch to branch as they climb to a safe place in a tree. This bird still had his pin feathers, and I took him home. Tukatah was the name I gave him, from one of his brash calls. He didn’t like his cage. Sometimes his cries to be let out were answered by other ravens flying over the little cabin on Lambert creek, and the adventures began.

John Sweetman was the county assessor and had been re-elected four times. He stopped by to assess the property one day and join me in a drink of moonshine. Tukatah was out and running around the yard. I made Calvados or apple brandy, 10 gallons at a time. Two bins of apples produced 100 gallons of juice to be fermented with wine yeast and runoff in the still. The product ran 130-proof and was quite tasty, according to the locals. A teaspoon of it lit up in a little blue flame.

This was a time when Ferry and Okanogan counties were the last of the areas in Washington where genuine white lightning was made. There was a “magic” round of winter tires down at the Texaco in Republic where inside you could leave an empty jug and a ten-dollar bill. Next day, the jug would be filled with clear

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# Cathlamet – Some Background

By Andy Valencia

While we wait for Washington State Ferries to announce any initial findings in the Cathlamet accident, the Vashon Loop has been gathering background information to help interpret what we’ll eventually be told about this incident.

An important piece of the Cathlamet’s history is its tendency to crash into docks; thus, it was coined the “Crash-lamet” after incidents during its Whidbey and Mukilteo service. A computer system replaced in 2000 was believed to fully address a failure mode wherein the props would unexpectedly angle for full propulsion. Did this fix it entirely?



Car deck damage and initial dolphin repairs. Photos courtesy Steven Allen

Some emergency scenarios call for the captain to steer into a “dolphin” (the term for the piers on the approach to a dock), and to use this impact to reduce the vessel’s momentum. For many years, dolphins were made out of wood, and each such impact required costly repairs. Modern construction uses steel and concrete; therefore, dolphins are now much more rugged, but we have just seen million-dollar boat damage, along with structural crushing that could easily have resulted in passenger deaths.

After a 2003 ferry crash in Staten Island – caused by the Captain’s disabling heart attack and resulting in 10 fatalities – operational rules requiring that multiple personnel be present during docking approaches became even more stringent. On a WSF ferry, it’s almost certain that the officer at the helm has at least one – and possibly two – other personnel in the pilothouse. All such personnel have the training to be able to take action during an emergency.

Video from WSF, released by local TV station KING 5, shows the ferry apparently not making any steering or power changes until well after impact with the dolphin (the video also shows a passenger scrambling away after impact, another sign of how close we came to a fatality). There are very few scenarios where both steering and power control are lost while the boat continues underway. All of them are catastrophic. Since the Cathlamet was docked and unloaded shortly after the impact, it’s safe to assume such failures were not present. The control systems were very likely operational before, during, and after the dolphin impact.

The final bit of suggestive data is that the captain resigned from the WSF the following day. People in the industry assure us that this is very unusual – there is a procedure for finishing one’s career after an accident, and there’s no reason to stray from it. When the report for the Cathlamet incident eventually comes out, if the reason for this behavior is not explained, you can be sure the report is incomplete. Also, all personnel were drug-tested soon after the crash, and all tests came up clean; this is not about booze or pills.

The weight of evidence tells us to watch for human factors in the pilothouse, rather than mechanical failures. What was the medical status of the captain before, during, and after the accident? Who else was in the pilothouse? What were they doing as the dock drew near? Who ultimately took control and kept the boat from running aground?

The report will probably touch on dolphin design. Building dolphins to be roughly as strong as the ferries they deflect has come very close to costing one or more passengers their lives. Just as cars are now designed with crumple zones, we’ll hopefully hear about dolphins that can do a safer job of absorbing a ferry’s impact during an emergency.



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# Vashon Loop Code of Ethics Statement

Adapted from the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics

Journalism is not to be undertaken lightly. Indeed, the mighty power of the pen is first and foremost a responsibility. Words can be both weapon and tool, constructive or destructive, sincerely meant or wielded disingenuously for selfish gain. That is why, as members of the Society for Professional Journalists, we plan to adhere to, learn from, and rely upon the SPJ Code of Ethics.

Each month, we'll highlight one of the four foundational principles of ethical journalism and ruminate on how and why ethics in journalism matter. Today, in our Inaugural September 2022 issue of The Vashon Loop, we share with you the SPJ Code of Ethics Preamble:

"Members of the Society of Professional Journalists believe that public enlightenment is the forerunner of justice and the foundation of democracy. Ethical journalism strives to ensure the free exchange of information that is accurate, fair, and thorough. An ethical journalist acts with integrity. The Society declares these four principles as the foundation of ethical journalism and encourages their use in its practice by all people in all media."

## The Four Foundational Principles of Ethical Journalism

- Seek Truth and Report It
- Minimize Harm
- Act Independently
- Be Accountable and Transparent

# What Brought You To The Island?

By Stephen Silha

Forty-three years ago last month, I made the trek to a cabin in Burton, looking south over Quartermaster Harbor, and I knew I'd come home. I had been living with a lover/boyfriend/husband in Gig Harbor, where we'd bought an acre and a quarter the year before and built a small house/garage. While we poured the foundation for the dream house we'd been designing, it became clear that our magical five-year "marriage" was over. We each walked our own path, and mine led to Vashon.

On a visit to Vashon the previous year, we'd almost made an offer on a beautiful old house in Dockton which I think listed for \$54,000. While I was very attracted to Vashon, my partner said, "No. I don't want to have to rely on a ferry schedule to go to a good restaurant, or a movie."

One year later, I found my wonderful cabin for \$165 a month.

In fact, there were a few decent restaurants on Vashon—the Spinnaker, Happy Garden (Chinese), a Mexican place by the north end ferry, and Sound Food at the corner of Vashon Highway and Telephone Road, near the bicycle-in-the-tree. Sound Food was probably the best; people came from Seattle for dinner. It had a distinctly Vashon vibe, and the Minglement store was attached to it, where you could buy vitamins, sundries, musical instruments, and art, including my favorite, Irene Otis

# WA Trails Association Comes to Vashon

Our trails are incredible for a reason! Humans clear them, protect them, design them, and otherwise bring them into being, and all of this is usually done by volunteer teams working together. Want to spend a day on the trail, in the company of awesome folk, under the gracefully swaying branches of colossal trees as fall colors float down around you? Yes! Who wouldn't?

**Upcoming Parties:** Maury Island Marine Park Oct. 18-22 & Island Center Forest Nov. 1-5.

**No Experience Needed. Go to WTA.org and follow instructions to sign up.** We hope this announcement reaches you before your schedule fills



up, as many volunteers are coming from off-island to help make our trails lovely. They'd love it if islanders also showed up!



## All Things Rich

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Come see us  
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# Land Acknowledgment

We honor this island, known today as Vashon-Maury Island, upon which we live and work. We are nourished and blessed by the rivers and waters, the trees, and the fish, the plants, and birds, and many other beings in the soil, Sound, and air who make up this beautiful place we call home. We especially honor and recognize the s̓x̓wəbábs̓, the indigenous people of this island. This is their ancestral land, upon which they have lived, tended, and woven in intimate relationship for millennia. Forcibly relocated, the s̓x̓wəbábs̓ are now part of the Puyallup, Nisqually, Squaxin Island, and Muckleshoot tribes. Their deep story with this island continues to this day.

The Vashon Loop is published monthly

sharing one phone line. And it was long-distance to call Seattle from Vashon. Not so on Bainbridge (or as we called it "Brain Damage Island"), because we figured all the telephone executives lived there.

I've always cherished this Island where the harbor is shaped like a question mark whose dot used to be the Asarco smelter. It invites us to always ask not only the 5 W's – who, what, where, when, why – but also a sixth: What's Possible Now?

# Home Maintenance, Series #1 – What Goes in Must Come Out...

Many people who move to Vashon Island are unfamiliar with rural living and landowner responsibilities. Whether you're from a small town, big city, or suburb, who provides your drinking water and manages your sewage matters only when the tap won't work or the toilet floweth over! Here on the island, it's a bit different.

**On October 19, 2022 from 6:30pm - 8pm,** Vashon and King County experts will offer a Zoom class designed to empower you to protect your family's health, your investment in your home, and our shared lands. Learn how to prevent premature septic system failures and costly issues with your well, your neighbor's well, or your region's water system.

While researching a radio series on the topic of "All Things Water," one of our editors, March Twisdale, personally toured our island's water treatment facility, met with our Vashon Town sewer guru, and visited with all but one of our Island's Water Operators. She found the tours to be incredibly interesting, surprising, and thoroughly enjoyable. This isn't a chore. It's an adventure worth having!

**Register here, now:** <https://www.vashonresilience.org/septic>, or call 206-852-3942.

A Zoom Link will be emailed to you immediately after registering. If you don't receive it, contact amy@backbonecampaign.org.

## The Vashon Loop

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October 10, 2022

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# When We Embrace Death

Who among us can say, “I embrace death?”

