

A Few Inconvenient Truths King County Council's Zoning Law Changes VashMauria

By Bernie O'Malley, Vashon Mayor 2016

Some people will see this page as an open letter to Teresa Mosqueda, our Elected representative at King County. Some people will listen to her luncheon-style Zoomer for answers. A few weeks ago, I wrote 2 whole pages in The Loop with 6 questions about Zoning Law changes for VashMauria. I'm told the pages rang very few bells Overtown on James Street. All my 2,200 words asking for 9 Electeds brought us just 1 Official for a TV lunch. No disrespect intended, just wanted more viewpoints. So sorry for my miserable failure.

Failure doesn't deter the Irish, but offers a lesson. Maybe just 1,000 words with 3 simple questions is a better approach. So here goes another try:

WHO IS ASKING FOR THESE CHANGES

WHY NOW

WHY HERE

The 1st question is the easiest to answer: the very powerful combination of the Federal, State, and County governments are loudly demanding more, cheaper, affordable housing. NOW, NOW, NOW. No Elected official can ignore the volume, the demand, the zoning changes required to make it happen. One way at County level is to change the permit process: often 2-3 years for a Single Family Residence, almost 4 years for a Congregant Housing Project. Change to perhaps just 6 months for a "permitted use" like Manufactured (Mobile) Home Parks and Congregant Housing.

The 2nd question is similar in simplicity: Billions and billions of cash just sloshing around the country looking for work products, especially



Visual by Anne Gordon. See Artist Profile, p. 4

hammer-ready proposals with labor available. At the County level, that means a Bonanza of New Income - Permit Fees, Design Fees, Wetland Reviews, Critical Area Reviews, and Inspection Fees. Whatever your political persuasions, what's not to like about new revenue!?

The 3rd question brings it all together, to our Islands which we may now call VashMauria. There are several vacant acreage lots in or near the "Rural

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Disconnect!

By Michael Shook

And so, here we are, barely a month away from the BIG DAY. I speak, of course, of November 5th. In a season that (so far) has seen two assassination attempts on one candidate, and the sitting President firmly, actively running, then dropping out (or being forced out) over concerns he's dotty - all amid numerous declarations from both sides that to vote for the other side is to welcome the collapse of the Republic - it seems fitting that the vote will come on the day celebrated in England as "Guy Fawkes Day."

Fawkes was a key conspirator in the "Gunpowder Plot." He was arrested while guarding 36 barrels of gunpowder, placed under Parliament in the hopes of blowing King James I sky-high, along with most of the English government. After the failure of the plot, King James reminded his people that monarchs rule by Divine right, and what better proof of that than his narrow escape? It could only be Divine intervention (this sounds familiar). As I write this, no one has yet attempted to blow up the Capitol. Thank goodness.

Of the presidential elections I've been witness to, this is more memorable than most. The only one comparable in my life was in 1968, when the country was tearing itself apart. The nightly news featured images of city after city in flames, as 120 endured violent riots that year. Demonstrators-turned-rioters hurled rocks, bricks, and the occasional Molotov cocktail at police and National Guardsmen.

The Democratic Convention was almost a war outside the International Amphitheater in Chicago.

Listing demands, students at various universities took staff hostages, some even held at knifepoint. Organizations like the Students for a Democratic Society, Weather Underground, the Jewish Defense League, Black Panthers, and others (including unaffiliated actors), lit off bombs. There were also the tragic assassinations of the Rev. Dr. King, and Robert Kennedy.

So what is it about this election? Many are deeply worried about the outcome of the vote, whichever way it goes, but all most of us can do is cast a vote. Then it's out of our hands. Which to me renders worry useless. Concern is good but worry, no.

Perhaps that's where the anxiety lies. Most of life happens to us; neither you nor I have any control over it, and turmoil of any kind emphasizes that harsh reality. With endless cycles of "news" swirling around like one hurricane after another, it can be hard to keep one's perspective. Disaster lurks all round.

But the truth is, life has never been better for more people than it is now. That is an objective, measurable fact. To take one example, about 130,000 people each day manage to lift themselves out of dire poverty. And that's been going on continuously for the last 30 years. Modern medicine, agriculture, and technology have enabled not just millions, but billions more to live into adulthood, and to have a shot at making a life. And those millions living in democratic nations have unprecedented freedoms - never before have so many had such an array of choice in their lives, to

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Running For The Ferry

By Seán Malone and John Sweetman

Seán and I had just returned from an extended trip to Hunters in Eastern Washington where his brother Mike has a large ranch that we frequently visited as "unpaid interns" to work in various neat projects, such as restoring old fish runs from Lake Roosevelt.

After a long drive, we ended up at the Fauntleroy terminal and ... just like almost winning the lottery, our arrival was almost a drive-on. Ferry problems seem to have been with us both our entire lives. So, the small delay allowed us to reflect on our early ferry experiences over a bag of overpriced Cheetos we snagged outta' that thieving machine next to the restrooms, which were closed for some inscrutable reason.

In 1953, Seán relates, dad was half-owner of a painting business in Seattle, and his younger sister and brother and he commuted to Seattle for school, which was a horrendous endeavor.

Every morning, we left the house for the ferry at 7:30 a.m. Connecting with the ferry was crucial as I went to Seattle Preparatory School and if I was late because of a missed ferry, the Vice Principal met me at the front door and directed me downstairs to the boiler room. Father W. would tell me to bend over and grab my ankles while he administered three spats. He used a three-foot-long wooden paddle with four holes, so as not to reduce the paddle's speed. It was said to be a successful mission if Father was able to lift your heels off the floor.

"Hey Dad, you are on the wrong side of the

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Thoughts on the Most Recent Vashon Healthcare District Meeting

By Dr. Steven Nourse

I attended the August 21 VHCD meeting and heard convincing testimony from Fire Chief Matthew Vinci; Brigitte Schran-Brown, Board of Commissioners Chair; Commissioner Jim Whitney; and other Islanders in support of utilizing the existing services of Vashon Island Fire & Rescue (VIFR) to provide urgent care on the Island.

