

Back on Track

An Island Mom Rejoins Roller Derby Part 1



Photo by Thomas Mitchell - TH-Mitchell Photo

By Jane Valencia

Roller derby practice is tonight. After a full day as a mom, Alice Watson drops off her three-year-old son Sorrel with her co-parent Caelan at the tail end of his work day. Then she rushes off to the ferry with a drive to north Seattle on the other side, a 1½ hour commute. Off Highway 99, Alice arrives at a warehouse that serves as the team’s practice space.

There’s no heat in the building, and water drips from the ceiling. As Alice and her teammates shed layers and pull on shorts and gear, chit-chat ensues – “How was your day? How are your kids?” – along with good-natured grumbling about how very cold it is. Alice warms up with a few laps with stops, joins in with the group warm ups, and the two-hour practice begins.

As always, it feels great to be back on skates, and to feel the exhilaration and camaraderie as play begins. At the end, Alice will take a 10:35 p.m. ferry home, catching up on the needs of life by using her phone during the hour-long wait in the car. The next morning, she’s up at 6:00 a.m. to get ready for work and help her son get ready for preschool.

What is it about roller derby that takes Alice, a young mom, off the Island three times a week, to play on both the Rat City Roller Derby home team, “Grave Danger,” and Rat City’s traveling All Stars team? And just what is roller derby anyway?

Roller derby is a full-contact sport. “But,” Alice explains, “this doesn’t mean you can throw elbows or hit people – you can’t do that. It’s all-body contact and blocking. You’re blocking with your hips and your shoulders.”

In a nutshell, the game, called a “bout,” involves two teams of five, each with a jammer, three blockers, and a pivot, who can turn from blocker to jammer under certain circumstances. Blockers put their bodies together, creating walls, and do hip checks, shoulder hits, and more, to keep the opposing jammer from making their way through the pack, and to help their own jammer get through. The jammer scores points when breaking through the blockers. The action takes place in fast-paced two-minute “jams.”

Alice was 13 when she got into roller derby. “I was in a lot of trouble all the

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The Barbell Betties Experience

By Josh Thorn

I’m thrilled to introduce you to a program that’s been making waves right here on Vashon Island. It’s not just about fitness, it’s about nurturing strong bonds among women as they navigate life’s changes. Let’s shine a spotlight on VashonStrong’s “Barbell Betties” program, affectionately known as “Fire & Iron” among its members.

A Community of Strength and Support

Barbell Betties is a unique strength program, designed specifically for women experiencing perimenopause and menopause. At first glance, it might seem like just another fitness class, but it’s much more than that. It’s a tight-knit community of women who gather to harness the transformative power of strength training while gracefully maneuvering through the hormonal changes that life throws their way.

The inception of the program was inspired by Betsey Archambault, a prominent Islander known for her leadership in numerous nonprofit organizations. A former member of VashonStrong, she knew from experience that weight training was attractive and rewarding, but also challenging to start because of stressful learning curves and other perceived “barriers to entry.” What sets Barbell Betties apart is its commitment to breaking down these barriers. It’s a place where women discover that weightlifting is not as intimidating as it might seem, thanks to the supportive community around them.

The Science of Strength

Strength training has long been associated with a myriad of health benefits. These include increased muscle mass, improved bone density, and a revved-up metabolism. For women facing the hormonal



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Does College Still Make Sense? At What Price?

By Andy Valencia

It’s hardly worth printing as news: college is horrendously expensive. Over the span of my life, its price has doubled several times. When making financial decisions, there’s the useful concept of cost versus benefit. You spend a certain amount of, say, money. And in return you receive something of a certain value. If the cost goes up for the same benefit, its value as a deal has diminished. The ratio helps you stay aware.

A decade or so ago, a famous article argued that you should not send your kids to college. The author priced a college year at \$26,000 for tuition, books, room, and board. He also noted that only 54% of students finish college within six years. The venerable old organization College Board at that time estimated the lifetime monetary benefit of a college education at \$800,000. It sounds

impressive, but the article pointed to their trick, which was to ignore the “time value of money.” If you took that same 6 x \$26,000 = \$156,000 and invested it in a stock market index fund with an average return of 10%, over a 50-year lifespan, you’d end up with \$18,000,000. Yes, 18 million dollars. If you invest your money in a degree, and make \$800,000 over the span of your life ... or you keep your money, and end up with \$18,000,000.

Fast forward to 2023. Within my immediate personal circle I’ve been exposed to modern college pricing. That same six years would now be 6 x \$76,396 = \$458,376. Invested rather than paid to the university would give a “lifetime benefit” of almost \$54,000,000. Fifty-four million dollars.

Obviously, College Board will have updated their estimates of what sort of lifetime financial benefit a college degree delivers. I perused their web site, and even downloaded what appeared to be the relevant report. I found no bold \$800,000 claims; in their place was surprisingly elusive verbiage which had the

Continued on Page 3

Holiday Rainbow BLINGO

Naughty Or Nice...

Join the Vashon Senior Center for another fabulous fundraiser on Saturday, December 2nd. Holiday Rainbow BLINGO takes place at beautiful Camp Burton Lodge, with doors opening at 6:00 p.m. and Bingo at 7:00 p.m. Lovely hostess and chanteuse Louvel returns, along with jello shots, a delicious dessert auction, all-cash prizes, and a chance to show off your naughtiest or nicest holiday attire.

Vashon Senior Center enriches the lives of older adults on Vashon-Maury Island with delicious lunches three days a week, served here at the Center or delivered to those who need. We also sponsor over 20 activities each week, including Mahjong; Tai Chi; Zumba; Book, Computer, and Photography Clubs; card games, and more – plus special programs about topics and issues that concern older adults.

You can purchase a ticket (\$50) or a full table (\$600). Your table purchase includes admission for 7 to 8 people and hearty appetizers, plus two bottles of complimentary wine, two drink tickets per attendee, lots of love and recognition from our Blingo hostess Louvel, and the opportunity to dress up your table if you like.

Please note: Holiday Rainbow Blingo is open to ages 21 and over. Also, per Washington state law, Bingo cards must be purchased with cash or check at the event (no credit or debit cards). Please come prepared. We look forward to playing with you!

Our last Rainbow BLINGO event sold out quickly, so get your tickets early!

To buy tickets for Holiday Rainbow Blingo, or to learn more about the Vashon Senior Center, please visit vashoncenter.org, call us at (206) 463-5173, or stop by. We're open Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and are located at 10004 Bank Road Southwest.

HOLIDAY RAINBOW BLINGO
VASHON SENIOR Center
Saturday, December 2
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(Which Will You Pick?)

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The Vashon Loop is published monthly

Vashon-Maury Clothing Drive



Where: Vashon Food Bank

When: Wednesdays, 10AM–2PM

(except the first Wednesday of the month)

Needed: clean clothing, shoes, rain gear, warm jackets for all ages; bedding/sleeping bags, tents, camping stoves, heaters (electric or emergency camping heaters also welcome)

Contact: Daniel Hooker, (707) 771-1999, to discuss contributions, 7 days a week, 9am – 5pm.

Thank you for your support and generosity in keeping Vashon-Maury Island a caring community and village.

Your donations last month made a huge difference. Thank you very, very much!

The Vashon Loop

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Vashon-Maury Students Need Us, and We Need You!

By Anne Terry

The Vashon-Maury Island Backpack Pantry Program was established in 2016 to provide weekend meals throughout the school year for students who experience food insecurity. This program is run completely by volunteers and operates under the 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax ID of Vashon’s St. John Vianney Parish. All donations go directly to purchasing food for students who might otherwise go hungry. St. John Vianney Parish provides storage space, covers the cost of insurance, and administration of funds, utilities, and taxes.

The Vashon Island School District identifies Elementary and Middle School students who need our program. Each month, VISD tells us the number of students in need. This number tends to grow throughout the school year, and has increased dramatically year over year.

We need your help in the form of financial donations to carry us through this school year and sustain our program into the future. Our current funds may take us through the current school year if the cost of food stabilizes and our student numbers do not continue to increase. Our October packing served 48 students per week. That number has already climbed, and we will pack individual bags for 55 students in our next session.

Backpack Pantry currently spends about \$2,000 per month for food. Volunteers plan menus, shop for nonperishable food items and snacks, and gather monthly to load individual bags for a month of deliveries. Working in concert with the VISD, students receive an individual bag of healthy, balanced, easy-to-prepare, kid-friendly food items for assembling meals, with some snacks included. The weekly bags are discreetly distributed by

school staff throughout the school year.

Backpack Pantry also provides ready to heat and eat food for high school-aged youth enrolled in the Student Link Program. Food is stored in the Student Link kitchen for youth to access a meal to go or a meal to be enjoyed on site. Student Link serves about 50 students and, with the Family Link Program, is under the umbrella of the VISD Links Alternative Learning Program. VISD Links programs were established for students who achieve better learning outcomes outside of a traditional classroom setting, and currently serves over 150 students.

We hope you will support our Island youth with a donation of any amount. You can set up a recurring monthly donation or a one-time donation to the Backpack Pantry via this link to PushPay: <https://tinyurl.com/y68kxt94>. If you prefer to donate with a check, make it payable to St. John Vianney (no abbreviations). Write “Backpack Pantry” in the memo line. Mail checks to: St. John Vianney, PO Box 308, Vashon, WA 98070.

Thank you on behalf of the Backpack Pantry Program and our Island’s kids!



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You can always view The Loop’s content for free online, at vashonloop.com

Vashon! Pay Less for Your Energy Bill with Puget Sound Energy’s New Discount Program

Meet with Maria from PSE:

Wednesday, November 15, 1-3 PM at the Library

Wednesday, December 6, 10-2 PM at the Food Bank

Wednesday, December 13, 10-2 PM at the Food Bank

You may qualify for 5% to 45% monthly savings for 12 months.