There are only two experiences all humans share in common. Birth and death. Since our earliest beginnings, humans have managed to deal with, avoid, celebrate, flee, focus upon, ignore, formulate theories, and flagrantly seek to deny these two inevitable events with exquisite creativity. Proving one thing: Birth and death matter.

As the natural world in the northern hemisphere passes the zenith of its summer life and moves into the early chill of fall, we see birth and death all around us. The fruits ripening on the branches of apple trees, evergreen huckleberries and late-ripening blackberries bring the promise of new birth, even as yellowing leaves, wizened raisins, and rotting blossoms speak of death’s gradual crawl across the land.

Gardeners are deeply engaged with these cycles of birth and death, and we speak of them regularly, without hesitation. We prune back excess greenery, allowing our aging tomato vines to better ripen already plump, green fruit. We dig manure into the old beds, the soil already shifted from the process of wrenching wilting bush beans, corn stalks, and over-extended squash plants out by the roots. And we toss them into a great pile of death, dying, and decay... from which the best beets and

potatoes will grow next year. Yet – when we speak of humans, who among us can say, “I embrace death?”

Into this quiet, perhaps awkward space, steps a familiar companion. Ceremony. Holy Day. Tradition. Throughout history, death has been graced with our constant attention, and how better to do so than with lights and food, flowers and song, music and drink? Which makes a great deal of sense. If you can’t avoid something...turn it into an excuse to throw a party!

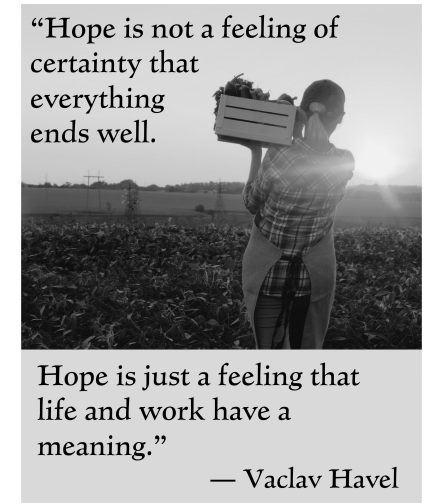
Among the many stories we tell ourselves about death, the religious concepts adhered to, the cultural mores and traditions lovingly passed on from the “dying generation” to the “recently born generation,” Mictēcacihuātl is a death deity many Americans know of – without realizing it. Created in the bloody furnace of Aztec mythology, the consort of Mictlāntēcutli is known as the “Lady of the Dead,” and she watches over the bones of the dead and ancient festivals held by the living to...embrace death.

Yes. The modern incarnation of “Día de Los Muertos,” canonized into popular culture by Pixar’s colorful, musical imagery and Disney’s trademark pulling of our heartstrings, “Coco” has even further invited hundreds of millions of people into an ancient, Aztec tradition. And, by so doing, paved the way for many of us to answer the above question in the affirmative.

“Yes. I embrace death.”



This month, as the world around you moves gracefully into “the beautiful dark,” entering into a womb from which the birth of springtime can emerge yet again, consider the effect on your life...of embracing death. Whatever tradition inspires you, it is never the wrong time to accept what is, and to turn it into an ally, a friend, a trusted companion, and a gift.



# Book Review



## Beloved Characters – Then & Now

By March Twisdale

In the world of Hollywood or the theatre, a performer who can act, sing, and dance is called a “triple threat.” Anne McCaffrey’s “Crystal Singer Trilogy” is a literary triple threat, as it feeds your soul in youth, maturity, and retirement! Making it an exceptionally good use of wood pulp and ink.

Bursting onto the page, in “The Crystal Singer” Killashandra Ree enters, stage left! An angstful young woman, denied her dream, possessed of sexual liberation, and impetuous enough to take a risk that leads to an amazing life adventure – her adventures are fulfilling fodder for those approaching adulthood.

In Anne McCaffrey’s second novel of the trilogy (aptly named “Killashandra”), we find a story that touches upon more mature, early to mid-adult life experiences of young love sacrificed – emotions drowned out by the distractions of a “business trip” – the timeless moral conundrum of personal liberty versus manipulation and control “for the sake of the greater good” – and even the vagaries and powerlessness created by endless bureaucratic red tape.

Exquisite writer that she was, Anne McCaffrey didn’t leave her senior citizen readers out, with book 3 (“Crystal Line”) touching upon the effects of time, aging, the emotional tiredness of lengthy relationships and an incredibly circuitous pathway back to true love, all while gracefully touching upon the question: “What is life anyway?” Mixed in are some good old-fashioned corporations chasing resources and profit at the expense of native beings who so inconveniently need those rare resources to survive – spurring us, as readers, to do some deep thinking.

As a self-avowed science-fiction writer, Anne makes all of this happen far, far away from Earth on planets that I can still see, hear, smell and taste...30 years later.

If crystal that sings, ships that speak, interstellar travel, symbiotic relationships, weather systems that kill, secret totalitarian regimes, music, good Yarran Beer, and wildly fun adventures blended with romance and strong female archetypes are your thing – Run! Don’t walk! – to your nearest used book store and cross your fingers, because “Crystal Singer” is not the type of book to be casually tossed away. Of course, you can always buy it new, but I recommend used, borrowed, or rented (from friends or the library) whenever possible.

# Beyond The End Of The Line

By Jane Valencia

In this article I attempt to use terminology that depicts the reality that Japanese Americans suffered in the War Relocation Authority (WRA) camps during World War II, as opposed to the euphemisms employed at the time and often used to this day. For further information, please view this article at vashonloop.com. To find out more about the Vashon Japanese American experience, visit the Vashon Heritage Museum and the Mukai Farm and Garden.

In Eastern Colorado last October, while seeking a campground called End of the Line, my husband Andy and I drove past a sign with an arrow above it: “Amache Japanese-American Relocation Center ... Wait, is that a concentration camp?”

Indeed, we had just passed the Amache Japanese American concentration camp, established originally as the “Granada War Relocation Center.” A sense of disquiet filled me, and of ancestors, and the need to hear this story, to walk the land. Here on Vashon, Japanese American families were incarcerated in camps such as Amache. Andy and I ourselves live on land previously owned by an Island family that was forcibly removed to one of these camps.

The next day, Andy and I wandered the Amache grounds. As characteristic of these camp’s locations, the land is remote and desolate. Placards and various areas depict the harsh, crowded conditions to which people arrived: the lack of privacy, little protection from the elements, and poor and inadequate food and bathroom facilities. A watchtower still stands, atop which

soldiers stood guard “For the internee’s protection,” but with machine guns and search lights directed inward, and barbed-wire fences configured to prevent anyone from escaping. Amache housed over 7,000 people within a square mile.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 turned our world upside down, shocking the U.S. psyche in the same way that 9/11 would 60 years later, and the COVID-19 response more recently. Racial prejudice, concerns for national security, and perhaps the need to be seen as controlling the situation all overrode the safeguarding of individual civil liberties. On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, granting authority to the War Department “To prescribe military areas...from which any or all persons [of Japanese descent] may be excluded.”

More than 120,000 Japanese Americans became excluded from the West Coast and forced into military-style camps such as Amache. Two-thirds of them were *Nisei*, second-generation, and thus American citizens. Many *Issei*, first-generation Japanese immigrants, likely would have been citizens as well, had they not been barred from naturalization. No due process of law was involved in this incarceration, nor was there any evidence that these families and individuals were truly the threat to the U.S. they were deemed. Not one Japanese American was ever convicted of espionage or sabotage.

Mary Matsuda Gruenewald, in her book “Looking Like the Enemy,”

# Both Sides Now

By Andy Valencia

When I was the manager of all software development at a fairly large startup, I made the worst management decision of my career. Two of my top technical leads came to me with a design tradeoff which they just could not settle between themselves. They each told me their position, and I then chose. One guy smirked; the other looked at me with a bit of wounded disappointment.

What I should have done is have each of them argue the other lead’s position. Whoever did the best presentation would then own the decision, including folding in parts of both proposals as they saw fit. The higher you climb on the management ladder, the more your job is only about hiring good people and ensuring they have the information and authority to make the right things happen.

When you do Internet searches, treat your search engines like highly skilled employees. Can they show you both sides of a decision you’re considering? And not just mention one side, but enable you to understand the people who have reasonably chosen each side? If they can’t or won’t, treat them like a second-class source of information.

In medical decisions, you can get a second opinion. Did you know the same is true of search engines? Whichever one you start from, let the variety of available search engines work for you!

google.com is, of course, the biggest search engine. If anybody has the answer, they will. But will you get



# My Little Slice of Heaven

By Mary Litchfield Tuel

The cat jumped up on me, and he was wet. I thought maybe he had slobbered all over himself, but as I toweled him off, I looked out the window and saw the leaves on the apple tree bouncing with raindrops.

Earlier, before it rained, I swept off the front porch. That sounds straightforward, but like most chores, one darn thing led to another. Going out the front door, I bounced back when I hit a spiderweb that covered most of the door opening. Pretty one, too – one of those classic webs with radiating spokes and precisely placed rows of filaments.