The Fire Chief and the commissioners have performed many of the services discussed. Whereas the VHCD Commissioners have only listened to a slick presentation by the expensive contract provider, Dispatch Health. In my evaluation of the VHCD meeting, I came away with the following thoughts:

Former VHCD Commissioner Eric Pryne stated, "The VIFR plan looks hastily prepared and light on specifics." This was exactly what I thought when I heard the responses of the Dispatch Health administrators to questions posed by meeting participants. Essentially, it was a lot of maybes and don't knows.

Mr. Pryne also said, "The alternative from VIFR simply isn't ready for prime time." I disagree. In his short time as Fire Chief, Vinci has made some forward-thinking and very effective and decisive moves, including creating Mobile Integrated

Health. I think he has earned the Island's trust and deserves to be given a chance to prove the value of VIFR in providing urgent care services to Islanders.

During VHCD meeting, there seemed to be a misunderstanding of what "urgent care" looks like and means. This needs to be given more airtime. A few weeks or a month more for negotiations would have provided Islanders with much-needed clarity. It is better to take time to do something right rather than do it quickly and have the results come back to haunt you.

Commissioner Tom Langland stated that the VHCD tried to meet and work with VIFR. This was disputed by Chief Vinci. This was exacerbated by Mr. Pryne's description of the VIFR plan as "preposterous." Name-calling is not the way to start a collaborative effort.

I felt the minds of the Board were made up long before this meeting; only one Commissioner dissented. That person stated exactly what I thought should happen - more time spent discussing the questions asked before making a final decision.

What I think needs to be done to show good faith to Islanders is to conduct a professional survey of what medical services are needed on the Island, and by whom Islanders want the service provided. Other questions I have asked the VHCD in writing are:

- What is the total cost of the Dispatch Health contract?
- Are there variables that could lead to

Dispatch Health asking for more funding, if justified?

- When is the money paid (annually, monthly)?
- This project is set to be reviewed after 18 months; at that time would a determination be made to continue or discontinue the contract?
- Will urgent care services be provided as-needed or on an appointment-only basis?
- Will there be Dispatch Health staff on the Island for certain hours daily, seven days a week?
- Will Dispatch Health provide VHCD with monthly reports of services provided?
- Will Dispatch Health provide off-Island transport? If so how will VHCD be charged?

We are in a totally different time and space than we were when the VHCD was established. That should be acknowledged and respected. If money is being thrown around in the manner that VHCD is, why not spend some to make sure they are truly following the Island's needs?

In conclusion, right now approximately an estimated \$1.5 million dollars has been committed to Dispatch Health over two years. It is owed to Vashon-Maury Island citizens and taxpayers to fully determine, cautiously and carefully, if a comparable service can be provided at much less expense. Chief Vinci proposed that VIFR, an already existing Island infrastructure service, could provide an equal or greater service for a \$350,000 annual budget. This would include an additional physician's assistant seven days a week. I am willing to place my bet on RED, or VIFR!

A Few Inconvenient Truths

King County Council's Zoning Law Changes VashMauria

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Town" for new housing projects. Several lots are already described where Highest Best Use is Multifamily, which sounds to me like already "Permitted" projects. You'll read that phrase "permitted" in the Comp Plan Amendments described by KC Council and the Executive for 2025 and beyond.

Okay, this sounds like crazy stuff, never gonna' happen to us on bridgeless Islands, 11,000 peeps living on groundwater alone, a tiny sewer district with only 4-5 miles of pipes.

Just not possible here. Quit your worrying! Enjoy your retirement!

Maybe seeing some "pictures" of realistic possibilities of how life could change in 3 years is a good idea. Let's start with the ever-popular subject of "safe parking."

What the devil is Safe Parking? We have excellent parking already at Park-n-Rides, don't we? Yes, we do see some RVs occasionally parked for months at a Park-n-Ride. Yes, we see some RVs and vans and cars on 103rd by RoseBallen, but it's just 6-8 vehicles and the woods nearby. Very quiet non-issues.

NOPE. Forget these one-offs. The County proposes a major remodel of concepts. In the words of Steffon Moody: IMAGINE, if you will, VashMauria in 2028.

The Comp Plan Amendments often refer to the "Rural Town of Vashon." The Town dimensions are basically a 1/2 mile wide area between Cove Road and SW 204th. In that 4-5 square miles of the Rural Town Plan, you'll find lotsa' vacant lots. Burton and Dockton might be included in other Amendments.

CAUTION: the vacant lots described here are for illustration. The actual property owners may be interested, or not, have better ideas, or see these options as snowball's chance in hell.

IMAGINE the new Affordable Housing Zone of "permitted" Safe Parking of 150 cars, RVs, Tent-Trailers, and Vans on a County-owned 1 1/2-acre vacant lot near the Library and Ober Park. This Affordable Housing Zoning Amendment calls for management by a "social service entity, religious group," or any group vetted by, but not directly managed by, King County Local Services Department. Sewer, Water, Garbage, Security services for this residential use is expected to be provided.

IMAGINE a "permitted" 60 Mobile-Homes Park on some vacant acres near RoseBallen. Sewer is "nearby," water shares might be available or a new well drilled, Metro bus line is walking distance. Each lot's Park might provide 200+ people with very affordable 2-bedrooms, single-wides, with carports.

IMAGINE another Affordable Housing option in the "Rural Town of Vashon," a "permitted" "Micro-Shelters Village," allowing as many as 460-600 people in 6'x10' shelters/sheds on a large vacant parcel. Sewer nearby, Metro bus too. Similar Villages in Oregon provide a common kitchen and sanitary structure.