You must bring your PSE bill or PSE account number, as well as your gross monthly household income (no proof needed; verbal confirmation of income is OK).

Or sign up at: pse.com/discount

Vashon! Sign up for health insurance, help with food stamps, and ORCA Lift!

Meet with Miguel from King County Public Health

1pm - 3pm, at Vashon Library (inside at the back)

Wednesday: November 15
Saturday: December 16
Wednesday: December 20

This is for health insurance that will begin the following month. Se habla español.

Entering the Workforce – Part 1

By Mickey Fontaine

College is a big decision, and it can have big consequences. Although it can create new opportunities, it can also close off doors later in life. It is very expensive, and debt can have a huge impact on your long-term financial stability, making it very hard to change the course of your educational or professional life.

Colleges also encourage students to specialize in economically beneficial career paths, which can force people into avenues that are not best for them.

Students are expected to choose immediately and confidently the path of their entire life, which they may not be ready for. Our institutions do not accommodate doubt or exploration.

Is college meant to hammer students into model citizens – or give them space to create their own paths?

I felt that this question couldn't just be answered with statistics; it needs a human element. Data can give a good overview, but it doesn't give the full story. To understand the restraining nature of college, I decided to try and give a voice to the numbers that so often take center stage in this debate.

First, I reached out to someone at the beginning of their college journey. Emmanuel grew up poor, making it difficult for him to access opportunities others take for granted.

"I grew up in Colorado Springs, which I feel was foundational in how I look at the world. It was this little

corner of the world that no one cared about, and I felt like there was so much I couldn't do."

Describing his early life, Emmanuel said he was constrained by his upbringing. His poverty made it difficult for him to achieve his full potential, but it also gave him a unique perspective and the motivation to create change in his community. He described the impact of his early life by saying:

"I think that growing up in such an unimportant place allowed me to be very conscious of my community. Whatever I end up doing, I want it to generate some kind of pride in the area; I want to do something greater than myself."

After 11 years in the Colorado area, he moved to Vashon Island, but still felt constrained. He described Vashon in a negative light, saying that it was unwilling to recognize its problems or change them.

"The problems on Vashon keep getting worse and worse, and everybody just wants to ignore it."

Unsatisfied with the inaction he perceived, he worked to find a place where he could have an impact. He found that place in Kalamazoo College. He described his affinity to the area, saying:

"I had done my research into Kalamazoo, and I saw in it a lot of honesty. The people here have been through a lot, things falling apart and people moving away, but they don't hide from their problems; they face

Showcasing Island Businesses and Organizations

We have many organizations and businesses on our Island engaged in exciting work. This issue spotlights a few of them. May these articles inspire us to learn more about the businesses and organizations around us. Let's support them – by word of mouth, purchases or other financial support, and our appreciation!

and fix them."

Emmanuel saw an opportunity to make a difference. He was driven to find a place there, but was initially frustrated. Between him and his future was a daunting cost. But luckily, his motivation won him a full-ride scholarship, allowing him to reach his full potential and become a part of something greater than himself.

"I am extremely grateful that I got this opportunity. I really believe that my life is going to change from this point onwards. In 10 years, I'll look

back and know that my life would not be the same without the aid I received."

While Emmanuel got the aid necessary to have a promising future, it's also important to look at those who were not as fortunate. In the next issue, we talk with John, who highlighted the huge amount of pressure that we put on students to decide their career path.

To Be Continued.



"Stay afraid but do it anyway. What's important is the action. You don't have to wait to be confident. Just do it and eventually the confidence will follow."

~ Carrie Fisher

Does College Still Make Sense?

Continued from Front Page

flavor of a lawyer's careful vetting.

I notice that one well-known survey finds more than half of college graduates return to living at home, and less than half land a job which uses their degree. If I was selling the idea of a college degree in this environment, I'd be careful about the monetary claims I make. Perhaps College Board agrees with me?

People's income has not kept up with college costs; neither have the salaries you can expect to receive with your college degree. The costs go up far beyond the apparent benefit; why do people keep buying? When the usual forces of capitalism have apparently disappeared, you should look for the hand of government. You don't have to look far: it's all about debt.

There's \$1.77 trillion in outstanding student debt. Remember, a trillion is a thousand billion, and a billion is a thousand million, and a million is a thousand thousand. \$1.77 trillion would give each United States resident about \$5,000. Or stacked as one-dollar bills, the stack would be more than 115,000 miles high – roughly halfway to the moon. It's a lot of debt.

Student debt is a special kind of debt; you can't get rid of it by declaring bankruptcy. Debt slavery, which our forefathers fled when they came to this continent, returned under Democrat Jimmy Carter. He was followed by Republican Ronald Reagan, who strengthened these provisions of our bankruptcy law. It

was bipartisan action which gave the bankers the return of inescapable debt. All they had to do after this was wait for the inevitable, mathematic consequences. They now hold \$1.77 trillion of the very best kind of Old World debt.

There are careers where college degrees are essential. You want to be a civil engineer and design bridges? Or you want to be a medical doctor? A degree is essential, and it's rational to grit your teeth and pay for the degree. Hopefully, after doing some shopping and some bargaining!

On the other hand, many plumbers and electricians will hire entry workers, and train you. After looking at the college numbers, doesn't it seem remarkable to earn a living while you learn a valuable trade? After six years, your college-bound friend emerged with perhaps \$458,376 in debt. Over that same six years, you could average a \$72,000

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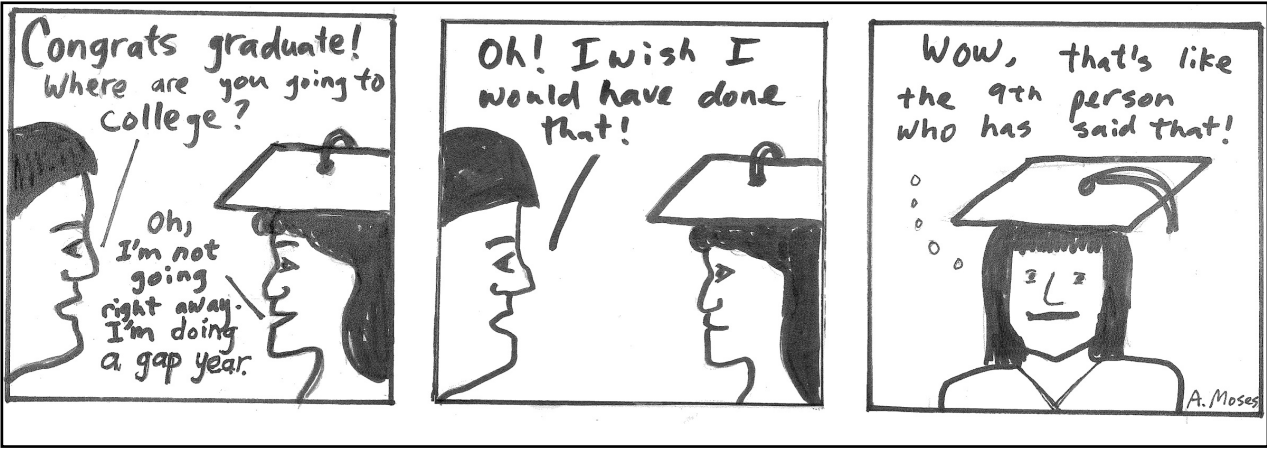
It is the right of people to express and share their opinions, knowledge, and experiences to promote health and nutrition. As our collective wisdom grows, so does our individual and community resilience. On an Island where we must at times depend on ourselves and one another, this matters. We at The Vashon Loop are proud to support our community in the area of wellness. Health-related information may appear throughout The Loop, in articles, recipes, and elsewhere.

We remind our readers that your health is your personal responsibility, your body and situation are unique, and information in The Loop is 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 prescribe medicine. Consult with an appropriate medical resource or healthcare provider when making healthcare decisions.

salary and have earned \$432,000. Your college peer is just entering the job market, where your six years experience in plumbing has probably brought you to the "master plumber" category – commanding an excellent salary. Or ready to start your own business.

When does holding a college degree stop being an indication of expertise, and start being a flag that you aren't good at financial decisions?

In an upcoming issue, we'll cover the unexpectedly wide range of jobs that do not actually require a college degree. It's high time to rein in an industry that has blighted the prospects of so many young adults.



Sailing out of My Comfort Zone

By Suzanna Leigh

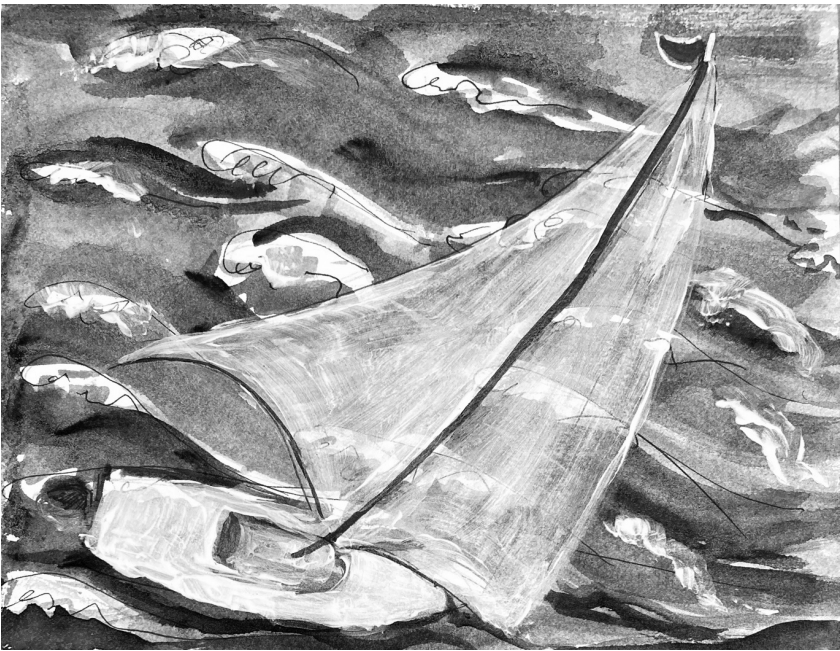
Only staying active will make you want to live a hundred years
- Japanese proverb

Why am I so terrified to take the helm today? We are coming into Fairhaven to tie the boat to a mooring line between two big yellow bouys. In all my decades of sailing, I've never tied up to a mooring line before; we always tie to a buoy or a dock, or we anchor out. However, this is cheaper than renting a slip at a marina and more secure than anchoring while we leave the boat for a few days.