I don't know if the spider was more surprised than I was by that bounce, but I do know that she wasn't expecting to catch something my size. I backed up and ducked under the web so her day's work wouldn't be wasted.

Home ownership is part of the American Dream, right? But it is almost impossible for young people starting out to buy a house, and Rick and I were no exception. We got this one because of dumb luck and low standards. For example, there was no bathroom in the mess hall, where the kitchen and bedrooms were, and we had to walk up the hill to the dormitory building and brush through cobwebs to get to a toilet. To get to the shower, you had to walk through an inky dark passage behind the toilets. Creepy.

The initial construction here began around 100 years ago by Norwegian-Danish Methodists, with help from the Epworth League. These fine folks built little cabins for

campers, a dormitory with bathrooms, a church/Chautauqua Hall, and a mess hall. All the camp structures were still here when I arrived in 1977, but went away one by one, while the little summer cottages surrounding the camp were remodeled into year-round family residences.

The County removed the church building some time ago, before converting the field out front into a community drain field. We have a community sewer system now, and as far as I know, we all have indoor toilets. Wahoo!

You would think the people who built the camp would have noticed that water ran down the hill, turned right, and headed for the mess hall. Mind you, originally the mess hall was set on pilings, so the water flowed right under it and into the creek. But in 1987, when it was remodeled into a house, we got all fancy-schmancy and put a foundation under the place.

A few months before we had the foundation built, I noticed that the north end of the house seemed to be bouncing. I went out to check the piling under the northwest corner and discovered that, rather than the piling holding up the house, the house was holding up the piling. This explained the trampoline effect. Putting a foundation under the house fixed that.

But I digress.

When we have a real downpour now, the water flows down the hill and into our yard, as it always has. There is a drain by the front porch that clogs right away in heavy rain,

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# Island Voices

## The Strength of Pretend

By Deborah H. Anderson

Finding the perfect cinnamon roll at the Edmonds Bakery was a moment of bliss. Huge, spirally, gently baked, lightly glazed, with hidden chunks of nut pieces in the inner fold's perfection brought unparalleled mouth happiness. Saturday afternoon delight, for sure.

Smithsonian Free Museum Day drew me to Edmonds. The drive to my other choice, the Tacoma Glass Museum, would have been untenable given Revive I-5 and a sinkhole on 405. Looking north found me enjoying the Edmonds Historical Museum and a leisurely stroll to their central downtown feature. A majestic canopy of mature deciduous branches, a water fountain in the center of the brick-paved roundabout, and eateries on all four corners gathered a continuous stream of cars circling for parking and pedestrians deciding which direction to walk. The city presented a more sophisticated, less-rustic version of Vashon's four-way stop, like a landmark garden, save for one difference.

As I sat on the painted and polished black, slated metal bench outside the bakery, I heard at least a dozen different languages: Eastern European, Asian, Spanish, English, Middle Eastern, and saw one couple signing American Sign Language. A linguistic symphony filled my ears with joy.

When I finally allowed myself to

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# Blackberry's Bundle

By Caelan Angell

Landing on Island and surveying the possibilities of restoration work, the first major and apparent challenge is handling the intimidating blackberry buttresses. Their thick ridged canes form seemingly impenetrable thorny defenses, any attempt to wrestle them resulting in a desert sky's worth of red and purple constellations. Their ability to regenerate and reproduce is staggering, boasting over a dozen ways of reproducing asexually, thousands of seeds being generated by a single pant. Their growth rate of 5-8cm a day can leave one feeling like Sisyphus ever rolling his boulder up hill, sections having been cut back seemingly regrowing over night. Witnessing Himalayan, or Armenian Blackberries ability to climb and strangle out other shrubs and even trees leaves me with clenched fists.

Yet despite the murderous feeling I often feel for this plant, I never turn down a taste of their bountiful fruit. While I only ever seem to catch thimbleberries for no more than a couple fruiting days, Blackberries seem to produce their juicy gems all summer long. Had Persephone visited Vashon, Hades would have likely offered her a Blackberry patch, the bountiful fruits entrapping her while vines grew, forming an impenetrable holding cell.

However, I cannot help but admire the voracious abundance that is Blackberry. I cannot disperse my awe as Blackberry continuously resists the violent efforts of containment used by so many cities and individuals. The

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## The Dorsal Spin: Enduring Spirits

By Orca Annie Stateler

In the grip of the pandemic, Tlingit artist Odin Lonning painted four square panels for the Open Space Arts and Community's public outdoor mural project. From openspacevashon.com: "Attention! Artists at Work" is a jobs program led by Open Space in partnership with local nonprofit organizations. The goal of the program is to hire artists who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Inspired by large public art murals, as well as the AIDS quilt, "The Mural Project" is a quilt of paintings, each as one-of-a-kind as our community. In summer 2020, 21 local artists were commissioned to create 45 panels with the theme "Backyard Universe."

The Open Space Mural Project is stunning. If you have not yet seen it, go immediately to behold the diversity of art styles. Odin and I are truly grateful that Open Space compensated us for work during a financially stressful time. Due to COVID restrictions, most islanders missed their chance to meet the artists and experience the grandeur of this beautiful and consequential project. We invite Open Space to consider a second public unveiling of this project.

Odin's panels are C7, E1, E7, and E8. We embraced the "Backyard Universe" theme, with specific references to surviving a pandemic in the year 2020. Each panel is laden

with spiritually, culturally, and politically relevant images. In "Enduring Kéet Spirits" (panel E7, photo), the large central orca symbolizes revered Southern Resident killer whale (SRKW) matriarch Granny (J2), 1911-2016. The dorsal fin with crescent-shaped nick and gray saddle patch outline are representational and unique to Granny. A stylized Salish salmon fills her belly – salmon sustain Resident orcas. Her saddle patch and tail flukes contain spirit faces. In Northern Coastal formline, spirit faces are typically carved and painted near body joints, signifying movement, life, and thus, spirit.

The juvenile orca beneath Granny embodies an aspirational seven generations of Resident killer whales, as well as young orcas we know who deeply touched our hearts, especially Kéetla/Springer (A73), b. 2002 and Tsu'xiit/Luna (L98), 1999-2006. Three faces in the body signify J, K, and L Pods – the SRKW – and celebrate Northern Resident Kéetla/Springer. At age 22, she is now a matriarch with three offspring: Spirit (A104), b. 2013; Storm (A116), b. 2016; and another cutie on the way! Salish salmon flank the killer whales on the lower left and right.

The upper right quadrant displays the Big Dipper and Comet NEOWISE, which we frequently saw in close proximity when we went comet-

watching in 2020. Moreover, the Big Dipper is on the Alaska state flag; Odin grew up in Alaska. The upper left quadrant features an eclipse or blood moon with a grayish-white Transient killer whale, Tl'uk (T46B1B), born in 2018, missing in June 2021, and declared dead by July 2022. Sweet little Tl'uk was famous during his short life for his unusual coloring, which likely resulted from leucism or Chédiak-Higashi Syndrome – an immunosuppressive disease often associated with premature death. His name Tl'uk came from a Halq'eméylem word for "moon." The Halq'eméylem are Fraser Valley, BC Coast Salish peoples. Tl'uk was one of

several white killer whales encountered along the Northwest Coast over at least a century.

Indigenous Peoples' Day is October 10. Odin's artwork will be on display at Dig Deep Gardens, 19028 Vashon Hwy SW, through the month of October. We are conferring with community members about events for Native American Heritage Month in November. For more information, call 206-463-9041 or email OdinShark@aol.com.





# MINGLEMENT

ORGANIC MARKET EST. 1972

## Horseradish & Fire Cider Recipe

Local horseradish is in, and so are all the ingredients (including Ball gift jars) to make your fire cider vinegar remedy for winter’s woes and health.

We owe a big thanks to Rosemary Gladstar for bringing her fire cider concoction to the forefront and sharing her recipes for all to use for health.

Use her recipe as a base and add your own ingredients, and give as gifts for winter health. Add berries, herbs, or something else from your own garden. – Eva

### Ingredients

- ½ cup horseradish, freshly grated
- ½ cup or more onions, chopped
- ¼ cup or more garlic, chopped
- ¼ cup or more ginger, freshly grated
- Cayenne pepper fresh (chop it up) or dried (flaked or ground), to taste
- Apple cider vinegar, preferably raw and organic
- Honey

Minglement has been around for a long time on the island – established 1972 - and continues now as before to support the healthy lifestyles of our customers. Once considered counterculture and marginalized because of a “granola-eating, yogurt-liking” lifestyle, it’s embraced now and all the rage.

Visit our updated website [www.minglement.com](http://www.minglement.com)

## Tostones with Mayo-Ketchup Dipping Sauce

By Luis Enrique

A family recipe, from Puerto Rico! Tostones is plural for Tostón, and is a crunchy plate-shaped fritter made of just green plantain. Tostones are usually enjoyed with mayonaise-Ketchup dipping sauce or seafood on top.