My last picture shows what our Elected Council members and the Executive are crafting for VashMauria. **IMAGINE** 15 more "congregate homes," 2-3 stories high, each project developing 5-10 8-12 bedroom homes for 400-800 people placed on any 2-4-acre vacant lot in VashMauria. The Vashon HouseHold project at 188th and Vashon Hwy is an easy example of what a "congregate home" looks like: good new construction, on-site manager for the residents, some off-street parking, on a Metro bus line.

These 4 pictures are not a fiction made up to frighten you, just imaginings to help us all see clearly

what's possible in the next few years with the NEW Zoning proposals. These changes, scattered in Vashon Rural Town and areas of Burton and Dockton, would provide housing for 5000, perhaps 10,000 residents. As mentioned, some real estate people predict 25,000 new residents possible if King County can streamline permit processes.

Thanks again if you read this far into my 1,000 words. Keep asking questions.

The Vashon Loop is published monthly

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Wednesdays, 12:30-3:00 p.m.
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All dates are at Vashon Library (inside at the back)

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These times not convenient? Call or email Miguel Urquiza 206-477-6965 or 206-491-3761 miguel.urquiza@kingcounty.gov

This is open enrollment for health insurance that will start in 2025

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Vashon! The DSHS Van will be here

New location and day of the week

Thursday, October 10 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

At the Vashon-Maury Community Food Bank (10030 SW 210th)

The Vashon Loop

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King County Zoning

Brace, Brace, Brace

By Andy Valencia

Vashon is awake and very, very interested in what the upcoming zoning changes for our island will mean. One of our leading citizens helped the Vashon Loop highlight some important questions in our previous issue, and follows that with more commentary in this issue. Our Community Council has also spoken clearly to King County Council, asking for a way to ask and be answered.

Early in the process, some people confused the proposed Thunderbird facility with the updated KC Comprehensive Plan, along with its newest 700 pages of amendments to our zoning regulations. If Thunderbird can open a long-idle Vashon site and operate it successfully - good on them. Reprogramming how Vashon is developed is a completely separate issue.

Progress

The Vashon Loop approached Councilmember Mosqueda's office in the hope of covering a comprehensive set of zoning questions and concerns, but was rebuffed with the statement that her office is too busy. And yet, some extra information is starting to come out through other channels, and it's promising.

Their plans have changed. What caused the changes? Maybe it's because the council cares deeply about their citizens. Or maybe because we were making enough noise to be noticed. Or it could simply be the fact that it's an election year.



Whatever the reason, we'll take it.

The most significant response is that Councilmember Mosqueda has apparently indicated that she'll "carve out" Vashon from some of the most worrisome aspects of the draft zoning changes. This apparently would address car camping and many of the highest density housing rules which could lead most directly to a fundamental shift of our town towards a new, more urban feel. These parts of the zoning changes would still be in the zoning regulations, but would not apply to Vashon.

Before you pop that champagne, please do remember that she is one vote on the council. Politics could cause her to change her position; politics at the council level could stymie her attempt to add a Vashon carve out. Vashon needs to stay on top of this until we see what gets adopted in December.

Communication

And what precisely will get adopted? The Loop has searched far and wide, but since our councilmember's office isn't talking to us, all we can tell you is that we have seen no details of a carve out. Will it be thorough? What will end up slipping through? We'll give you

answers as we find them.

Amid all this interest, the community was finally granted a 90 minute Zoom call with Councilmember Mosqueda. The finalization of these changes is scheduled for November - there's one more meeting addressing town development and affordable housing. One more general meeting over in Seattle, and then all of this will take its final form and be adopted in December. It's later in the game than you think.

The Zoom Call

The Zoom call with Councilmember Mosqueda and her staff was 60 minutes of overview, and 30 minutes of questions. She started with a list of issues to be addressed, starting with affordability and continuing with a list which would surprise no one - health, transportation, child care, and more. "Middle Housing" as a term was introduced, encompassing duplexes, triplexes, townhouses and the like. Along with ADU's, they apparently make up the focus of the type of housing development needed to solve Vashon's supply and affordability woes. At least in this new, post-carveout world.

The presentation was a mix of carrot and stick. Some modest relaxation in a few regulations. Some new kinds of requirements which can be sprung on a submitted project, such as adding affordable units, or building using whatever green techniques are currently in favor. There's an "Inclusionary Housing" meeting in November between King County and some of our community council folks; watch for new wrinkles in what town development will look like as the results of that meeting make their way into the plan.

Big picture

Now take a step back from the question of how many feet away your neighbor's heat pump has to be from your house. Zoning laws are like arrows, pointing a path through the maze of possibilities. New zoning means a new path. What does the Vashon at the end of this new path look like?

Our county is telling us that we're rural, and thus hardly any of the changes will have an impact on us. Logically, this is not reassuring, as most of non-rural KC is inside cities - which have their own zoning. How can big chunks of Seattle-adjacent land like Vashon not be an important part of their thinking?

Zoning is all about fitting people and their activities onto locations. Vashon is unusual in that our locations are bounded, and getting to the next land over requires floating or

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The Vashon Loop Health Disclaimer:

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.

Vashon Health Care District Leads, Follows, AND Gets Out of the Way

By Marc J. Elzenbeck

Living on the Island means forgoing some healthcare options. We all knew that going in, and many older residents are so adversely impacted they have to move away.

Recent surveys have listed healthcare access, particularly to urgent care, as a top concern. If you slice deep into your thumb, if your kid runs a 106 degree fever, or you decide to use a chainsaw at night, best make sure it's before the last ferry leaves. Nothing will change that soon.

While we still have a geographically constrained reality, ignoring fundamental improvements would be a mistake. It's time to recognize jobs well done. Voters overwhelmingly approved property tax increases to improve care during business hours. First, by establishing the Vashon Health Care District (VHCD); second, by extending a lavish increase to Vashon Island Fire and Rescue (VIFR); and finally, by continuing to pay for Medic One, a national leader in ambulance service quality.