James is on the foredeck, ready to grab one of the rings on the mooring line, to tie up to. The plan is to go beyond the mooring buoys and circle back, so that the boat is parallel to the mooring line and the bow points into the prevailing wind. Today, though, the wind is at right angles to the mooring line, and will push the bow away from it. I don't know the bottom here. How close can I get to the shore before going aground? Is that Coast Guard boat at the dock to my left, the one with the engine running, going to pull out into my path? What about that little sailing skiff that is headed across my bow?

Our first attempt fails. When I cut our speed so that we don't shoot past our target, the wind pushes the bow away before James can grab the ring with the boat hook. The second attempt fails. The third gets us almost, but not quite, there.

Island Voices



The fourth attempt. I have to go further toward shore before making my turn, but OH GOD! Am I going to hit that man in a row boat? I don't. Now the bow appears to be even with the mooring line and I think I should turn parallel to it, but James says, "Keep going. A little further."

Just when it seems as though I am about to run over the mooring line, James says, "Turn now!" and "Stall!" I push the tiller over to turn the boat and shift into reverse just long enough to stop us.

And he's got it! He has hold of the ring we need to tie the boat to. I put the outboard in neutral and go forward to help him thread the bowline through the ring - but I can't reach it! My arms aren't long enough.

I hold the ring with the boat hook while James passes the bowline through the ring. Now the trick is to keep the boat parallel to the mooring line so that we can attach a stern line to another ring. Somehow, we manage that.

We put the boat to rights, cleaning, putting on the sail cover, putting away the jibs, packing anything we need to take with us: two bags of garbage, James' big black duffel, perishable foods, my purse, and my backpack with all the important things. My dark blue backpack has my journal, sketchbook, paints, watercolor paper, and meds. I don the old life jacket, the one we wouldn't cry over if it gets stolen. I climb down into the kayak and James

hands me everything we are taking with us. He padlocks the hatch, and climbs in behind me.

James paddles us to shore where we unload the kayak and pull it up above the high tide line, to rest with several other dingies. We stash the old life jackets and the paddle under the Kayak, hoping these will be safe here until James returns in a couple of days.

We find a nearby dumpster for the garbage and walk up to Fairhaven carrying everything else. We stop for lunch at Colophon Cafe, but my stomach is ... raw. Queasy. All I can handle is a glass of ice tea and an English muffin. I still feel ... logy. We started off from Chuckanut Bay before I was quite awake and I never did get my usual slow wake-up time. Is that why taking the helm terrified me so? Is that why I feel shaky still?

What did I learn from this? If accepting new challenges helps to keep us young, as studies show, I must have added five years to my life today!

What we need is not a peaceful existence, but a challenge we can strive to meet by applying all the skills at our disposal

- Hector Garcia and Francesc Miralles

Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life

For more of Suzanna Leigh's writing and art please visit her substack, *Drinking Color*.

~ Painting by Suzanna Leigh ~



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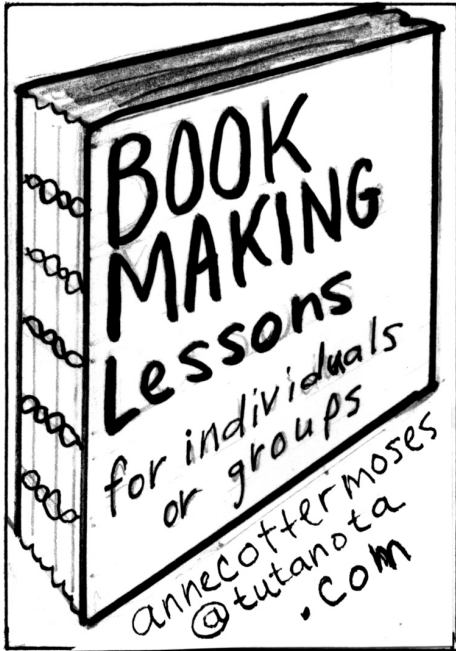
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Chautauqua



Photo by Dawn Stief

By Seán Malone and John Sweetman

We all have distinct memories of our early school days, and some memories stand out long after the “bell.” Seán had an unusual opportunity to “go back” to the third grade. Thankfully, he did not have to pass his mathematics exam again, but was offered a chance to impart some of his life learning to youngsters.

One of Vashon’s third-grade teachers asked if I would be willing to mentor an aspiring third-grade writer. I told her that I would be proud to help in any way I could. Wes, a third grader, would write a story and I would endeavor to respond with answers to the questions he raised. Vashon Artists in Schools was the sponsor of the program, partially supported by Vashon Allied Arts.

We had a safety patrol at Vashon grade school in the 1950s. If you had a red background on your badge, you were sergeant, and blue if captain. I was a sergeant. Miss Thompson was our sixth grade teacher, and had recently graduated from college with a teaching degree. Vashon was her first teaching assignment, and we harassed her

constantly.

One day, she sent me to the principal’s office. We all knew that our principal carried a three-foot garden hose to correct us with. He sat me down in a chair in front of his desk, and while he lectured me about the need for discipline, kept tapping his left hand with his hose. He didn’t ever beat me, but his hose-tapping brought his lesson home.

Mrs. Larson was the school cook, and her kitchen was in the basement as well as the lunchroom. Her hot lunches were good, except for the canned peas which she constantly burned. We called them “cigar peas” because their smell reminded us of burnt cigars.

Our janitor, Mr. Steen spent all summer varnishing the wooden floors and stairs, so that in the Fall our school stank to high heaven, but you could almost see your face in the shiny wood floor. Mr. Steen stacked all our desks on one side of the room, and when the newly waxed floor was dry, he just moved the stacked desks to the other side of the room, so as to wax and polish where the desks had been stacked.

I too learned some things that stood with me for a lifetime. In the third grade, I played baseball although I was always the last one “chosen” as we selected teams, as I was klutzy and pretty well sent to the furthest outfield position. My lifelong friend, Gene Amundson would help me out by pitching “slow” balls, but I was pretty much hopeless.

One day, Gene and I persuaded our teacher to let us listen to a baseball game on the radio. I was taken aback by the roar of the crowds! Sadly, after this I became a lifelong Cubs fan for no particular reason, not even knowing where Chicago was, but I thought the little bear was cute on the bubble gum baseball cards. Gene liked the Yankees, which ended up being a contentious point between us.

One game, I was up to bat and somehow improbably hit a long, bouncing grounder to a hole in right field. I stood stunned at the plate, in awe of my only hit of the year, and heard the roar of the crowd (all 10 of them). As I was thrown out at second, it dawned on me that the crowd was



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yelling, “Run! Run you idiot!”

Yes, the things we remember. But I’m still a Cubs fan. After all, there’s what Sean and I said in third grade ... “Wait ‘till next year.”

... Displace ...

By Michael Shook

In 1972, when I graduated high school, there were about 3.4 million residents in the entire state of Washington. In 2022, there were 4.5 million residents of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties alone. The state is now home to roughly 7.8 million people, with another million estimated to arrive during the next 10 years. The Puget Sound basin has the most and best jobs, and the most hospitable climate, and so immigrants settle here more than anywhere else in the state.

For years, this was a relatively quiet part of the country, almost an afterthought to the rest of the nation (save for Boeing aircraft, and that companies’ Senators, Maggie and Scoop). Other than that, we were a backwater, nothing but rain and trees. When I taught skiing for a season in Colorado, just after high school, I met two girls from Boston. Upon learning I was from a rural Washington town, they wanted to know – were there paved roads? Did I have a phone?

I think we were put on the map, and the national consciousness, back in the late 1970s – I blame Don James and the prominence achieved by the University of Washington Huskies (and later, the Seahawks and Mariners). People realized what a beautiful place it was, and, well ... in they poured. The first wave to have enough of an impact (that I noticed) arrived in the 1980s. That decade, too, saw an influx of about a million, and the landscape changed very quickly.

I’ve thought of this as I’ve driven

around the Island, and seen the signs noting that we live on the traditional lands of the Swiftwater people. That set me thinking about previous dwellers. People like me, for example, who’ve called the Puget Sound basin home for their entire lives. People like the many Vashon-Maury residents who’ve been here for decades, whose families go back farther than that, and who can no longer afford to live here, or whose children will have to go somewhere (where?) to find affordable housing, and sustaining work.

It’s an old story. I doubt there is a people anywhere that has not been overrun, shoved aside, massacred, and done wrong. It is a most human endeavour. My Scottish ancestors were booted off their lands by the English, moved to Ireland (displacing native-born Irish), then had to hit the road again. On my Dutch side, folks stayed put, and drove the Spanish out. But in 1769, ancestor Hermanos Shook left Holland, sailing to Virginia. Perhaps he just wanted an opportunity in the “New World.”