### Ingredients and Tools

- Green plantains (NOT bananas; YES, you read GREEN plantains)
- Frying oil (coconut or olive oil recommended)
- Garlic
- Mayonnaise
- Ketchup
- Cutting board
- Frying pan
- Coffee mug

Step 1, make the sauce: Mash 3 cloves of garlic in a mortar to a paste-like consistency. Mix mayonnaise and ketchup in a 3 to 2 ratio. Gradually add garlic until you reach desired taste (you can always add more, but you can’t take it out!).

Step 2, fry the plantains: Peel the green plantains and cut them into one-inch rounds. Fry the rounds in preheated oil on medium heat until golden; remove them from the oil and place on a paper towel.

Step 3, shape the plantains: On the

### Instructions

Place the herbs in a half-gallon mason jar and add enough vinegar to cover them by 3 to 4 inches. Seal the jar with a tight-fitting lid. Place the jar in a warm spot and let sit for 3 to 4 weeks. Shake the jar every day to help in the maceration process.

After 3 to 4 weeks, strain out the herbs, reserving the liquid. Warm the honey (so that it will mix in well) and add it to the vinegar, to taste. “To taste” means that your Fire Cider should be hot, spicy, and sweet.

Bottle, label, and enjoy! Your Fire Cider will keep for several months unrefrigerated if stored in a cool pantry. But it’s better to store in the refrigerator if you have room.

### Notes

A small shot glass daily serves as an excellent tonic. Or take Fire Cider by teaspoons throughout the day if you feel a cold coming on.

Minglement keeps Rosemary Gladstar’s book “Fire Cider!” in stock. Also, staff members have their own ideas as to what one could add to the recipe. Feel free to ask them!

Recipe used with permission. Learn more about Rosemary Gladstar and Fire Cider at [scienceandartofherbalism.com](http://scienceandartofherbalism.com).



cutting board, smash the fried plantain rounds flat using your coffee mug. If they don’t hold together – or if they stick to the mug – they need to be fried longer.

Step 4, re-fry the plantains: Throw once-fried smashed plantain rounds back into the oil, this time on high heat. This second fry will give them a crunchy texture.

Tostones masters make sure to salt their tostones as soon as they come out of the pan and – like anything fried – eat them while they’re still hot.

Buen Provecho!



## The Roasterie News

By Eva Deloach

My Foundation, called Traditions, (est. 2003) is a 501(C)(3) that contributes to indigenous communities and individuals at the vanguard of the natural environment.

Indigenous Elders and these communities protect the natural environment. Numbering more than 370 million individuals worldwide, these cultures have not lost their unique understanding of local environments and cosmic mythology. Their community elders are vital resources of ancestral knowledge that comprises oral history, ritual, and land stewardship, as well as medicinal and culinary traditions.

What we think of as beautiful wilderness has long been a tended relationship between a people and a place and the entire ecology.

Conservation efforts to protect the wild by forcing indigenous peoples from these places and restricting them from practicing their life ways on these lands disrupts ancestral relationships. The wild suffers, as do the people. It is well worth researching this situation.

I hope that you are inspired to take action and seek the path of your own origin stories – to re-member and find value in becoming an ally to these cultures from all continents as they protect these places of immense diversity and beauty that is linked to the health of The Earth and all her inhabitants currently endangered.

Visit our website to learn more: [www.tvicr.com](http://www.tvicr.com).



New offering at The Roasterie

### Morning Star

### Medium-Dark – Aegean Rustic Roast

Venus, The morning star planet, the brightest star in the pre-dawn sky, is worth waking to see. This complex blend has the brightest flavor profile of all our offerings. A blend of Ethiopian, aged Sumatra, and more. May this delicious coffee guide you gently through dawn and into your day.

## Scone-Loving Author Searches for Treasure on Vashon Island – Needs Our Help!

The title says it all, and if you enjoyed some freshly baked Fisher Scones in the Thriftway parking lot this past weekend (October 7-8), then you already know all about it!

If not, perk up your eyeballs and read slowly – so you don’t miss a single clue. Yes, it’s true! The famed author of, “Memories of Mount St. Helens” recently regaled me with a story of a mysterious, jam-smearing, butter-loving, scone-devouring man in his 40s or 50s who – eyes flying left to right, as he leaned in close – spoke of a secret barn, covered in paintings of ancient, scone-baking islanders.

With a wail of woe, Jim Erickson admitted that he failed to ask the man’s name. This brings us to the purpose of this message, this entreaty, this plea, and Jim’s greatest hope: to find the epic barn and record the history of Fisher Scones, which goes back to 1911 and the Fisher Flour Mills. And he needs your help. Our help. Help, in general!

If you’ve seen these elusive, archaic writings and barn drawings, make Jim’s day and text him at 253-777-9499. I’m guessing you (and your stomach) will be well rewarded.



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# It's More About the Fascia

By Sandi Silagi

If you have back pain and instability, the connective tissue in your body, the fascia, is the most likely reason. Most people with back pain are told to improve their core strength. Most people with balance issues are told to practice standing on one leg. The strength of the muscles in core conditioning is most likely not the problem. Current studies are proving the suppleness of the fascia (hydration and pliability of the tissue) to be the cause of discomfort, not the muscular strength of the “core.”

In 2010, just 12 years ago, the book, “The Myth of Core Stability,” by Professor Eyal Lederman, Physiotherapist, PhD, and Doctor of Osteopathy, gave two viewpoints of particular importance: Weak or dysfunctional abdominal muscles will not lead to back pain; and tensing the trunk muscles is unlikely to protect against back pain or reduce its recurrence. That was quite questionable in 2010; it is now being proven true with studies showing that most back pain is related to the fascia rather than muscle.

Sometime after age 26, the scaffolding of our bodies starts to change. Instead of the skin being taut, and the underlying tissue hydrated and supple, these characteristics reverse. Our skin loses elastin, and repetitive movement patterns create dehydration.

Without noticing much discomfort, our movements can become smaller. Your top shelf and lower cabinet get used for things you don't need access to; you may not

notice that you can no longer reach high or bend down. People buy slip-on shoes to avoid bending forward to tie their laces. Things like that get little second thought. It is easy to avoid thinking about.

By regularly moving and being less sedentary, we can often avoid the discomfort. The key word is regularly. Regularly means most days. Regularly moving such that you find ease in the entire body moving. Walking is a great example of a best regular movement. There is natural rotation and reach throughout the body. The arms swing, the legs swing, you look around. Walking is core conditioning, and it is fascia conditioning. Walking stimulates the whole body.

It makes as much sense to care for our soft tissue as to strengthen the muscle. The collagen and elastin are fibers in the fascia, the inner connections; these fibers keep our scaffolding (skin and other soft tissue) strong. The muscles are the motors; the non-muscle fascia is the leverage. The non-muscle fascia of collagen and elastin provide absorption and transfer mechanism of force. Collagen can be thought of as a spring. A loaded spring transfers the force of the movement.

Think of the elastin as an elastic band. The elasticity of the tissue relies on the elastin. Elastin keeps your internal memory foam supportive. You need the fibers in the fascia to slide and glide for healthy force absorption. If your tissues are dehydrated or you are sedentary, there is no slide and glide. Instead,

Continued on Page 7

# Health Matters

## Ten Things To Know About American Healthcare That Industry Insiders Will Not Tell You, Part Two

By Wayne Miller

For part 1 of this story, see the September 2022 issue at [vashonloop.com](http://vashonloop.com).

**6. We are 12+ years into ObamaCare and have collectively spent more than \$24 trillion on chronic healthcare services, but the healthcare system has barely taken a step toward the transformative thinking necessary to operationalize meaningful change.** There has been no decrease in chronic disease rates, and we spend more money on healthcare services than ever. This begs the issue: How much more time and money do you want to give to the same people and institutions that have proven to be inept at operationalizing innovation? Considering that overall federal indebtedness is about \$31 trillion, the recognition that we are spending so much on chronic illness should be sobering. The entire fiscal instability of the US is directly related to chronic disease.

**7. In 55% of all US congressional districts, healthcare companies are the dominant economic engine of the community.** The Department of Defense would envy this situation, as

it ensures that no elected representative is going to demand what is needed to compel substantive change. For example, everyone hates Big Pharma, but no one blames their local hospital for being part of the problem. After all, you know people who work there — they are neighbors and they are good people. In my healthcare policy experience, I have found that policymakers (elected officials) often know very little about healthcare. They don't know how to think about it, and they cannot identify the root causes that enable its problems to persist. They do not know who to talk with to get any diversification of thought on any topic, and they rely upon established institutions and individuals for information. Once, I thought these policymakers were universally ignorant. I learned along the way that they simply do not have the time to go down every rabbit hole, even when a complete lack of sensibility stares them in the face.