Together, these add up to well over \$1000 in taxes per Island resident every year. That's a ton of money. Has the investment been worth it?

It's starting to look like it has. By acumen or luck, VHCD hit a home run getting the SeaMar Community Health Clinic onto Vashon. Due to a past round robin of poorly performing hospital-connected providers, many of us have grown accustomed to fulfilling their medical needs off-island. (Urgent Care options are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. not far from the north and south ends.) Many still voice their complaints and

impatience, but we no longer see or hear about steady disappointment with the services we've got. All indications point to high satisfaction. SeaMar even answers their phone.

SeaMar brings much more to the community than first meets the eye, and VHCD deserves more credit for luring it here. It no longer takes proffered financial support, knows how to run a huge array of services out of clinics and, most importantly, is able to stay afloat on Vashon. By inception and design, SeaMar specializes in catering to the needs of underserved communities. Its track record of proliferation in western Washington is unmatched; it now has 90 medical and dental clinics.

SeaMar building a new clinic in town with its own finances demonstrates commitment as it plans to expand into dental, plus making affordable housing for staff. SeaMar possesses the organizational expertise for growth, elsewhere providing maternity, pharmacy, nutrition, and social services, long-term facility based care, plus outpatient and inpatient behavioral health and substance abuse treatment.

In his article on page 2, my friend and neighbor Dr. Steve Nourse indicates that there is a turf battle between VIFR and VHCD over the privilege of providing expanded Mobile Health, de facto urgent care services, during business hours. He favors VIFR's internal solution, and may well prove to be right. Battles can be wasteful, conflict can be uncomfortable, but there are different ways to view this. Competition tends to bring out the best in its participants. Lack of competition tends to foster complacency and limited transparency.

In that spirit, we should welcome this bake-off

as an old-fashioned "Build vs Buy" situation.

For its part, the VHCD simply seems to be following through on its voter mandate to further improve the level of care available on the Island. It has the budget to do so, and is staying well within it. Like SeaMar, Dispatch Health is a proven specialist in its field. All they do is provide mobile urgent care, and their own rapid growth has likewise been achieved by providing a good solution to underserved areas.

With a track record of making a wise and deliberate key partner choice, VHCD deserves the courtesy of some trust. Assuming VIFR secures the extra few-odd hundred thousand dollars it seeks for its Mobile Health plan, at the end of the next two years, we'll have a pretty good idea of which service is most proficient. Hopefully, they'll both prove to be equally so, and during the daytime, for once, we'll have more health care options than we know what to do with. Let's find out.

News You May Have Missed

Tupperware goes bankrupt

So does Kmart

Health: pump iron, cardio, or dance?

These and more at:
vashonloop.com/missed

Why Now? Why Here? Part 2

An Expert Interview About the Thunderbird Treatment Center

By Caitlin Rothermel

Last month, we ran part 1 of our interview with Dr. Marli Parobek, a Vashon resident and doctorally prepared nurse practitioner who is board-certified in family practice and psychiatry. Dr. Parobek previously developed and managed a voluntary inpatient medical rehab/detox center at the Astria Toppenish Hospital in Yakima, and is currently the only prescribing psychiatric professional on the Island.

This month, Dr. Parobek summarizes some changes the Island is likely to experience with the establishment of the Seattle Indian Health Board's (SIHB) Thunderbird Treatment Center, discusses some pressures and incentives that may affect patient screening and care, and reiterates her concerns that neither King County or SIHB has involved any local medical or mental health clinics or professionals in collaborative conversation about on-Island needs.

Patient Screening

Dr. Parobek is concerned that, as a low-intensity facility located on an Island that is, at minimum, one hour away from emergency care, the Center will not have the medical staffing or flexibility needed to ensure patient safety.

The SIHB has emphasized that they plan to screen for lower-risk patients, a level of caution that is essential because the Center will

house pregnant and parenting patients. SIHB has also stated they will not admit individuals who have been convicted for felonies, and plan to screen to avoid medical complications due to undertreated mental illness.

Dr. Parobek believes that, due to the nature of the system and the incentives that drive it, these screening procedures will be inadequate. When people detox, the first step is usually a 3-7-day stay at a high-resource treatment center. According to Dr. Parobek, this is expensive and closely managed, "... Getting insurance to pay [for extra days] is difficult - there is absolute pressure to move patients out of beds. This leads to less-than-ideal screening systems."

SIHB has indicated they plan to sell "pre-paid" beds to certain tribes; this is also common practice. Dr. Parobek explains: "At Astria Toppenish, we had 12 beds, and the Yakima tribe bought two. If the tribe didn't have two people who needed those two beds, they remained empty because the tribe paid for those beds."

On the other hand, with pressure to transition patients out of detox treatment, this pre-paid arrangement can serve as an incentive to use beds that may not be ideally located for the patient.

Thunderbird is also a voluntary facility and, lacking adequate ground transportation and a well-functioning

ferry system, if patients choose to leave early there is not always an easy way to get them home.

A Community Resource?

Dr. Parobek believes it is incorrect to view the Treatment Center as a community resource. "If King County truly wanted to invest in Vashon substance treatment and prevention, they would provide funding directly to Islanders via a pre-existing, successful program that simply needs more funding to expand its services. I would start by asking 'Why now? Why here?' It's not the people of Vashon asking for it, it's not Vashon having the infrastructure and the medical professionals to manage it - what really is the incentive here? Because it's not community health."

In line with this, there's no guarantee that someone from Vashon needing addiction treatment would be transferred to this Center. Why? The priority for rehab is not location, but the first open bed. Also, according to Dr. Parobek, "Statistically, people don't like treatment in their hometown. Part of the reason they use is the people and environment they're surrounded by ... Drug and alcohol rehab should be the opportunity to seek respite away from the people and places that trigger substance use."