And it’s not just Europeans that displace others. Contrary to the romantic vision some have about the Indians of North America, the natives here spent a great deal of time and energy doing their best to kill their neighbors and take their resources (sounds familiar!). In the upper Ohio river valley, the Iroquois walloped the Osage, driving them down to the junction of the Missouri and Ohio rivers. The Comanche scoured the Apache out of the southern plains and into the high desert, the Blackfeet clobbered the Shoshone, the Crow nation was defined by constant

warfare with the Sioux, the Sioux were hounded from the Great Lakes region by the Ojibway and Cree, and so on and on.

Close to home, in 1847, the much-revered Chief Sealth led what was described by one of his own warriors as a “war of extermination” against the Chimacum people, and in a battle at the namesake area of Chimacum, slaughtered what was left of the eponymous tribe (a few surviving women and children were then enslaved). Even today, there is a conflict between people claiming their tribal heritage as Duwamish, while other interests (Muckleshoot, Suquamish, Puyallup, and Tulalip) declare they are the true Duwamish people.

Well, there’s not much to be done about it – “it” being the influx of “outsiders” (however defined) – or the ensuing, usually ugly conflicts that accompany intractable problems, prodigious challenges, and the inevitable displacement of someone or another (salmon and Orcas included).

The upshot of all this is that, in the past 50 years, I’ve watched as the Puyallup, Sumner, Orting, and Auburn valleys were converted from

farmland to malls and housing developments, “concretized” in the process, with miles of roads criss-crossing and connecting it all. The rich topsoil deposited by the flooding Green, White, and Carbon rivers over thousands of years (the rivers now “tamed” by flood control dams) was scraped off and sold to developers in other areas for lawns.

The long valley stretching north and south from Renton to Sumner used to hold a handful of dairy farms, and would fill with so much water in winter that the cows would bunch up on high ground as shallow lakes formed, then filled with thousands of migratory ducks and geese. Now, it’s a freeway, bordered by tilt-up warehouses.

We kid ourselves thinking that we can cram so many people into an area – any area, but especially one like ours, wedged on a narrow strip of land between the mountains and the Salish Sea – and not bear witness to the sorrowful alteration and destruction of the very lifeforms that made the place what it is, or rather what it was.

Time, destroyer of all, continues its march. And everything changes ...

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The Nuts and Bolts of Paying With Plastic

By March Twisdale

Nowadays, you can walk into almost any business, whip out your preferred form of plastic, and buy what you want. If you're over 50 years old (like I am), you remember when this was anything but normal. But, here we are, and the question is: "Do we want to stay here?"

If you've been keeping up with our series on cash versus plastic, you already know there are transaction fees (which I call "Bank Taxes") for every business transaction involving plastic. This month, I began looking into how it all works. So, let's talk about Credit Card Processing Companies.

If you read my article online (at vashonloop.com) you'll find useful hyperlinks, such as this one, referencing an article by Forbes Advisor, updated October 17th, 2023, directed at business owners who face the "new normal" of needing to offer a plastic purchasing option to customers.

When we step up to a business's cash register (note the name - "cash" register), we expect there to be a card reader on the counter. How did it get there? The business owner pays for it, and not just once. Credit Card Processing Companies offer their services on a monthly fee basis, and they're not cheap. This Forbes Advisor POS System Cost Guide goes into detail. "POS hardware costs

range from \$0 for a simple card reader to more than \$1200 for a complete retail register, [and] paid POS systems offer more robust features for advanced inventory tracking, restaurant operations, marketing, loyalty programs, and other specialty business needs [ranging from] \$50 to more than \$200 per month."

But, what's a business to do? Forbes says, right up front: "It's practically impossible to do business these days without accepting credit cards."

To be clear, I'm not bashing these systems. Back in June, while talking with David Hinchman of Vashon Print & Design, he made the point that these systems track all the available data, saving him many hours of laborious accounting each month. They even track how people pay. It's these systems that make it so easy for Island business owners to pull up their "cash versus plastic" stats. In May and June, when I began this series, customers had a serious plastic habit, with a 90/10 split. But that's changing.

Since we started this series, here are some comments I've received from Island business owners. "People are starting to pay with cash more often." "Island customers bring it up, saying they're trying to use cash more than plastic." "There's a lot of interest and people are talking about it." "I have customers who say, oh wait! Then they run to the ATM and come back and pay cash."

Island Resilience

This is great news. The proverbial ball is rolling! And there's a movement afoot to create additional incentives for Islanders to pay cash. It's completely possible for us to achieve a 50/50 split between cash and plastic by Spring of 2024. Keep your eyes peeled for details in the December Loop!

For now, I want to raise customer awareness of what our Island business owners are dealing with. The "convenient" world of plastic is rife with fees that, according to Frank Kehl of Merchant Maverick, "can be a burdensome expense for your business." Even worse, "most merchants pay too much for them

because they don't understand how they work." In Merchant Maverick, we learn that "processing fees" are made up of (1) variable interchange fees, (2) assessment fees, and (3) a processor markup. Nor can you dodge "Bank Taxes" by using your Debit Card. Unless you're at a store that offers cash back (like grocery stores), your Debit Card processes like a credit card. That's why there's a VISA emblem on your Debit Card.

In other words, the only true way to avoid incurring "Bank Taxes" for your favorite Island business owner (and yourself, as these fees cause product prices to rise), is to pay with cash.

Remember to give your favorite ATM a lot of love, grab the cash you'll need for the day, and have fun painting the town green!

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Canola Oil: More Than Meets the Eye

Canola Oil, originally derived from rapeseed, undergoes extensive processing and is heavily contaminated by excessive herbicide and pesticide use. Introduced in the 1950s, the FDA once banned it from the North American market because they found it to be harmful to both humans and animals.

Recent evidence has linked canola oil to numerous health issues, including inflammation, cancer, and neurological disorders. Opt for healthier alternatives like coconut or avocado oils for cooking, and olive oil for cold dishes.

Discover more on our Instagram [@headleyholistics](https://www.instagram.com/headleyholistics).

Corporate Gift Cards? Give Cash!

By Jane Valencia

The holiday season approaches, and with it, choosing gifts. If you're like me, you often send gift cards to your teen and young adult loved ones, so they can purchase just what they want. But if you've been reading the "Cash On Vashon" articles these past months (see vashonloop.com), and striving to use cash more frequently yourself, you may be rethinking that choice. I know I am!

Please note: this article refers to corporate gift cards (Amazon, name brand corporations, etc.). If you wish to give gift cards, I encourage you to purchase them from local and other small businesses. These businesses directly benefit, and our choosing them helps them to thrive.

Here are a few things to consider regarding giving corporate gift cards.

1. Hidden costs

As we've seen in the "Cash On Vashon" articles, digital payments of any kind come at a cost, from processing fees, typically applied to the business owner, and other times to yourself, or both. Gift cards, particularly general purpose cards that act like a "purse" and which can be used anywhere, can be loaded with hidden fees. From an initial activation fee, to a monthly inactivity fee that kicks in if the card isn't used for a certain amount of time, to a processing fee incurred by the businesses who accept the card for payment. This sort of gift card can chisel away an astonishing amount of what you intended to give, with

everyone involved paying along the way. If you are going to purchase a gift card, definitely take time to understand how the card works.

All this said, it is worth noting that WA state is actually unique in having some strict laws against profiteering on gift cards. Take a look at "Chapter 19.240 RCW: Gift Certificates" at apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw. You'll get a good sense of what the law intends to protect against.

2. Money left on the table

It is rare that your loved one will use the exact amount of a gift card/ecard. They will either need to add more of their own to purchase what they want, or they'll "leave money on the table." How many cards given to your children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews contain a few dollars here and there that never get spent? The amounts may not seem like much, but this is another way that companies nickel and dime, benefiting in this case from what isn't spent. How many physical cards get lost in a messy bedroom or tossed out? How many emails delivering the ecard and access information quickly disappear in an overflowing and rarely viewed email inbox, and from your loved one's memory?

3. Teaching through gift choice

As adults, we want our gifts to connect with our younger loved one. And we hope that our gifts pass along wisdom and values as well, at least to some degree. While choosing a gift that is just right for your loved one is an ideal choice, a gift of cash can be

both meaningful and convey lessons to the next generation, especially when we explain why we're giving the latter rather than a gift card/ecard.

You can let them know that:

- They are receiving the full amount of the gift.

- They can spend it however and whenever they want. They aren't limited to patronizing a single business, and they won't lose money if they don't spend the full amount.

- They have spending privacy (from big tech and the various businesses and corporations that would be involved when using a gift card)

- They are helping to keep cash alive by using cash

Make it personal:

During the December art walk, buy greeting cards from Island artists. Gather your cash, maybe some beautiful new bills. Write a special message to your loved one. Point out that they can enjoy spending the cash when and where they wish. They, and whomever they patronize, will receive the full worth of what is there.

If you are concerned that your gift might be stolen when you mail it, just be sure that the bills are tucked into the note card and that you can't feel them. You could write a check, but often that money just ends up directly in a bank account. Cash has immediacy. If you are concerned your gift might be lost in the mail, then be sure to send it with tracking.

Or go ahead and buy a gift card from a local or small business. Share



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in your note why you enjoy patronizing those businesses. Personal connection, unique services, vitality to the local community are just some reasons you might name.

Join in the beauty of the gift-giving season by taking the opportunity to share and teach about the value of cash, and of supporting local and small businesses!

Thanks to March Twisdale for her discussion and ideas on this topic that inspired this article.

Legends of Vashon – The Lantern Man of Burton

By Tripper Harrison

“Oh, man, I am NOT going out there alone again,” said Kemal. A university kid from Morocco who speaks several languages, his English was heavily accented, but correct as usual. “Please would someone walk with me to the Lodge?”