**8. Most people think of the practice of medicine as being well grounded in “established” science. Most people are wrong.** Historically, specialist physicians have often been paid twice as much as primary care physicians to deliver the exact same therapeutic protocols. Though physicians would dispute it, the research on the effectiveness of these patient care practices is clear (references upon request): Only 11% of guideline-recommended patient care practices have any strong supporting evidence, called Class A evidence in the scientific literature. Said differently, 89% of recommendations fall into what is called Class B or C evidence, which

Continued on Page 7

## Home2Vashon 2022

by Rich Osbourne

In late 2016, I was selling my “All Things Rich” spices and oil at the Saturday Farmers Market. My friend, Patty was crying. I asked, “What’s wrong?” She told me, “I can’t afford Garrett’s ferry home from his cancer treatment.”

That Tuesday, at Vashon Community Care where I lead the Music Mends Minds singalong, I talked to my friend Kathy. She told me “Rich, when I take my husband in for his cancer treatment, we can’t afford lunch.” This hit me hard.

I texted my Sufi teacher, Sheikh Tosun Bayrak of the Halveti Jerrahi Order of America. “I need your advice.” He told me that this is why I am on Vashon. Three weeks later, I received a \$3,000 check from the Jerrahi Order to get things started. A few days after that, my teacher died.

I found out that Vashon Youth and Family Services provides free Medical ferry tickets. I spoke to Carol Goertzel, VYFS executive director. I proposed Home2Vashon, an ongoing annual fundraising event to raise funds. She agreed. I talked to a lot of people. I got donations.

We had a concert at Camp Burton on October 25, 2017 with The Balkan Womens’ Choir and The Curvettes. Vashon Thriftway and Vashon Fresh IGA donated salmon and beef. Chef Dre Neeley of Gravy was our Celebrity Chef. He provided the rest of the meal.

We had a raffle and an auction. Vashon Rotary stepped up to help in a big way. We raised \$10,000. With this success, we continued. Every dime we raise goes directly to VYFS, which has 501(C)(3) tax status.

In 2018, our concert moved to Open Space; “Ladies in the Kitchen” performed. In 2019, it was Open Space again, and “The Mongols of Rock & Roll” performed. In 2020, we went virtual; “Jennifer Stills & Friends” performed. In 2021, we moved to the Vashon Center for the Arts, where Kat Eggleston performed. VCA has become a great partner for us. They help us in too many ways to recount here.

On 6 PM November 5, 2022 we will be at VCA again. Alchemy (The Curvettes, rebooted) will perform. We will be auctioning experiences and other things. Tickets are available at VCA. Or call VYFS at 206-463-5511.

My business is doing well enough that I now donate \$1,000 each year. I invite you to join me. I never ask people to “Give until it hurts.” I quote my friend and co-conspirator, the late David Carleton, who we lost last week: “Give until it feels good.”

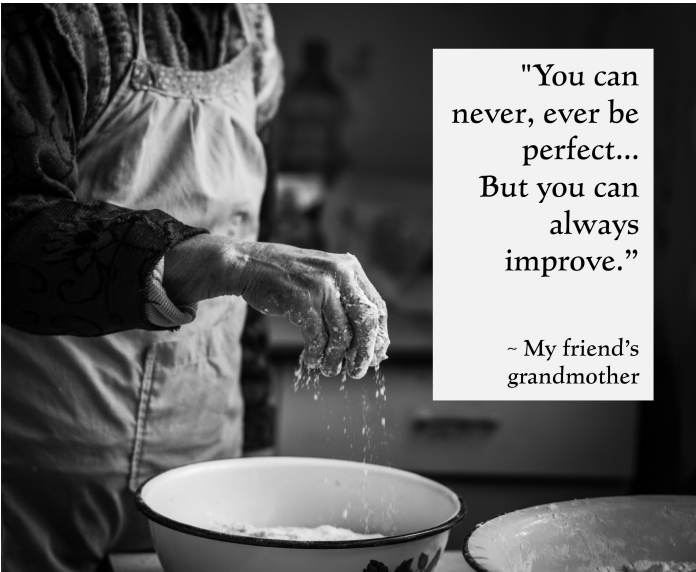
(We love you, man.) So come. Give. It’s good for you.

## Covid - What's On Your Mind?

COVID-19 is one of the biggest challenges we face today. As such, it deserves our utmost attention. But talking about anything related to COVID-19 has become progressively harder. What's an independent newspaper to do?

At The Vashon Loop, our decision is to turn to you for guidance before we start including this coverage. Readers, neighbors, friends, and fellow Islanders – What's on your mind when it comes to COVID-19? What do you want to know more about? What would you like to write about? Which aspects of the past three years are you most interested in, and what topics seem most relevant as we move forward together? Write us at [editor@vashonloop.com](mailto:editor@vashonloop.com).

To provide an idea of what independent coverage might look like, our own Caitlin Rothermel has researched and written about the new generation of Covid vaccines, at [vashonloop.com/bivalent](http://vashonloop.com/bivalent). We invite you to visit and read this article.



"You can never, ever be perfect... But you can always improve."

- My friend's grandmother

## Health Disclaimer

Information in The Vashon Loop is meant for educational purposes only. Any health-related content is the opinion of the author alone and should not be used to diagnose or treat medical conditions or to prescribe medicine. Your health is your personal responsibility, and your body and situation is unique. Please consult with an appropriate medical resource or healthcare provider when making healthcare decisions.

An Incurable Trickster

Continued from Page 1

liquid...and your ten bucks would be gone. Magic, until the credit card companies sniveled at the charge: “One Gallon Rice Brother’s Moonshine.” After that, it had to be cash only.

John and I were having a short snort in the cabin, discussing last night’s poker game at the Eagles in Republic. Aerie 68 is one of the earliest chapters. We went to the shed to inspect the results of the ongoing distillation. John said: “Jeez. It tastes like it could take rust off grader blades... but if you run it through my special filter made from diatomaceous earth, activated carbon, and special cotton... it might be useful in raising the dead!” We agreed after a few sips that improvement was necessary. After adjusting the brew and setting up filters, we came out of the shed, looking forward to a few minutes of late-afternoon sun. The first thing we saw was Tukatah sitting on the bench-table with shiny keys in his beak, taunting us for sure.

John had teased the raven with his keys until Tukatah grabbed them and tore out the door with John in hot pursuit, a broom in his hand. The raven hated the broom and would “croak” and run, it made him so mad. He dived under the shop, into an inadequate crawl space. Out of reach, of course.

The problem solved itself when I saw something shiny and kicked the leaves under the big fir tree between the cabin door and the shop and found the keys. The raven had dropped them as he performed the ruse of having taken the keys under the shop, and that wasn’t the end of his capers.

To read more about Tukatah the raven, visit the [vashonloop.com](#)

It's About The Fascia

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you may experience achiness in gummed-up tissue.

Soft bouncing and tapping can release the gummed-up tissue and support and connect the fibers. Working with the tissue to release holding patterns in our bodies reduces pains that limit movement and mobility and cause instability. Bouncing can help you move better and feel better. Melt Method techniques and sequences of compression and vibration and bouncy movement can hydrate and stimulate the tissue to respond. This type of movement will then support muscular strength and provide the needed leverage for ease in your body.

Let’s explore this a little – I’ll walk you through. Start seated and start small; there should be no pain – zero, nada. Let’s get moving and find the movements that will bring you the balance and confidence to move more.

Sit in your chair; slowly move or bounce the hips forward and back. Think of an infant before they stand, they get excited and wiggle their butt – start with a little wiggle. (That little wiggle is strengthening the core!) Now stand in a place where you feel supported, soften the knees, and let the body bounce lightly there. Enjoy the silly of it all. You know, the first thing a baby will do once they can hold themselves up is bounce. Something to think about.

That’s it! Bouncing seems like nothing, but can do so much within your body! I bet if you had checked your balance before you bounced and again after you bounced, you would be more balanced afterwards! Bouncing stimulates signals and creates new pathways.

Move small, move big; move front, move back. If you think you can’t bounce, well, you are not alone! It has to be practiced.

Ten Things To Know About American Healthcare

Continued from Page 6

can be essentially defined as: “There aren’t enough studies to prove efficacy one way or another, but physicians think that the therapeutic intervention under study may work.”

Science, of course, is an iterative process that does not advance by consensus. It advances when data become available to make it clear that some activity (heretofore unknown or unappreciated) produces superior results than standard-of-care medicine.

**9. The innovation cycle in healthcare is about 17 years.** This means that, when something is “discovered” or revealed by research, it will not find its way into the physician’s office for patient use for 17 years. This statistic is well known, and has not materially changed over time, though one might think otherwise. While one might be tempted to blame physicians for the tardiness with which they embrace change (and some criticism is justified), no individual physician bears responsibility. If physicians stray too far from the consensus of the crowd, the influences they are subject to may lead to negative consequences to their reputation and economic well-being.

**10. Many people decry that we have a for-profit healthcare system, but there are already many non-profit hospitals, insurance companies, and clinics.** A finance distinction must be made here. Profits are a function of accounting rules and are not nearly as relevant to explain the dysfunction of America’s healthcare system as revenue, which is a function of cash flow. These two finance features are not the same, and the perpetuation of the latter is far more problematic than the former. For

example, total insurance company profits are about 3% of total healthcare expenditures. Those profits don’t ever help patients. However, remove them entirely, and in the greater scheme of things, it doesn’t matter. If healthcare inflation is running at 3%, then patient care will not materially improve by virtue of removing all profit from the system.