This leads to another overlooked consideration in siting this facility on Vashon - clinical recommendations for addiction treatment emphasize the importance of involving family in the recovery process. According to Neal Cotter - a licensed mental health consultant who previously worked at

the Astria Toppenish Hospital inpatient psychiatric unit: "I always like to think about best practice. What makes sense? Having people near their family."

It is important for patients to be in a location that is close (enough) for family to visit, with accessible places to stay. This infrastructure doesn't exist on Vashon, and because of this, the Center's location could have the unintended effect of isolating patients.

Conclusion

Having this discussion isn't about privilege; it's about accountability and realistic considerations. SIHB has indicated that they have provided multiple program updates and opportunities for community input. Speaking as an Island mental health professional who interacts with other Island health professionals, Dr. Parobek disagrees:

"SIHB has only engaged with Vashon on a limited basis, and mostly with special events for invited guests and supporters. We have only heard from SIHB administrators and KC politicians - none of our businesses, schools, medical or mental health clinics have been engaged in a meaningful conversation about daily operations and the impact of adding the largest residential and the largest medical facility to the Island. If King County truly wanted to invest in Vashon substance treatment and prevention, they would provide funding directly to Islanders via a pre-existing, successful program that simply needs more funding to expand its services."

Artist Profile – Anne Gordon

In August, our front page featured an eye-catching visual by Anne Gordon regarding undergrounding Vashon-Maury power lines for fire safety. When we pondered how we might depict Island concerns regarding the potential zoning changes, we thought immediately of Anne. As you can see on the front page, Anne has a wonderful ability to create art that explores current issues in expressive ways.

We asked Anne a few questions about her work.

Loop: Who do you produce art for?

Anne: Usually a customer, but also myself. I do a great deal of experimentation - in fact most of it is experimentation - with technique. For content, I study the world, our society, and get inspired. Everything to me is a story.

How do you perceive art? What triggers your interest and passion to create?

Actually, everything I see is art. It's all about the balance of light and dark, kind of like life. In our world, one could say we are not always in balance. I perceive art as the juxtapositioning of the incongruent. I combine photography (having been a photographer) with painting, imagination, and technology.

For example, I have files that are called: "faces of war," "apocalyptic art," "transhumanists," and "trees and skies;" I have a series called "When does death begin?" (In reference to climate change [regardless of cause], and tree deaths throughout the world). To do that, I

traveled every year to forests in British Columbia, documenting the demise of trees, very sad ... heartbreaking. This particular file includes solar radiation management (what we see as lingering criss-crossing white trails). I have many other files reflecting the world as I see it. The passion doesn't stop, as long as I can still see (bad joke) ... I am inspired by that which I see ... often that which others do not.

Could you describe your process in developing and creating the Undergrounding visual ("Underground Vashon-Maury Powerlines for Fire Safety")?

I met this nice lady, Ms. Bell who told me that she was looking for a yard sign (I had no idea what that was). She explained the need to bury electric lines, which could prevent fires. YES, I got that loud and clear, agreeing to do it ... My process was, I started with a "graphic" of a flame, and, typical of my processes, used several programs and tools to get the color and message. I have to say it's complex the way I do an image ... usually 3-4 programs/filters, making tons of decisions ... and knowing when to stop. I use Photoshop (taught it) ... then transfer to another program, then back to Photoshop.

A lot of energy goes into a finished piece.

What drew you to begin creating art this way - digitally mixing photography, images, special effects?

I've had a varied background, from photography, being an RN, art teaching, authoring educational books, researching. All these facets plus technologies got mixed up together.

I began mixing media before the



Visual by Anne Gordon. Featured on the front page of our August issue.

computer. It all began at age 6 when my mother showed me colored pencils and watercolors, which I combined. No, I didn't save that art. However later on, I traded a ring (that gave me bad luck) for a camera, and I was hooked. I began painting on the photographs. People wondered why I was ruining so many pictures. But I learned how to retouch old photos to make them look new. Then in the 90's, I fell in love with the first painting program, and the second, and the rest is history. When experimenting, it's all about "what happens when."

Your Artist Statement concludes with, "Image making is my passion because imagery is the door that freezes

time." Can you tell us more what you mean with this?

So, at the end of the day, we each hold onto our special memories, our events that impact us. We can think our minds remember exactly, but a photo or image captures the memory in a slightly different way than the mind, triggering more. It is a door into a personal esoteric sanctuary. My continued passion revolves around the question: "What is art?" No two people answer that question the same way. My goal is to create images not seen before, created in non-traditional ways.

I do not have any upcoming shows scheduled, though might in the new year. In the meantime, I am thinking of doing car pop ups ... or something for the holidays at a bazaar. I did create Robots in Babylon in 2010, which was a prophetic sci fi DVD about our future society in 2020. It is very interesting to see how accurate it was, and can be viewed online at <https://vimeo.com/11321292>: a grant was awarded for that.

Visit: <https://>

www.annegordonimagery.com/

Vashon-Maury Clothing Drive Needs Our Community to Keep It Going

Based at the Food Bank on Wednesdays from 10AM-2PM, the Clothing Drive gives clothing, rain gear, jackets, bedding/sleeping bags, heaters, camping stoves and more for free to those who need them. These donations have made an impactful difference to Islanders throughout the year, and during the cold, rainy months especially.

After initiating and operating the Vashon-Maury Clothing Drive for the past ten years, Daniel Hooker is retiring from this project, and is seeking community members to take it over. Will you consider? Contact Daniel at (707) 771-1999 to discuss what's involved. As Daniel says, now is the time to "Step up to the plate before the plates are gone!"

Getting Old on Vashon

By Pam (aka Gates) Johnson

As I've said to anyone who will listen, getting old is not fun. Many of those things I used to do with ease are now next to impossible. Things not impossible are now just too darned hard.