Maybe because it takes so long in the summer, darkness fell without anyone noticing. It was early August, and just like the year before, the new counselors had started to compare some of the odd little things they saw individually, in pairs, or as a group. There were a lot of odd things.

For example, there were flickering lights, not a surprising thing on Vashon at all where the power goes out so often, but not in summer, and this kind of flickering was more a case of dimming and buzzing, like something was interfering with the power or it was getting overloaded. Very possible with 100 year-old buildings, but still.

Everyone knows that the radios are glitchy and turn on and then back off for some reason, again more annoying than creepy, so we would be like, “The radios are at it again.” Then every once every few days, we could hear a door downstairs in the rec room slam hard even when there wasn’t any wind, or anyone there to do it.

Again, the counselors had arrived at consensus. One from Turkey, whose American was not yet as correct, commented that “it be haunted as hell.” (He listens to rap

and didn’t say “hell.”) One of the girls from Hungary said, “I al-vays feel like I’m being v-watched v-when I leave the Lodge alone at night.”

My personal conversion happened when I saw a cellar door steadily close, almost fully, then slam shut when there was only a foot or less of travel left. It was broad daylight, the sun was out without the hint of a breeze, and it was the only door moving of three others in a hallway, opening to a room that lacked a window.

But none of this was why Kemal didn’t want to walk alone that night. He had been one of over 20 people, a mix of counselors, little kids, and middle school girls, who saw a tall man come out from by the tool shed. He carried a lantern down the gravel road in low late evening light like he was doing his job.

This was after curfew, sighted from two separate cabins on the other side of the road. The cabins stand about 100 yards apart, so he was seen for a good minute. Upon later questioning, the kids described him as wearing a dark jumpsuit like a pilot or like car mechanics wear for work.

They thought nothing of it, assuming he was a maintenance guy because he was carrying an axe. Looking to chop some wood at night is kind of out of the ordinary, but it could happen and there are a lot of staffers coming and going. The only remarkable thing about him was that he was holding up an old-style lantern, with yellowish light, even

though most of the pathway is lit by streetlamps. Some said they had seen him a few times before.

But this time, because Kemal did not remember seeing him around during the day, he paid attention, watching the man go into the trees and proceed towards the water tower. Suddenly, both the man and the light from the lantern disappeared in mid-stride. As in, not went behind a tree or the water tower, but faded into thin air.

So we were in the main house debating what is haunted or not when I joked, “Lantern Man! That’s almost like it’s from one of those dumb ghost videos.” Exactly then, the walkie-talkies crackled and a low-frequency rumble or growl like a man’s voice came over, faint but deep. It sounded a lot like, “It’s not dumb.”

All our mouths dropped open, amazed. Goosebumps went from my back up to the top of my head. Later, we walked with Kemal over to the Lodge, and thereafter we usually walked in pairs in the dark, only crossing alone when we absolutely had to.

That’s all I know, and we’ve talked about contacting Ghost Adventures. We thought better of it. People from the Island say they’ve heard a bad wood-cutting accident happened back in the 1930s or 40s and help couldn’t be gotten in time. Maybe some of the old-timers would be able to confirm or deny that.

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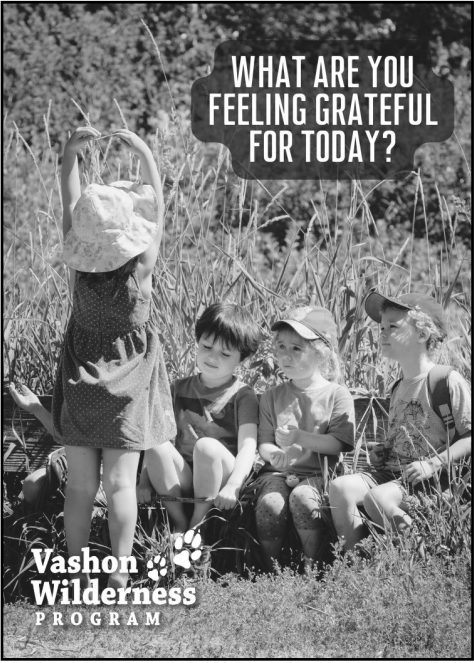
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Vashon Families!

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Is your child interested in 4-H? A new 4-H club is being set up on Vashon.

4-H club activities are open to children 5 years and older.

Anyone interested in participating should contact Kelsey at Kelsey@venisonvalleyfarm.com.

I will need other parent volunteers to assist with organizing meetings, educational days and supporting kids on their chosen projects.



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From the Roasterie

Before I had opened the Roasterie, not really knowing what to do and with kraft paper still on the windows, I was surprised by a knock at the back door. Upon opening there stood, obvious to me, two native peoples of this land. A woman named Sweet Water and my brother Lalo, a Tewa Hopi Indian. They would set the tone and inspiration for my business moving forward, and when standing still.



Our conversation was filled with meaning and teachings that I can't possibly write about in this short conversation with you all, but Lalo's words are prophetic and still in place as I move through coffee in this place we call the Roasterie. Lalo is an Hopi Elder, and among the many things he spoke to me about that day, this small sentence of hope that I revisit from time to time is more relevant now than ever as we find our way thru chaos. "Remember, Eva - The Future is behind us." - Words given to me by, Lalo Mihoiniwa Valdez (Hopi Tewa).

Think upon it.
After 25 years I pass these words along to you.
Eva

Jack O'Lanterns on the Roasterie - Minglement porch.



Island Epicure – Breakfast Around the World

By Marjorie Watkins with Suzanna Leigh

While I was writing this column for The Loop, my son Steve, daughter Suzanna, and I got to talking about breakfasts we've eaten in other countries. Steve and I remembered a Japanese breakfast of hot rice with egg. The raw egg was put into a depression in the rice and the heat of the rice was supposed to cook the egg. It didn't cook mine, but Steve said his was cooked.

That was the closest we came to an American-style breakfast In Japan. Usually, we were served miso soup and rice, which was also served for lunch and dinner. In Korea, we had rice with red beans cooked into it. In Okinawa, we were served steamed eggs in a beautiful cylindrical pottery cup. The egg was mixed, put into the cup, and cooked in a pan of boiling water. In China, a popular dish for breakfast - or anytime - was steamed rice buns stuffed with a sweet bean paste. In Macau, a basic dim sum served with cheap green tea was especially popular with old men at the local eatery. Suzanna remembers a thin rice gruel and plates of fresh papaya and pineapple in Indonesia.

One of my favorite breakfasts now is made with leftover rice:

Rice Cakes

- A cup or two of leftover cooked rice
- 1-2 eggs, to make the rice stick together
- Hoisin sauce
- Mix beaten eggs into cooked rice.

Heat a skillet. When the skillet is hot, add olive oil. You know if the skillet is hot enough to cook the rice cakes if a drop of water on it sizzles. Drop several dollops of the rice and egg mixture onto the pan to make 3" pancake-sized rice cakes. Cook until the rice cake doesn't squish when you tap it with a fork, then turn it to finish cooking. Serve with a little Hoisin sauce on each rice cake. Enjoy with slice of melon or an orange, and a cup of green tea or coffee.

Emergency Breakfast

Grab a banana and a piece of bread or toast, slap a slab of cheese on it, and run to catch the school bus or dash to the car. Whatever you do, eat something tasty and nourishing. Nutritionists say that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, so get some protein, some fruit, and a bit of grain.



Vashon!

Do you have a favorite recipe you'd like to share with others and see published in The Loop?



Share it with us at editor@vashonloop.com

Lauren Talks Lard!

By Lauren Garaventa

From the Editors: It's the season when many of us cook at home more often, and a great time to learn more about new ingredients and kitchen staples. With this in mind, The Loop's Caitlin Rothermel interviewed Lauren Garaventa (proprietor of The Ruby Brink) to find out more about the dos and don'ts of cooking with lard. We learned a lot, and hope you will, too. Be sure to check out Lauren's flour tortilla recipe, and remember that leaf lard is sold by the pint at The Ruby Brink.

Would you say that there is a resurgence of interest in using lard for cooking?

Yes! Several things have contributed to the resurgence of animal fats in day-to-day cooking. Lard is a natural fat - it is not expelled from a seed or fruit. It is just melted out of the solids, and is not hydrogenated or processed. The health benefits related to lard have come to the forefront recently with the help of some diets like "Paleo," "Keto," and "Carnivore." These diets encourage the use of animal fats because seed fats cause inflammation and insulin resistance.

Another reason for interest in lard is that people are learning about the importance of using the whole animal when consuming meat products. Pigs are so much more than bacon and pork chops, and using the fat for cooking and baking is a great way to not let any part of the animal go to waste.

How does lard compare as a cooking oil with butter, olive oil, or other oils?

Lard has a high smoke point of 370 degrees. It can stand up to all cooking methods, including deep frying. Once a fat goes past its smoke point, it starts to break down and releases chemicals that erase its beneficial nutrients. Choosing fats with a high smoke point for high-heat cooking is always recommended. Lard is your best natural choice.

Do you think lard gets a bad rap from home chefs? How come?

I think it depends on where the home cook is buying their lard. Grocery store lard is usually mass-produced from corn-fed hogs, hydrogenated to be shelf-stable, and smells really bad. Most pork products from factory farm pigs will taste a bit gamey. However, home cooks who seek out unprocessed lard from well-raised pigs have few complaints.

There isn't really anything inherently gross about lard. Crisco was invented as a vegetarian alternative to lard, but with what we now know about hydrogenated oils and health, you would think switching back to lard would be an easy choice. Both substances look, smell, and feel the same.

What are your favorite ways to use lard?

Tortillas and tamales are where I always use lard. Pie crust requires lard, in my humble opinion (half-butter, half-lard, to be exact). Many baking applications are better with lard. For baking, I recommend using 100% leaf lard. This fat is from around the kidneys and doesn't have any meat in it when whole. It is the most mellow-flavored lard, and produces a more tender texture when baking.