What has to change is paying for services that do not materially produce a movement toward health. This is the heart of the problem – a payment system that utterly fails to qualify payments on the basis of how well the services delivered work for the patient. This is an informatics (data) problem. We must gather the data needed to make the assessment. If we don’t, expecting qualitative material change to American Healthcare is a fool’s errand.

Epilogue: Data will set you free

We must change the entire data function within healthcare operations or suffer the consequences, individually and collectively. Comparative effectiveness and cost-effectiveness are measures routinely used in various industries to assess capital allocation. An attempt to stimulate this approach was embedded in Obamacare with the creation of the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). Funded with \$10 billion, it was a great idea, but for one thing. To establish PCORI, Congress had to commit to never use what was learned at PCORI in the development of public policy. Yes, that specific prohibition was explicit in the ACA legislation.

See *Wayne’s biography*, posted online at the [vashonloop.com](#).

The Strength of Pretend

Continued from Page 4

be pushed off the Island by real estate challenges and semi-retirement from being a caregiver for special needs families, I was terrified. Like some character from the Brazilian Netflix Show “3%” (simplistically described as the war between the 97% have-nots and the 3% haves), after 25 years of, “Vashon is the best, most friendly, culturally and artistically diverse, beautiful, peaceful place,” it was daunting to move from “Offshore” to “Inland” (using the terms from the show). Re-registering as a “Summer Person” was daunting.

Landing in Crossroads, the area in Bellevue I lovingly call “Bill Gates Plantation,” workers from around the world who come to serve a bigger, better Microsoft, flood Trader Joe’s at dinnertime. Watching a man with two elementary-age children bent over the frozen food section, phone to ear, describing choices in some Southeast Asian language, made my heart sing. I love diversity.

Me on an Island with a ninety-percent-ish white-dominant culture population probably wasn’t the best fit, I’ll admit. I have always lived in culturally, racially, and economically diverse communities. When I hear people complaining about how Vashon is changing, I think to myself, “Do they realize the whole nation is changing?”

Finally, I settled into my digs, 12 blocks north of the neighborhood in which we lived before moving to

Vashon way back when. Ahhh...the mainland! Fifteen minutes to full-service 24/7 medical care. Blocks from a variety of diverse restaurants and walk-up food windows. My Buy Nothing Club has the same small-town feel and friendliness Vashon espouses. If there’s a traffic jam, there is always an alternate route. And the night I left the car open by accident and nary a thing was taken. No trauma. No drama. I could go to the store and be in and out in five minutes. The mainland was no worse than Vashon.

There’s a Facebook post quoting Egyptian journalist Mona Eltahawy: “It’s the writer’s job to tell society what it pretends it doesn’t know.”

Pretend. My friends who belong to AA, in recovery, talk about “The strength of pretend.” Apparently, it’s when a person doesn’t want to face the real truth about circumstances and pain. A false narrative is created about how good things are.

From the mainland, I can say that Vashon has some serious issues to acknowledge and discuss. Floating privilege, an elite Island community, isn’t really trending right now. Does that seem harsh? The reality of that is very harsh. It just is. No answers, just questions: How does Vashon need to change? What does Vashon need to give up? How can Vashon find a way into an ethical future that mirrors the nation’s experiences?

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## Poems of the Harvest

With Merna Ann Hecht

These poems are in celebration of autumn as a time of harvest and a time when a rich tapestry of color is paraded for us by the natural world. Merna Ann Hecht has contributed two poems and a favorite by Canadian poet Lorna Crozier. Merna is a long-time Vashon resident, a teaching artist for poetry, a storyteller, a poet, and a social justice advocate who has worked extensively with refugee and immigrant youth. She was Vashon’s Poet Laureate from 2017-19 and has loved poetry since age seven!

### Farmers Market at the Autumn Equinox

Even here, with yellow-leafed wind,  
and baskets heaped with saucers of squash,  
bunched arugula,  
lipstick and gypsy peppers,  
we know the news of the day,  
wars against children,  
tax cuts for the rich,  
environmental assault,  
it doesn’t stop,  
but this morning  
if I must think of what’s gone bad,  
let it be a bruised eggplant,  
an apple with a worm,  
let me hear the tambourine  
of the moon  
as it lights the way for the corn  
to rise up,  
slight breeze through my basket’s weave fills  
with memories, travels in me  
as if from the thin roots of carrots  
to the leafy tops,  
and I am with my grandfather  
as he listens to the small song  
of a seed before planting it,  
kneeling to earth  
he asks the seed, how it wants to flower.  
Tonight, I will dream of him  
dream he has cupped his hands  
around mine, and between us we hold  
a luminous sliver of prayer  
for what the world could still become.

By Merna Ann Hecht

This poem is in honor of my grandfather David Hecht, a master gardener, a storyteller, a lover of poetry and a banjo/mandolin player who loved life and lived to be 98! He is a huge influence on my life-long love of language, poetry, story, song and gardening.

### Why I Love Pumpkins

Because they roll into town on the backs of trucks  
with a loud orange  
crash –  
tomatoes, apples and melons  
moving away from the market stalls  
to make way for their huge invasion.  
Because the grocers pile them row on row  
with the same skill that builds stone fences.  
Because they are more accurate than calendars or clocks.  
Because of the grin some mother or father  
carves for a child. The nose,  
the triangular eyes that look at you  
as if they know your face.  
Because a candle flickers inside their head  
like memory  
striking its paper matches and blowing them out.  
Because they are the last  
of autumn’s light, the last to ripen,  
an explosion, a contradiction of  
colour in the colourless fields.  
Because they are not a vegetable  
for the delicate, the weak-hearted.  
When you knock on their doors, someone  
might answer, beckon you inside.  
Because they are moons defeated by gravity,  
hugging the earth in their orbits, as we do,  
dust to dust. Because in soups and pies  
and thick slices of pumpkin bread  
we taste what they know of time.  
Because of the small distances  
they travel on their trailing vines.  
Because they float just above the earth  
like lighted buoys marking the safest entrance  
to the harbour.  
Because the first snow falls  
into the huge silence  
the pumpkins leave  
in the fields.

By Lorna Crozier  
(Excerpted from a longer poem. Used with permission.)

Lorna Crozier is a well known, award-winning Canadian poet. She lives in Victoria. I have followed her unique, often whimsical poetry for years. I love her playful, repetitive “pumpkin” poem and hope others see it as an invitation to create their own love poems for autumn or harvest time. Examples might be, “Why I love Maple Trees,” or, “Why I love the Harvest Moon,” etc. Crozier has many publications.  
*See the web version of this article for another of Merna's poems, as well as one by Jane Hirschfield at vashonloop.com*

### Blackberry's Bundle

Continued from Page 4

way HBB looms over roadsides, choking off access roads, and crowding property lines, I cannot help but feel empowered by their resistance against the ‘order’ we humans have enforced upon the land. As I release my anthropocentric view of this ecological web my bloodlust is replaced by a wondering at what teachings blackberry holds for us in this time. Though I still grieve the species they continue to choke off and crowd out, I recognize the consequences for our actions. The way they slither into disturbed areas, almost like an immune response. The way they weave themselves over river banks, as if guarding these life paths from our corrupting hands, a fever of the land.

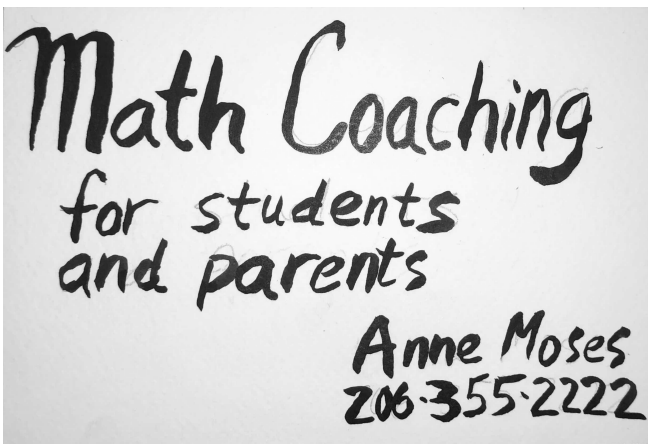
When my kitty lost his tracking collar, and the GPS located it in the middle of a buttress of Blackberry that rivaled the grandeur of the Great Wall of China, I felt dread. I wondered whether that expensive little device was worth braving the wrath of those wicked thorns. As darkness fell I walked the perimeter of the wall of thorns. My first breach attempts were thwarted easily until I noticed a point where the vines were not woven so thickly.

As I pulled back the draped canes a tunnel was revealed. The thorns grasped at my clothing as I emerged into a cathedral with arched ceilings and twisting columns. I noticed deer and raccoon tracks crossing back and forth, hidden from view, safe from the eyes of humans. And in that moment my feelings for Blackberry shifted dramatically. While I still feel the grief bordering on anger when I witness their conquest of large swaths of land, it is tempered with a slew of other emotions. Feelings of responsibility, that we introduced these beings to this place and disturbed the local balance so that they are susceptible to the invasion of Blackberry.