Here is an example of the unexpected difficulties I have encountered. A few weeks ago, I had an early appointment in Tacoma. No problem. Hopped in my Bronco and off I went. On my way back to the ferry, I thought it would be a good idea to stop at Safeway and pick up some groceries. It was early, so the parking lot was pretty empty.

I got my groceries, headed to the ferry ... and arrived home. Went around to the passenger door and proceeded to open it. There was some resistance, then a "clunk." Hmmm?

Tried again and got the same result. This is a reasonably new vehicle, so nothing should be "clunking." I stepped back and saw that my fender was scratched, the quarter-panel was pushed back, and the wheel-well thingy was all scratched up. Some pin-headed twit hit my car while it was parked for ten minutes at Safeway and didn't bother to leave a note!

Hit and run! Now starts the insurance dance. Since it was hit and run, the deductible was only \$300, as opposed to over \$1,000, so that was an upside. Downside was I had to get hand surgery, so couldn't drive the Bronco to get an estimate, and had to call upon the generosity of another to drive me in. Thank you, David.

Island Voices

The estimate came in at around \$2,300, with a week in the shop. I was just starting to use my hand and was leaving for vacation in a couple of weeks. Argh! Okay, I had to make this work, so plans were put in order. Take the Bronco in, get a rental car, wait a week (which just happened to be Festival), get my car back, and proceed with life.

I dropped my car off at the body shop and was picked up by Enterprise to get a rental. As we drove into the lot, I saw a Bronco like mine, two Toyota Tacoma pick-up trucks, a bunch of stinking minivans, and a Dodge Challenger sports car. I asked about getting the Bronco and was told the last guy who rented it took the key with him when he left and he couldn't bring it back until tomorrow. I could come back and get it then (another ferry trip).

How about one of the Tacoma pickups? Nope. They are both already spoken for. I told the salesman I would rather walk than drive a minivan. You can see where that left me. The Challenger.

In all these many years behind a wheel, I have only had two cars, a Dodge Swinger and a Volvo sedan. Everything else has been a truck. I can get in and out of a truck easily. I can see out of a truck. I know where the front and sides of a truck are when driving and parking. My car-driving experience is limited. And they put me in a sports car.

First problem was how to get in. With a truck, you put your right foot in, hoist your butt up to the seat, and push up with your left foot. Well, I put my right foot in and tried to sit my butt down. But with my rear on the seat, I couldn't swivel my head or bend my neck enough to get into the darned thing. I felt like an idiot.

Trying again, I stood up and thought about it. How about I put my butt in first, lean way back until my head went in, swivel my butt, and then try to get my feet in? It was an ugly process, but it worked.

I fired the Challenger up, and boy did it growl. It had a Hemi, just what an old lady needs. Made it to the ferry with no major incidents or speeding tickets, but then had another thought. The Challenger had about three inches of ground clearance. What if it was a low tide and I couldn't get on without wrecking the bottom of the car? Crap! Luckily, the ramp wasn't too steep, so I loaded up, again with no incidents.

As the deckhand walked by, I said sorry I was so slow, but it was a rental car. He grabbed my arm and told me to drive it like I stole it. That was the high point of my day.

I had a week with that car. Drove it to the store once. It sat in my driveway the rest of the time. You have to fill up the gas tank before you take it back, so I did that. Again, had to jack myself around getting in and out at the gas station, so once again looked like an idiot.

Never, ever hated a vehicle so much. I was so happy to have my little black Bronco, one that I could easily get in and out of, back home where it belongs.

Disconnect!

Continued From Front Page

do what they want, how they want, when they want.

Are there severe problems? Of course, and there always will be. Is it often two steps forward, one back (or worse)? Absolutely. But enormous progress has been made, and if we keep faith in our ability to deal with what arises, if we keep from panicking, if we "fear not" and continue to do the work that needs to be done, progress will continue to be made, however slowly.

Now, I will do what should not be done without first asking - give advice - but since you are still reading, I will take that as a "yes."

Step one: To relieve the worry, you must disconnect. Turn off the phone. I'm not joking. TURN. IT. OFF. Unless you are the President, you are not so important that you must be available 24-7. If you think that untrue, you are deluded, and ought to seek help. That's not a joke, either.

Step two: Stop watching news from television, streaming, Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, X, and anything Silicon Valley has come up with, and

instead read a couple of newspapers or magazines. Or, if you can't stand holding something made of paper in your hands, find Substacks, or something, remembering that references are your friend! Choose one from the left, and one from the right. Feel free to not read any of it, even for days at a time.

"But how will I know what's going on?!" You will. You'll know what's going on in your neighborhood, your community, and your county; enough to make good decisions about voting (or just living). What you won't be is encumbered by what passes for news these days. You won't be inflamed by some troll. You won't be lamenting a disaster that occurred halfway around the world that has nothing to do with you, about which you can do nothing.

Election Day will come and go, and life will go on, and we will deal with it. Absent the stress, you will think more clearly, and be able to gratefully enjoy this incredible gift called "being alive."

You could even take a walk (sans earbuds) listening to the world around you, seeing what is around you, right now.

Imagine that.



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Going Aground in Mystery Bay

By Suzanna Leigh

"This t-shirt says 'Nordland General Store' on it," R says as he folds the laundry (I wash, he folds). "I don't recognize it."

"It's mine," I say - and I am flooded with memories. Bob and I went aground on our boat Sea Change, on the way to Nordland. Nordland is a community deep in Mystery Bay, at the head of Kilsut Harbor on Marrowstone Island.

Where is Marrowstone Island? Well, if you look south from Port Townsend, you see two islands. One is Indian Island, a Navy base and munitions depot; a bridge across Port Townsend Channel connects Indian Island to the mainland at the south end. The other is Marrowstone Island, inhabited by civilians. These two islands are connected at the south end by an isthmus, and between them is Mystery Bay.

At the North end of Mystery Bay, there is a sand spit that is covered at high tide. A narrow winding channel between the sand spit and a submerged sand bar leads to Mystery Bay. At low tide ...