I have also whipped lard with salt and chopped garlic and used it on bread for delicious, porky garlic bread. I use lard anywhere that cooking oil is required. Sautéing vegetables, cooking a steak ... anything.

What are the best sources for good lard? Are there any lard sources that people should avoid?

Don't buy hydrogenated lard from the grocery store. Find a local butcher who buys hogs that live outside and are fed a diverse and healthy diet. On Vashon, The Ruby Brink always has rendered leaf lard available by the pint in our display fridge. We buy hogs from Pure Country Farm in Moses Lake, WA and render the lard in our shop.

What is the best way to store lard?

Rendered lard keeps for a year in the fridge and indefinitely in the freezer.

Lauren's Favorite Flour Tortillas

Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ⅓ cup lard
- 1 cup warm water



Directions: In a bowl, combine the flour, salt, and baking soda. Add the lard and cut it in until it resembles a coarse meal.

Slowly add the warm water until dough forms. You may not need all the water, so don't pour it all in at once. Turn the dough out and knead the dough till smooth. Rest in the bowl again for 45 minutes to an hour. Divide into 10 pieces and roll or press to flatten. Cook on a dry cast-iron pan for 20 to 30 seconds per side.

For a delicious treat, spread lard whipped with garlic and salt on the hot tortilla like butter and enjoy.

Getting To Know Lobelia

By Kathy Abascal

Lobelia is a lovely plant with a gorgeous flower. There are many lobelia species, ranging from the blue *L. sylphatica*, to the widely used, white-flowered *L. inflata*, to my favorite *L. cardinalis* with its dark red flowers. All lobelias (except nursery hybrids) are medicinal. Although it took me quite some time to get over my fear of using this plant, I now make sure I always have some on hand.

Most lobelias are native to North America and were used by indigenous peoples to treat respiratory issues, muscle spasms, and as a purgative. *L. inflata* continues to be known as Indian tobacco, a clear reference to its use in traditional medicine. There is also a species of lobelia found in China that is considered one of their 50 fundamental (or “top” herbs).

Lobelia is a “low dose” or “drop dose” plant. That is, one only needs a few drops (5-20) of the tincture to gain its benefit. At higher doses, whether as a tea, capsule, or tincture, Lobelia is nauseating and will make you vomit.

Back in the 1800s, purging was a central part of many medical treatments. Perhaps because food and water often were contaminated, and vomiting helped the body rid itself of toxins. Perhaps because, when the respiratory tract is filled with thick, sticky mucus, vomiting can help: As we become nauseated, we salivate, our eyes and noses run, and we drool. Rather unpleasant, but at the same time, the phlegm stuck in the bronchi also loosens up, easing breathing and expectoration.

Finally, purges were popular simply because they were “heroic,” especially among traditional physicians of that era. Heroic measures like purgatives, enemas, blistering, along with toxic doses of mercury, were considered a prerequisite of any healing. In the process of being used as a heroic purgative, lobelia’s reputation was tarnished. Even today, lobelia continues to be viewed with fear and

Medicinal Plants on Vashon – Hawthorn

By Dr. Leigh Siergiewicz

Hawthorn, or *Crataegus spathulata*, is a small-tree member of the rose family, native throughout the northern hemisphere. Hawthorn has smooth, gray bark, and most but not all varieties have sharp thorns on the stems. The flowers can be white or pink in springtime; they have berry-like “haws” that range from red to purple; and its leaves are small, serrated lobes that vary slightly among varieties.

Hawthorn is most commonly known as a medicine for cardiovascular conditions; however, it is also used for nervousness, restlessness, improving attention span, digestion, allergies, autoimmunity, and emotional grief.

Hawthorn contains antioxidants that help maintain healthy blood vessels and the heart, making these structures more resilient for healthy aging. It can be used as part of a whole-person treatment to improve all varieties of heart conditions, including both high and low blood pressure. It can reduce LDL or “bad” cholesterol and increase HDL or “good” cholesterol.

Some sources suggest using hawthorn leaves or flowers, while others suggest the best medicinal part is the berry, which should be harvested around now in late October or early November. Renowned herbalist Matthew Wood recommends his preferred preparation as a tincture prepared from the haws soaked in brandy (tinctures usually soak for a month or longer). Hawthorn can also be prepared as a tea with any of the edible parts. Best results are achieved when taken over a longer period of time; hawthorn is typically not used acutely.

There are numerous scientific studies that look at the effectiveness of the *Crataegus* genus, and many find it helpful for various conditions; however, more study would be wonderful. The large variety in the genus and the different preparations of the plant and its parts make it difficult to compare its effectiveness and ideal

Health Matters

excessive caution because it was once prescribed in large purgative doses, followed by prolonged sweats. This, of course, tended to weaken rather than heal the sick.

In contrast, the Eclectic physicians (a small group of non-traditional physicians in the 1800s) used medicinal herbs rather than heroic measures. This group did not use lobelia as a purgative. Instead, they used drop doses of the plant as an anti-spasmodic. In an age where inhalers were unavailable, they might prescribe a couple puffs of the smoke of lobelia to stop suffocating spasms of asthma attacks. In small doses, lobelia relieved the excruciating pain of kidney stones, allowing many to pass. Lobelia relieved the spasms of croup and the whooping cough.

Finally, lobelia was considered one of the most important medicines in epidemic influenza. It eased the non-productive, dry, barking, hacking cough that often follows the flu. It opened the respiratory passages in patients who developed pneumonia secondary to the flu. In many cases of the flu, the plant was used as a chest rub to prevent pneumonia from moving into the lungs via respiratory tissue damaged by the flu virus.

I gathered lobelia on field trips while studying

with the late Michael Moore in Arizona. Michael had a great fondness for the plant as it had helped him pass several kidney stones over the years without the aid of modern pain relievers (which he abhorred). Nonetheless, many years passed before I tried lobelia. I was troubled by its reputation as a dangerous purgative, despite all the information I had on its many benefits.

Then, one day, I came down with the flu. I was in bed, in agony. My muscles ached. My head ached. And my chest felt like it was in a vise. My old stand-by flu herbs (boneset and pleurisy root) were not doing enough to ease my symptoms, so I finally decided to try some lobelia. I took 5 drops of my tincture, and almost instantly the vise grip around my chest loosened and I fell asleep. I woke a few hours later, feeling as awful as I had before I took the lobelia. I took another dose and again fell back sleep. This continued through the night with longer and longer periods of sleep until I finally woke feeling human again. Thanks to lobelia, my bout with the flu was much less painful and helped me heal more quickly. I became a fan of the plant.

These days, I always have lobelia on hand. As we enter into the season of respiratory viruses, you may want to have and be able to use small doses of the tincture to relax respiratory spasms, coughs, and the achiness, should you have the misfortune of catching a bad case of the flu.



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usage from a scientific standpoint. However, the extent of use across the cultures where hawthorn is native dates back centuries, and establishes this plant firmly as an important remedy for any natural health practitioner.

A 2008 systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized, double-blind placebo-controlled studies found that hawthorn preparations are helpful for patients with chronic heart failure. The meta-analysis included 10 studies and 855 patients and found that fatigue, exercise tolerance, and shortness of breath were all improved over placebo with hawthorn treatment (used alongside conventional standard of care).

Hawthorn is generally safe and well tolerated, side effects are uncommon and usually only mild to moderate. However, anyone currently taking any kind of cardiac glycoside medication for arrhythmias or other serious heart conditions should seek medical supervision if you wish to try hawthorn.

Additional reading related to hawthorn can be found at the online version of this article at vashonloop.com.



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Fish n’ Chips at Island Queen

By the Footloose Foodie

The “Friendly Foodie” sends greetings! Vashon friends, family, and visitors, I said I would set my feet loose this month and visit a local eatery. Please, reader, remember that I write only of my personal experience. Agree, disagree, or agree to disagree. I have no ill will or nefarious agenda with writing my experience.

Working over 45 years in various food service businesses, I have come to enjoy certain foods and various ways of cookery. The idea of knowing what you feel like eating is very important. Know what you like and seek it! I had a craving for “Fish n’ Chips.” You know? That desire to consume something you have a hungurin’ for! Being born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, fresh seafood is a true gift from the Salish Sea and connecting deep, cold waters.

Where to go on Island to fill my craving? I chose “Island Queen.” Knowledge of delivery days of wholesale food drops is an inside secret. This allows me to choose menu items I can bet are fresh. Wednesday is a good day to dine out.

Reservations not needed nor taken, so I popped in for an early dinner. Great atmosphere. Families with children enjoying an evening dinner out. Reminder! Children can be a presence. So, if you don’t enjoy kids, then this is not the place for you! Fortunate for me, the order line was

non-existent. Fish and chips were available. Ordering was excellent, easy, and the teen behind the counter knew his touch screen!

I laugh remembering my first restaurant job at 15 and one-half years of age. POS was something you called your car when it kept stalling. Not a term for tracking restaurant ordering, inventory, or book-keeping. Then the pager? LOL!

I took a desired seat, with many clean tables to choose from. Manager Michael was kind and on top of the goings on behind the scenes, behind the counter, and up front. Making the experience really inviting. Not paying much mind to the pager, just not used to it, I guess? No worries, as I was served by a pleasant young one with a smile and, “Anything else i can get you?” Such kindness – yes, kudos all around!

I ordered the three pieces of fish, as I do love fresh Alaskan wild-caught true cod as a fried fish. French fries proved themselves again, an “IQ” go-to! The coleslaw was not my favorite. Coleslaw has as many varieties as taste desires. This slaw seemed to be a more vinegar-marinated cabbage.