Recognition that their conquest is not the oppression that we have forced upon all other-than-human beings of these lands. That though they crowd out and choke off some species, they also feed and shelter others. As I fume at and hide from the many atrocities we humans are actively enacting upon our earthly community, I now look to Blackberry.

We must learn from their resiliency, weaving our connections with each other, human and otherwise, so thick as to be impassable, scaffolding each other to reach higher heights. We must become so robust with our creativity and empowerment that though our stems are cut and our roots dug up and sprayed with chemicals we need but only the smallest root fragment to re-sprout. We must grow with such abundance and rigor that though they may cut us back day after day, they cannot keep up with our ever-present growth. And we must cling to reciprocity and abundance even when things get ugly, always producing more fruit than could be consumed, always creating shelter for those who have no other place.

Now, as I cut back cane after cane of Blackberry, I respond to each poke and scratch with a murmur of gratitude following my profanity.



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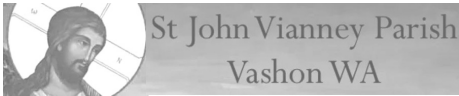


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My Little Slice of Heaven

Continued from Page 4

and then water flows over the porch, off the other side into a second drain placed there for such exigencies. The occasional floods leave behind shoals of sand, silt, and forest detritus – tiny cedar cones, sticks, and pieces of brush and grass. It did not rain long enough or hard enough today to flood the porch. But now that autumn is here, I need to go out there and make sure those drains are open.

Some people prefer to rent. If something goes wrong, they complain to the landlord, who is responsible for fixing it. Many of us, though, are really hooked on owning a house – it is a form of security, right? Well, sort of. The American Dream includes maintenance, repair, and those pesky property taxes. When the county values your property for more than you would ask if you were selling it, and you are asked to pay property

taxes based on that value, it feels a little less secure, so the dream is not undiluted bliss.

I am getting older, and I sometimes think about moving to some place that does not have ferries and does have accessible medical care and other amenities of mainland life, like Dairy Queen chocolate-dipped ice cream cones. It may come to that, but for now this house is still my little slice of heaven – property taxes, clogged drains, and all.



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This is a very big deal because in they last year and a half they have only come once.  
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Did you know that glyphosate (the active ingredient in Roundup) was first patented in 1961 as a chelating agent to strip mineral deposits off pipes and boilers? And that it was patented again in 1968 as an herbicide, and again in the early 2000s as an antibiotic? These applications and more all play a role in its detrimental impacts to human and animal health. We must educate ourselves to the realities that our reliance on chemicals has created. We are here to help you make sense of it all. Reach out and let us know how we can support you in your journey.



Continued from Page 1

And yet. A storm is brewing and the seas we’ve sailed so smoothly are getting rough. In March of 2022,the U.S. Federal Reserve funds rate stood at “Free Money!,” and 30-year mortgages could be had for 2.8%. Since then, the Fed has hiked rates the fastest ever, with more raises signaled, and as of this writing the best mortgage rate is 7.1%. On September 16, shares of Federal Express, perennially one of the world’s most respected companies, cratered 24% off the opening bell. The previous evening, its CEO had dared report the headwinds of global recession.

After school that same afternoon, our eighth grader announced we were out of cornflakes, and that our remaining milk had soured due to said lack of breakfast cereal. So, we swung by an island grocery. I forked over \$20 and waited in the car while he went in for re-supply. Coming back promptly, he set the bag down and handed me a single dollar bill. Puzzled, I asked, “Oh, you got something else? Candy?”

“No, Dad,” he said, “just the milk and cornflakes.” We bought these same staples in early summer for \$3 less, so they gapped up about 20% in 3 months.

The future’s uncertain and the end is always near. School bonds are specialized instruments; their precise costs and payoff dates can fluctuate widely, but a simple way of thinking about them is as a mortgage on the

community. The bad news is, borrowing money is no longer cheap and this bond is likely to be more expensive to pay off than prior bonds.

More obvious bad news is that \$19.5 million doesn’t go nearly as far as it once did. For example, replacing the entire high school gym would be on the far side of \$50 million. More, in fact, than the new high school building cost 10 years ago, and that price tag definitely puts passenger drone taxi services far beyond reach. The good news is, the gym looks great, it’s built like a bank vault, and could realistically last another 50 years – at which time it would become a treasured landmark. Meanwhile, painting it to color-coordinate with the school would be cheap.

The not-yet-perfected state of Washington does not build any actual public-school structures, but decrees local properties must be taxed over and above to make and support appropriate edifices to dignify and improve the education of our children. A \$19.5 million bond with no new buildings comes with undeniable sticker shock. But there is an entirely different and legitimate way to look at it.

If the inflation rate is 8.5% and climbing, then a 7.1% mortgage is a screaming deal, because you’ll pay it off in the future with devalued dollars. And since when have dollars ever re-valued? If the real inflation rate is closer to the 20% seen in stores, it’s an even better deal, and we should grab the money now and convert to tangibles. While we still can. So, one part of me says run away, and another says let’s roll.

and culturally divisive “yes, yes/no, no” loyalty questionnaire.

At the Amache Historical Site, placards offer glimpses of how these families strove to make a home for themselves, to salvage and nurture a place of dignity, well-being, and community in an overcrowded, prison-like environment. The tenacity of the human spirit is evident in photos of bountiful gardens and myriad activities in which the people engaged. Despite the injustice of their incarceration, many attempted to contribute to the country that was their home, and to prove their loyalty. This included volunteering to serve in an all-Nisei military unit that families feared would be sent on the deadliest missions. While this fear proved to be well-founded, the soldiers of 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team fought with heroism and devotion, becoming one of the most highly decorated units in the history of the United States Armed forces, and ultimately making a huge difference in influencing the government to rescind Executive Order 9066.

Mary’s book reveals repeatedly how her family relied on their Japanese American community, their traditions, and their faith in God to cope. Families had no guarantee that they might ever be permitted to return to their homes, or that they even had homes to which they could return. They feared for their lives and felt anxiety, anger, bitterness, grief, shame, and resentment within their situation. Despite the extreme stresses that catalyzed breakdowns in community and family ties in the camps, the Matsudas held a commitment to family unity, and to courage and honor.

The West Coast reopened to

**Both Sides Now**

Continued from Page 3

to see that answer? They have a large – and growing – list of editorial decisions they use to control your search result. If something’s true, but they don’t want you to know it – you won’t get it from them. And the list itself is secret.

bing.com is Microsoft’s answer to Google search. It started out weak and has become quite good. They scan web pages for themselves, and generate their own search results. As a huge corporation, they also bring an agenda to those results. But they’re much smaller in the search engine competition, and their results often feel less “rigged.” They also tailor results based on a profile they create about you. They want to keep you “in the fold”, and so they’ll skew their answers based on what they know you want to hear. It can make you feel happy, but it can put you in an echo chamber, and you won’t even know it.

startpage.com is a privacy wrapper around google.com. As such, it’s Google-style results, but without the per-user tailoring. It still reflects Google’s global censorship decisions, but lets you take one small step outside the echo chamber.

duck.com is also privacy-respecting. They start from bing.com’s datasets, but do their own indices and search result calculations. For their initial years, they were very even-handed in the results, but have now announced that they’ll be applying censorship to various categories of information. Disappointing, but they

Japanese Americans in 1945, and in time, this chapter in our history came to a close; however, the lives of Japanese Americans were irrevocably changed, and reintegration was often slow and painful. It was only decades later – with time, pressure, and perspective – that cases came to court, and wartime documents revealed that government attorneys had withheld, altered, and destroyed evidence favorable to Japanese Americans, and had made false claims that they were security threats. The exclusion order and incarcerations were shown to be based on racism and falsehoods. In December 1982, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) concluded that the incarceration of Japanese Americans had not been justified by military necessity. The report determined that the decision to incarcerate was based on “Race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.”

I used to think that we as a society would never again commit such atrocities, or that we as citizens would never stand by and let them happen. But in past years, we’ve witnessed how severe stresses, fueled by media and an agenda, can set us against one another and heighten division. Individually, we may have experienced how fear of community rejection or retaliation leads us to keep our opinions, questions, and at-odds experiences to ourselves. Tumultuous times are exactly when values and rights must be examined and upheld, for they exist to show us which lines we do not cross, terrain into which we do not stray, and provide standards to guide thoughtful decisions.

Concentration camps such as Amache are our Island’s history. The Vashon Japanese Americans who were incarcerated are the

*October 10, '22*

have a long way to go before they reach Google’s level. Very often their results are superior to Google’s.

search.brave.com comes from a company with a browser marketed as privacy-focused. It claims to build their own search indices, and to calculate their own search results – all while entirely preserving your privacy. However, their browser product is known for its aggressive integration of both ads and cryptocurrency monetization. Thus, most users expect the future to hold more ads and other nonsense. For now, it’s a pretty good experience.

rightdao.com scans the web for themselves, and builds their own search results. The result quality is inferior to, say, duck.com, but sometimes comes up with gems that the bigger search engines miss. They don’t appear to apply any hidden agenda to the results they provide.