... We had just come through Port Townsend Channel on an outgoing tidal current and had dropped anchor at Port Haddock, south of Port Townsend to take a lunch break. Perhaps we should have stayed an extra hour there. The tide was still on the way out as we passed a huge gray Navy ship loading or unloading munitions at Indian Island. Two little watchdog boats were making sure we didn't come within a hundred yards of it. One of them followed us as we made our way toward the entrance to Mystery Bay. It's good to know our Navy is doing its job, protecting that big ship from our little sailboat.

We checked the chart and located the green and red buoys marking the entrance. Red right



Sketch from Suzanna's journal: View from the Nordland General Store

returning - keep the red buoys and markers on your right and green on your left when going into a harbor. We threaded our way slowly between the exposed sand spit on our left and the red markers that stood on the submerged sand bar to our right.

OOOF! We stopped moving. What the? We were stuck in the sand. Aground.

Bob, who was a fan of the Hornblower books, remembered a scene where the British Naval hero and his crew "kedged" to get unstuck. We decided to try it. Bob loaded the anchor into the dingy and rowed out to deeper water. He dropped the anchor and made sure it was down good. Back on Sea Change, we pulled on the anchor line, trying to pull the sailboat closer to the anchor and thus into deeper water. It didn't work. We were still stuck. Kedging may have worked in the fictional novel, but it didn't work for us. At least not yet.

2:55 p.m. The tide was still going out, for at least another ½ hour. There was nothing more we could do until the tide came in enough to float the boat. I went below to read, to ease my tension, and to wait out the tide.

Walking around in the cabin, I noticed a different feel to the floor just aft of the V-berth. The floor was slightly humped there. While the rest of

the boat seemed to move a bit with wind and current, the boat at this spot was very still. This must be where the keel is stuck in the sand, I thought.

I checked the chart. It looked like there was a red marker missing right about where we stuck. If the marker had been there, we would have steered further to the left, into deeper water.

3:25 p.m. Still stuck. A flock of seagulls circled noisily over head.

3:45 p.m. A passing motorboat sent enough wake our way to lift Sea Change slightly - just enough so that Bob could pull on the anchor line and pull us into deeper water. So we kedged off after all, thanks to a motorboat and a rising tide.

We rounded the spit and continued following the markers on a zigzag course deeper into Mystery Bay. When I looked over the side and saw eel grass brushing the hull, I held my breath, but the depth sounder said 10' and we draw only 6'.

Within an hour we were anchored in Kilsut Harbor and rowed ashore to the Nordland Store. As we ate our ice cream bars, sitting on the store's porch overlooking the harbor, we listened to islanders' tales of other groundings on the sand spit and on the sand bar we had just escaped.

The most dramatic story was of two men who motored in a small boat to Port Townsend for a night on the town. After a night of drinking, they got into some trouble. They were fleeing the harbor police and tried to go directly over the sand spit - but they misjudged the tide. Crunch! Destroyed the boat and got arrested besides!

R hands me my "Nordland General Store" T-shirt, and I hold it close, then put it away, but the memory stays. Sometimes, no matter how careful we are in life, we go aground, get stuck, and need to wait for the tide to change before we can get unstuck and continue on our way.

For more sailing adventures and a peek into my studio, visit me on Substack, "Drinking Color," <https://suzannaleigh.substack.com/p/summer-is-for-sailing?r=e26ga>



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Running for the Ferry

Continued From Front Page

road," I said as we sped through the three or four very sharp turns on the flat before Heights Hill. Before the County came, Vashon Highway was just an old wagon road that followed the property lines, creating tight corners on Vashon Highway. Dad spoke up as he sped towards the dock: "I'm just straightening out the curves."

As we neared the dock, I could see through the bushes. "Hey Dad, they are closing the gate," I cautioned, and Dad began honking his horn, causing the deckhand to quit lowering the gate while the Captain waited for us to board. That's how Dad saved me from the "boiler room." That day.

The San Mateo was the smallest ferry in Puget Sound, and the last steam ferry. Generally, riding the ferry was boring until a big storm came along. Then, the San Mateo pitched and rolled, and Dad told us to grab both rails while climbing from the car to the main deck. When the San Mateo pitched, we heard the bow slap as she hit the wave's trough. We made a game out of timing the waves while we ran from post to post to reach one of the benches. It was dangerous, as you could be pitched to the deck if your timing wasn't right.

John relates that the San Mateo figured in an experience he vaguely remembers. Back in those days, the "Black Ball" line, which my grandfather referred to as "those crooks," was mainly powered by steam or vintage diesel engines that were peculiar in that they were

"reversible" in rotation. That is to say that, as a ferry approached the dock, the engine noise would suddenly cease and then loudly resume as the propeller rotation reversed.

Such was the operational protocol, but stopping the large engine and then restarting in reverse was a complicated exercise in coordination between the signal system, engineer, and captain, as well as a precise alignment of exactly the top dead center of where the pistons were located. To get this right, there was a thing called the "Johnson Bar" that had to be moved at exactly the right moment to stop the engine at exactly the right point. And then restart in the reverse rotation!

All went usually fine, except for rough weather and the usual miscommunication over the early brass speaking tubes between the bridge and engineering spaces. One time, we were headed into Winslow, on probably the San Mateo, and the usual silence before docking was longer than usual. All of a sudden, the sound of the engines returned, and we sped toward the dock instead of backing off as usual! We crashed into the dolphins or the dock. My grandfather's Chrysler smacked into another car, and I remember some damage being discussed.

While the responsible adults discussed various remedies and fixed the ramp to offload, we kids were taken up to the cafeteria to have banana splits with cherries on top. Grampa probably had a sip of his favorite Canadian whiskey.

King County Zoning

Continued From Page 3

flying. The number of people and their needs can be calculated from the number and kind of developments you zone to accommodate. And yet – what’s our number? Will they tell us that number?