The meal all and all was great! The service delightful. The price, well. I believe that “IQ” can sharpen their pencils and re-address the pricing structure. Anthony’s at Point Defiance has the same menu item for the same price. Less the “IQ” fries! Though the Ferry ride can be a crap shoot! Their

seafood menu is spot on.

All in all, “IQ” thank you! Thank you for providing this Island community a place of good food, for family, friends, and visitor fun. I am giving you a 4 of 5 possible points on the “Friendly Foodie” dining experience scale. Five being damn fine, and 1 being, well, keep up the hard work!

Once again friends, please remember, the opinions of the “Friendly Foodie” are strictly mine.

Agree or disagree, and even agree to disagree, it’s all good with me. Please remember to let me know of an eating establishment you would like me to visit. Doing so will get you entered into a drawing for a gift certificate to the place you send me!

Please put a bug in my ear for my next craving! I am considering a comparison of grocery stores? Anyone interested? If so, enter to win a gift certificate for your favorite grocery!

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Barbell Betties

Continued from Front Page

fluctuations of menopause and perimenopause, maintaining muscle mass becomes increasingly vital. It’s not just about weight management, but also nurturing overall health and well-being.

However, strength training can be deceptively complex. While it appears straightforward, it requires a significant investment of time and instruction to develop proficiency in technique. It’s a skill in its own right, not merely a test of brute strength. Fortunately, over the past six years, VashonStrong has been cultivating this skill, and its coaches boast diverse athletic backgrounds, spanning Olympic lifting, CrossFit, endurance racing, Jiu Jitsu, mountain biking, gymnastics, and more.

Building More Than Muscle

The Barbell Betties program, guided by the exceptional trio of coaches – Katie Wolny, Lisa Macleod, and Shannon Seath Meyer – provides a welcoming haven for women to explore their physical potential. They

also form deep connections with others who share similar life experiences. This program has been nothing short of a sensation, with every session fully booked. The six-week program format allows women to do a deep dive into the world of weightlifting and then end, or they may sign up again for the next 6-week program and continue to build on their skills and fitness.

What distinguishes Barbell Betties is its remarkable fusion of strength training and community support. Participants not only master the fundamentals of strength exercises like bench-pressing and deadlifting, but also forge profound connections. It’s a place where the challenges of menopause are met with camaraderie, laughter, and unwavering encouragement.

Back on Track – Roller Derby

Continued from Front Page

time,” she shared. As Alice skated weekly at the local rink, her mom suggested she try roller derby.

“And so I tried it out. I was already pretty comfortable on skates, so that helped. I really took to it, and it changed a lot of things for me, too. It brought me closer to my family. It gave me an outlet and something to focus on.”

Alice joined a team with the I-5 Rollergirls, a junior multi-level league based out of Seattle, and played with the league for five years. The league collapsed a year or so after she aged out at 18. Six years later, having attended college and become a mom, she joined Rat City Roller Derby.

Alice started out as a jammer on the B team with I-5 Rollergirls, and became a blocker with the A team. She is a blocker with Rat City. I had to ask about injuries. She ends up with bruises, but with the adrenaline and all that’s happening during the course of play, doesn’t tend to feel them. She did crack her ribs last autumn.

What’s it like to play?

“I guess it’s what people kind of describe as a flow state. That’s when you don’t think about anything else. For me, I’m really laser-focused on one person and just doing anything that I can. And then you are also thinking about your jammer and potentially helping them get through.”

But, for Alice, roller derby expands beyond the sport. “You are really in it, not just in the game.” Upon joining the league, Alice found

that she had access to that community right away, and friends. “We all are super-connected outside of the sport, too. So, beyond even love for playing the game is love for the greater community.”

Alice explains further. “The league is very close-knit, and very tied in with activism and the greater community, too. It’s is a subculture as much as it is a sport. There’s not a specific age or gender or body that plays roller derby. We come from all different backgrounds and experiences with sports. Derby has the ability to show us that all we are athletic, strong, and a valuable part of a team.”

Teaching related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as healing, are a core part of league meetings. “We have a long way to go, as does every organization,” she says, “but are continuously in discussion about equity, inclusion, and how we can stick to our values.”

Alice also mentions, “I think it’s really cool that we have players from all ages and backgrounds, we have teachers and bus drivers, doctors and lawyers. You know people by their derby name and see them in their skate clothes, and then you talk to them outside of derby, or run into them, and discover that they are a lawyer, or have four kids.”

“There are lots of parents,” Alice notes, “and just such an array of people that aren’t always included in sports.”

To Be Continued.



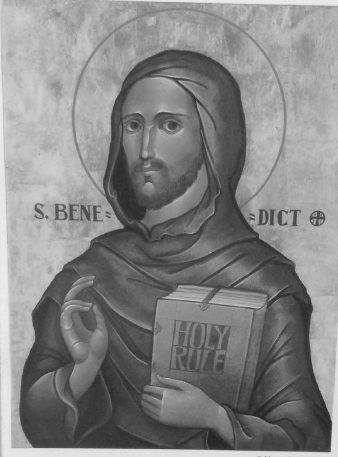
Attend a bout: Saturday, November 18, 5:30 pm – Rat City All Star Program Expo Bout Mash-up. At the Southgate Roller Rink, 9646 17th Avenue SW, Seattle, WA 98106.

Join the sport: Rat City has three training programs, offering opportunities for complete beginners through experienced skater.

Support: Opportunities abound to support the league as a fan or a business.

See ratcityrollerderby.com.

Benedictine Morning Prayer
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Fall Day

By Rainier Maria Rilke,
Translation by Marc J. Elzenbeck

Lord: it is time. Summer was sublime.

Spread thy shadows across the sundials
and scouring winds upon the meadows.

Tell thy fruits to swell on branch and vine
and send us yet two more southerly days,

urging onto consummations, and chase
their final sweetness into heavy wines.

He who has no house now builds none better
and whoever is alone will long stay so.

They'll sit awake and write long letters,
and in the lanes pace to and fro,

restless, as the dry leaves blow.

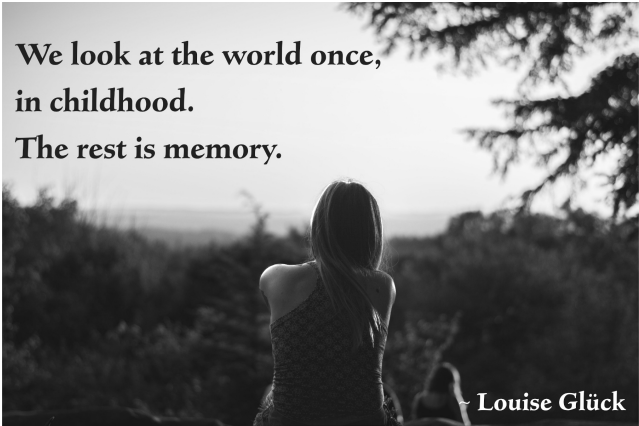
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- 2. No tips for street musicians
- 3. No tooth fairy
- 4. No purchasing privacy
- 5. No money available without the internet and a power source

We look at the world once,
in childhood.
The rest is memory.



Llaughing Llamas Chronicles

By Daniel Hooker

Lately I've been seeing a mermaid.
We met online. She's quite a catch.
~
What does a mermaid wash herself with?
Tide.
~
What do you call a wreath of one hundred dollar bills?
Aretha Franklins!
~
The media is a weapon of mass distraction!



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Totem

By Claudia Hollander-Lucas

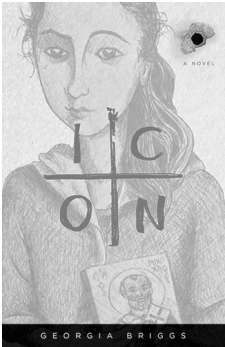
Some claim to be eagles
or bright warbling birds
With so many species
which bird would I be?

I know I'm no raptor
gull or albatross
flicker, horned owl, or meadow lark
Would be a wax-wing
a sly black-eyed stare
hot red tipped fingers
tail embered in gold –
such melting ecstasy!

Perhaps I'm more a middling bird
not regal, elusive, exotic, or rare
I might belong to my mother's clan
immigrant staunch and self-reliant.
I'd belong to the clan of thrushes
an American Robin, a dew-worming
chupper ever so watchful
stilettot'd tin-star lawn sheriff...
Hear her tireless calls – Red-tail!
Harrier! Osprey! Fox!
She's the self-taught diva
pre-dawn chorus of one; her later
serenade lulls us to sleep.

Cautious and frugal in death as in life, my
mother is still a robin who watches for me-
She pecks each window with tellurian beak:
Hey you – pay attention – thief in meadow!
She's that slate-brown torpedo
burled silhouette
a tucked-wing vigilante
my diurnal angel

See her covertly dart from
margin to threshold –
this tireless minister
of mid-canopies.



Book Review

Icon: A Novel

By Jane Valencia

On Thursdays, I head across the water to an Eastern Catholic church where I am learning how to write (paint) icons – sacred images in the Orthodox tradition considered to be “windows into heaven.” I also happen to love juvenile and young adult fiction. Imagine my delight when I found “Icon: A Novel,” on one of the church bookshop shelves.

“Icon: A Novel” by Georgia Briggs, is a dystopian Orthodox Christian novel set in near-future America, where Christianity is outlawed, and 12-year-old Euphrosyne, suffers the horrific loss of family and religious community. The authorities are intent on convincing her to leave her faith behind, to embrace a new name and the touted ideals of the regime – that of happiness and choosing whatever she wants for herself (but not religion).