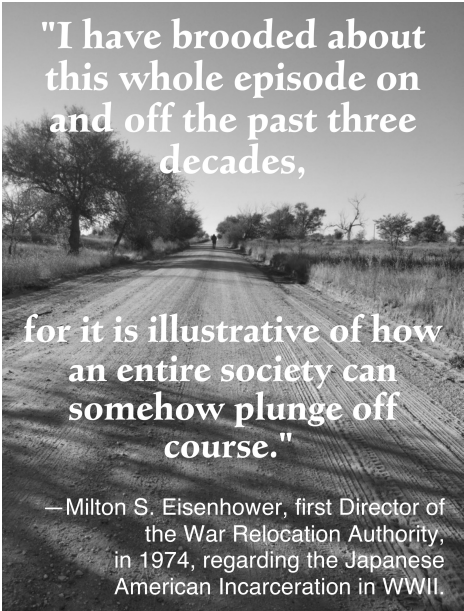
search.marginalia.nu is a beautiful labor of love; it feels like a one-man show. You won’t find the best product review of a cell phone, but you might find a poet or essayist who would be lost in the vast, profitable search machines of the giants. They’re the small-town newspaper of search engines.

Jump “the fence” of search, and maybe you’ll find a brand new part of the Internet!



grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and neighbors to all Islanders today. If we are ever to enter a world of peace and justice, we need to begin where we are: Respecting our diverse backgrounds, life ways, and personal choices, and truly giving honor to our perspectives and viewpoints. Especially in stressful times, we must take care to continue seeing one another as the neighbors, friends, colleagues, and family we are, and to make time to engage in curious conversation in which we might all be changed for the better.

As difficulties arise in new ways, let us walk together. Beyond the barbed wire of fear, accusation, and blame is the open air of fresh thoughts, humor, and compassion. May we Islanders choose the fertile wild ground of possibility that lies beyond the end of the line, and do our part in daily acts of listening, kindness, and courage to ensure that grievous wrongs such as those that the Vashon Japanese Americans suffered in World War II never take place again.







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# Planet Waves

by Eric Francis <http://www.PlanetWaves.net>



### Aries (March 20-April 19)

The world, by which I mean existence is swallowed by digital consciousness, has become a giant game of “you are wrong.” This is not a discussion of factual accuracy or intellectual integrity, but rather a mean-spirited drive to make sure that neither of those two things get to exist. It’s a game because it’s all a waste of time, which is designed to avoid the contact with reality and with one another that emerges from a state of trust. There can be no discoveries where everyone is suspicious of one another as a way of life.

### Taurus (April 19-May 20)

When you have all the answers, there is no mystery to anything. There is nothing to discover. And your mind goes to sleep. When you believe that anyone outside you has the answers, the effect is tripled. Part of sleeping is setting aside the necessity of wrestling with your conscience. Closely related is disabusing yourself of the notion that you might have made serious mistakes, or keeping that fact a secret from those whom it may in some way affect. Uranus is now past the midpoint of its seven-year journey through your sign.

### Gemini (May 20-June 21)

How do you know what you believe is true? That can be a disturbing question, which is why it’s so rarely asked. This unasked and therefore unanswered matter is responsible for the ways that individual people make the same mistakes over and over again, which then ripples out into the world. Mars retrograde in your sign is an opportunity and an invitation to correct the course of your existence. It is a time of review and reflection—during which making important decisions and embarking on new enterprises would be ill-advised.

### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

With the transition of the centaur Asbolus into your sign, it’s essential that you always follow your intuition. All of the centaurs (strange, slow-moving worlds in the spirit of Chiron) pertain to a healing process of some kind. There is always a challenge; an initiation. What people describe as intuition is an inner sense, and the overwhelming nature of the digital environment has taken most of us way outside of ourselves. This is added to the prior situation with intuition—most people cannot distinguish it from fear.

### Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)

Beware what you construe to be a “message from the gods.” This would count for any form of seemingly external verification of some idea you may have. That message might not be wrong, but it calls for reflection rather than immediate action. The astrology of late September and early October comes thundering through the mind and communication angle of your

solar chart, and it may indeed feel like you’re receiving signals from on high. The underlying theme is to learn how to open your mind, in a world where we are all being wedged into a tighter and tighter mental corner.

### Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)

If you find yourself stuck or in a state of confusion, check whether you are trying to achieve competing goals. Said another way, examine whether you’re working at cross-purposes to yourself. That can mean a few things, including not understanding what you’re doing or why you’re doing it. And it can include having two different intentions that ultimately conflict and stop progress. There is tremendous power to be gained from defining your intended goal or purpose for anything you do in a way that you understand and can explain.

### Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)

A stunning equinox chart followed by the New Moon in your birth sign describes one of those very rare occasions when your life is poised to renew itself entirely. I understand that this is the promise of every New Age and self-help book, as well as brand of mouthwash and car. However, I am talking about something else—the turnover of a cycle in your life that looks poised to release a tremendous amount of energy, which will need someplace to go.

### Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

Matters of intimate relationship are now at the forefront of your life, and this is deep material. While this is always true for you, you have reached a stage in your personal development where certain very old questions are coming up for investigation and resolution. To move through this territory successfully, you need one tool, mainly, which is the ability to be honest with yourself about what you know about yourself, and to extend that honesty into the most significant partnerships in your world. There are times when being truthful will not be convenient.

### Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)

The sense of pressure you may be feeling is your own vital force energy needing somewhere to go. These outlets cannot merely be through digital devices, no matter how creative your use of them may be. Numerous planets—including two directly associated with your sign, Jupiter and Chiron—are collecting in Aries, your 5th house, which pertains above all else to direct experience. The joke is that the 5th is, by topic, about playing, making art, sex for fun, and any activity associated with gambling or taking a risk.

### Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

Events at the time of the equinox seem destined to focus you not just on your reputation as an achiever, but also propel you into actual accomplishments. The energies at the Libra equinox and New Moon offer

many promises of success. Yet the caution from your chart is against wanting everything all at once. Based on the concentrated focus in your solar chart, you might expect to suddenly enter a major peak in your personal state and professional activities. However, what I suggest is the slow burn and the step-by-step improvement rather than any sense of soaring, peaking or escaping. If you are true to the qualities of your sign, you value deep and lasting results. That is different from some instant gratification of “making a difference.”

### Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

If you have lived for a long time with no view of the horizon, no sense that more is possible, a diminished sense of the future, or lacking faith in yourself, you will appreciate the astrology that is rapidly developing. Most of the action in your chart is on what we could call the spiritual level—it involves your perception of yourself rather than “objective reality.” From your own internal viewpoint, objective reality does not exist; there is only your personal (what is called subjective) perspective. This is what you’re being called to work with—to learn how your viewpoint determines what you see as reality. This is one of the most challenging lessons in a world where we are told that everything is mediated and determined from the outside.

### Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your present yoga is to be vigilant with the use of your resources, and as the case may be, those of other people. Whether in great or modest abundance, those resources exist, and are calling for impeccable and thoughtful allocation. You are in the position of making decisions for anything that you control. And those decisions require firm grounding, which means applied practical ethics and values. Working in this realm also requires you to bring out your negotiation skills. This does not mean pandering to the will and viewpoint of others, but rather collaborating with them to find the common ground that you share.

Read extended monthly horoscopes plus a wealth of extra material at **PlanetWaves.net**

Announcing our theme for the next three months (Nov.-Jan.)

## The Light and The Beautiful Dark

Are you inspired to contribute?  
Articles, poetry, comics, and more are welcome.  
Contact: [editor@vashonloop.com](mailto:editor@vashonloop.com)

## Llaughing Llamas Chronicles

By Daniel Hooker

Join in the hilarity of a new, seasonal joke, just in time for our October Issue of The Vashon Loop!

~

A couple met at a Halloween Party.

The man looks at the woman and says, “What are you supposed to be?”

She says, “A harp.”

The man looks her up and down and says, “Aren’t you a little bit small for a harp?”

The woman’s shoulders go back and she says, “Are you calling me a lyre?”

And, Daniel’s September jokes joyfully find their way onto our inky, printed pages...

~

The other day, my friend Barbara asked me how I was sleeping, because of the hot weather.

I said, “Not that well. Usually I count sheep when I can’t sleep, but I made the mistake of telling them a joke from Massachusetts.”

“From Massachusetts?” She asked.

“Yeah, two sheep walk into a baah...” I explained. “They laughed all night long.”

~

Barbara tried to follow that up with a joke of her own, but it flopped and she said, “I’m no good at jokes.”

Off the top of my head, I said, “Jokes are sort of like pregnancy. It doesn’t matter how long or how well you carry them, it’s all about the delivery and the catch.”

~

On another note, I’m amazed at how smart my dog is. Yesterday, I asked Falkor what two minus two was. He just stared at me and said nothing.



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