Yet, Euphrosyne can't quite give it all up, especially since an icon dramatically saved her life. Along the way are many heart-breaking challenges, including dealing with her own trauma, and many moments when she is confused as she meets up with the ideology of the new “Era of Tolerance.” Aspects of the book reminded me very much of Lois

Lowry's “The Giver” (and indeed that book is mentioned within this tale).

I love the references to books throughout this book. One character, Mimi, is a librarian intent on saving certain books, and many of those books are ones I have treasured. I especially love the spiritual aspects that arise unexpectedly throughout “Icon,” particularly toward the end, as well as the details of Orthodoxy. There's some profound beauty in these pages! Once finished, I immediately reread the book to more fully soak it in.

“Icon” is a compelling book, both sad and amazing in various ways. While not dwelt upon in fierce detail, it does have violence and even torture, so please look through the book before passing it on to a youth who may be sensitive to these aspects of the plot. That said, I found myself reflecting deeply about spiritual strength and martyrdom, and, in our secular times, that is a strange and worthy reflection indeed. This book provides some awesome expression of how it might play out in an ordinary American life, to hold fast to sacred truth, even while enduring the worst.

If you enjoy or are open to faith-based fiction, are intrigued by Orthodox Christianity, and you like young adult dystopian novels, I recommend this book. Underscored recommendation if you are a fan of Madeleine L'Engle's “A Wrinkle In Time” or Lois Lowry's “The Giver.”

This is a fast read: upon reaching the end, you may find that, like me, you can't help but flip the book over and start in on it again.



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Aries (March 20-April 19)

The matter of resources comes up in grand style this month, as many planets make fireworks across Taurus and Scorpio. That is the money axis of your chart, and it influences such questions as what you have, where you get it, and what you do with it. Yet all of these things are abstract issues, in contrast to who you are—and who you think you are. You have information about how to align yourself with your community and your society in a way that is designed to connect you to resources. Do you recognize your worth, not as some abstract concept, but rather in productivity, commitment, experience and wisdom? Are you willing to offer yourself totally, without hesitation? If you are considering “saving some of yourself for later,” you will miss out on the benefits of your gifts today.

Taurus (April 19-May 20)

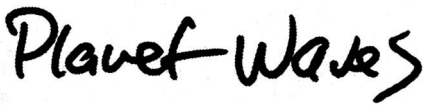
Your world is reverberating from the Oct. 28 lunar eclipse in your sign, and may be for many months. Eclipses of any kind are about deep shifts in one’s orientation, whether cosmic or worldly. On the surface, Taurus seems to be about stability. Yet that is a wrapper around a ball of raw energy that is always looking for a way to burst out—and that ongoing potential has a way of threatening your sense of self. The key to maintaining your sanity is not looking outside yourself for your value, your sense of belonging, or the deeper stability that you are reaching for with every facet of your soul. Your motto for this month might be, “It’s not about him/her/them. It’s about me.” Remember that your core relationship is with yourself and not about anyone or anything else. The lesson may seem hard at first, though it will be much easier when you see that your freedom can be found right there.

Gemini (May 20-June 21)

A discovery about yourself that you make early in the month will give you plenty to consider, and reveal several options you hadn’t seen before. Yet the reminder that comes along with them is a bold one: you cannot live with anything but your truth. Fortunately, your truth is the most accessible thing in the whole wide universe. Or is it? People tend to pack their deepest beauty under many layers of what we might call socialization and civilization. Push limits and test boundaries in the ways that you express yourself. I don’t mean no boundaries but I do mean going far enough beyond your comfort zone that you feel uncertain and insecure in doing so. This has nothing to do with how others respond to you. It’s about you being adventurous and learning to be more daring, and discovering that something is possible.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are working with tremendous creative potential right now, though creativity requires a fertilizing force. You may find that in a shock from your environment, which will help get a chain reaction going within you. Yet tapping into this force is largely a matter of your shifting point of view. Gradually you are



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

figuring out how insane and unstable our society is right now. You are aligning with your ability to respond in a way that is productive. Begin with honesty in your own mind, and a sincere assessment of both your situation and that of the world. You will conserve energy and have more for priorities that are valid right now. Part of this process involves a clearing out of goals that may have meant something in the past, but no longer does. You do not need those attachments. Be sensitive to any situation that seems deadlocked; those are the very places where your energy is trapped and needs to be set free. A policy of waiting for something to move is not a good idea. It will be much preferred if you are the one who initiates the action.

Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)

Despite the seeming complexity of your situation, and a diversity of factors you don’t really understand, you can avoid making the same mistakes again. That’s the essence of your whole situation: at this particular turning point, you have the option to set yourself free from a habit that has had you running in circles. You remain at the mercy of your emotional tides, and many of those are driven by various family influences that you have yet to resolve or work through despite being an adult. Those who would wrap you in strings in order to avoid their own insecurity may say they love you, but they don’t act like it. There’s a way through this maze, though the most important element will be understanding that your sincere loyalty to yourself is the basis of every other commitment.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)

You have spent many years living with a haze of uncertainty around some of the most important facets of your existence—especially knowing where you stand with people. It’s not just your intimate relationships; the fog has made it difficult to perceive anyone accurately, or to locate yourself accurately within your world. A bold realness has begun to show its influence. This is coming at the cost of your fantasies, and that’s a positive development. With astrology like you’re under now, there is no room for even the least sly deception. Saturn can seem like a harsh mistress, though her role is to enforce your growth and development – in all matters of human interrelationships. Under the influence of Neptune, you have had a very wide berth. Under the influence of Chiron (approximately 2011-2018) you developed a concept of what you needed to heal, and I suggest you review your notes from that era. What was the status of your most important relationships at that time? A lot has happened since then. Saturn is here to help you finish what you began under the guidance of Chiron. This will call for scrupulous honesty with yourself.

Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)

Having a conscious plan and logical framework for your actions is the essence of your chart, now and for the foreseeable future. This is not about binding yourself into structures, but rather having a set of principles that can guide you through a wide diversity of if/then situations. You tend to overthink things as it is; you don’t need to take that approach at the moment. Keep a sense of what matters to you the most; what you’re willing to compromise and what you are not. Yes, the recent solar eclipse in your sign arrived with the reminder that all things must pass. Yet as long as we are living in time, all things

may be reborn and transform—especially and including you. This will be more apparent when Venus returns to your sign on Nov. 8, and you’re reminded of who you are, and of your ability to make whatever changes are necessary. The one thing you don’t want is to have decisions made for you. Rather, stay a step ahead of yourself—one step, not five– and make your choices as the need or opportunity arises.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

If it seems like you can never get a handle on your relationships, you’re invited to ask yourself what that is telling you. One implied message is to work with change rather than against it. This change is likely to include growth that you can neither control nor influence. The changes that have come into your life in recent years have surely presented challenges, and one of them has been understanding your need to stand on your own. As Pluto makes its way into Aquarius, the next stage will be moving toward independence from the influences of your family. This is all in the spirit of your emerging fully mature identity, that stands apart from your past, and also your need for approval from your family of origin. The kind of leadership you are taking on requires you to stand strong in your own emotional grounding, as a person of influence in your tribe rather than one who is influenced or controlled. This will be the product of many seemingly small revelations and decisions.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)

You may not like the feeling of being constrained and limited, both in your home environment and in the need for discipline in your emotional inner space. Yet working within a structure and boundary will serve you in many ways. The growth lesson here seems to be about having negotiable, movable dividers rather than fixed and inflexible ones. The idea is to divert your energy and attention rather than to bind it up. You don’t need to be under this kind of pressure. If anything is taking a toll on your body or your creative expression, you must vent some of these feelings and concerns. Doing so in a controlled environment such as with a massage therapist who is a good listener would make a fine start.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

Now that Pluto has stationed directly in your sign, you may feel that it will be worth the effort to tackle certain projects that seemed futile before. Your ruling planet also stations direct on the 4th, which will relieve additional pressure and resolve some extra complications in matters that don’t need any more than they initially came with. You may feel like whatever you’ve been working toward has no end. Yet I would encourage you to persist, not on the basis of hope, with the understanding that there are a series of breakthrough points that will arrive over the next few months. If you are present

with your work, that will be its own reward, and you may proceed with daily focus as your motivation. Part of the larger lesson here is learning to be precise and solid with your words, whether spoken or written, including when you are reading or listening. Steer away from anything that wastes your time.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

Current aspects are reminding you that it’s time to make a few career moves, and update your activities to match your current interests. There are some things you do that are no longer interesting or necessary; at the same time, you have an opening to do something entirely new. This may be about choosing what you do the best and love the most (they are probably the same thing) and expanding them. However long you’ve delayed a certain idea, I suggest you get yourself in motion because the time is ripe not just to make moves in the world, but to let go of emotional attachments that have been holding you back. Firing up your professional life in a new way will make it easier to see the changes that you need to make at home and potentially with certain family bonds. The central question is about values. Lighten your emotional load and focus yourself on feeding the tree of your life and—for now—not the whole forest.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your job is not to be the flavor of the month, or to earn an employee parking spot. Your job is to be real with yourself and with others. This takes courage in a world where we’re told over and over that popularity is everything. Yet in truth, what passes for popularity is usually vapid and toxic. Be faithful to others—which is more complicated than it seems—and pay attention to who is faithful to you. You have an opportunity to re-train yourself to withdraw time, energy and resources from those who fail to come through even once, and shift your investments in the direction of those who stand up when needed, and show up on time. Notice the situations where there is a net gain for everyone and nobody has to sacrifice. A true friend is someone who shares what they might need themselves—and you won’t have many of those in the course of a lifetime. You may discover over the next few weeks that you have one or two of them, and you are invited to treat them well. And if you lose a friend, they were probably just an acquaintance.

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

“The more you explain it, the more I don’t understand it.”

~ Mark Twain



Vashon! Do you have a great story that you want to share with The Loop? We want to hear from you!



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