Try out 20,000 or 30,000 people, instead of our current 12,000-ish population. Look at our intersections, water, and septic/sewer. Then go down to the ferry dock and imagine doubled or tripled demand for those poor boats. With our green technology plans for the boats, we’ll be hard-pressed to get back to our pre-COVID capacity in the coming decades, never mind doubling service. How long will the ferry lines get?

Don’t just look at the boats – look at the docks. Even if the Fauntleroy terminal could be tripled in capacity, what do you think its neighbors will have to say? Passenger-only boats can help with commuting office workers, but good luck with bulk supply runs, multiple destination trips, and destinations that are unreachable by transit in any reasonable time. Of if your legs don’t work well.

The inimitable Bernie O’Malley has coined the word VashMauria to describe all of us living a ferry ride away from the rest of the world. My fellow editor Caitlin Rothermel just coined the companion phrase “Low Resource Place” – LRP. VashMauria is a LRP. No hospital, no trained crisis intervention, only the most basic medical lab and diagnostic equipment. Most of the already modest medical options are unavailable at night.

It’s the same story with our two

deputies. Every now and then, things get a little sticky, and they hold on by their fingernails until some help can float across. We’ve had fire engines come across when VIFR gets busy enough. We appreciate that help, but there isn’t much of it, and it doesn’t arrive immediately.

And water. And septic. The list is long.

A Low Resource Place

We can double the number of people on Vashon. And double the fire engines, and police, and open lots of clinics and eventually a hospital. And add lots of other stuff. 24 hour shopping, a big box store or two. We could do this—if we the people want this. Zoning will follow. I wonder if any of the politicians are talking about a bridge again, because that would make it all much easier.

Being an “islander” is the opposite of this. We came here because it doesn’t look like Fauntleroy. We accepted the lack of services, and the expensive gas, and the crazy ferry service. It’s an honorable tradition to get old enough that all your medical needs tell you it’s time to go to the mainland. And you move away. You won’t be forgotten!

It seems like every decade or so Vashon needs to revisit how it defines itself. Call it maintenance of the soul at the island level. That time appears to be upon us, so I’ll finish with this great cautionary lyric from Joni Mitchell:

They paved paradise and put up a parking lot.

Vashon Children



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Microsoft Goes Nuclear

By Marc J. Elzenbeck

Earlier in 2024, Microsoft's current leadership proposed a plan to reduce power consumption from multiple groups within the company in order to re-route its capacity to its US-based Graphical Processing Unit (GPU) servers. GPUs power AI. The plans feature shifting the "compute" for core services, for products like MS Office, to other countries. Not a known recipe for service quality success.

Why the frenzy? The idea is to put AI on top of enterprise subscription software, or Software as a Service (SaaS). In sum, it provides a way to search and organize institutional memory, then make compelling stories with it. The more data you generate and collect, the more data trails you have to store, the more permutations you've got to mine and re-arrange into Business Intelligence. Stare into the void and it stares back at you. Exponentially.

Not feeling enthralled yet? To understand Big Tech's desperate commercial affair with AI, all you have to do is look at its flat or falling SaaS revenues. AI is the first new-new thing Salesforce and like providers have had to sell in 20 years. It's a justifiable upgrade to squeeze out another \$30-\$50 license per seat a month.

Here is Sales Scenario One: someone may have looked at your ad for floormats on Facebook back in 2016 ... and they just leased a new Mazda! AI spots it and sends them a 20% discount coupon. Due to improved ad-targeting efficiencies, the climate crisis is averted.

Island Resilience

Management has decided to scrap its energy free-up plan. Not because it was seen as dumb and generated internal resistance, but because it wasn't aggressive enough. Telling executives to turn off their lights and charge laptops at home is good practice, but a single Nvidia H100 GPU blows through about the same daily kilowatts as a household of five people. That's just raw consumption of one processor. It does not account for the construction, building, cooling, maintenance, and finance costs spread across the typical 10,000 GPUs in one hyperscaled data center.

A creative person at Microsoft hatched a cunning plan: re-open the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant, aka America's Chernobyl, closed since 1979 after 80% or so of the uranium in its Unit 2 reactor burned off into the air above the Susquehanna River. Its owner, Centennial Energy, was somewhat reluctant to reopen the disaster site until Microsoft committed to pay them more than double (according to industry analysts) the going electricity rate for 20 years. Three Mile Island is scheduled to start back up in 2028.

At a mere .85 Gigawatts, however, Three Mile Island's output isn't up to powering the New Industrial Revolution. Something more along the lines of an AI Manhattan Project is afoot. Led by OpenAI's co-founder, top execs from Anthropic, Microsoft, Google, and Nvidia visited the White

House last week and informed officials they're going to require a round number of 5-Gigawatt Mega-Centers to remain competitive in the global AI race against space aliens, or possibly China. 5 Gigawatts? That's what it takes to power the city of Miami, Florida.

US Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm is doing a PR tour to explain that fast-tracking permits for small nuclear reactors is the path forward, per a CNBC interview: "They're committed - telling us - to bringing that power with them, which is why the need for small nuclear reactors, collocating data centers with small reactors, or partnerships."

One suspects this level of investment isn't simply so customers can get chatbots to write haikus about how bad their company is (an actual case).

It might be wise to look for a higher-level motivation. Siri was originally a large Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) weapons control project, one that heavily employed AI. The basis for Facebook was once a well-funded DARPA project based on digital pioneer Gordon Bell's research. Google? DARPA. Boiled down to purely technical steps, targeting weapons with AI is almost indistinguishable from targeting advertising.

Targeting sorts through available data to form a probabilistic picture of what someone is likely to do when presented with opportunity within its capabilities. Here is Sales Scenario Two: Cellular and financial data shows a subject participates in a known terrorist cell, but when home, visits children at bedtime and then has a 98.4% chance of stepping onto the outdoor balcony at 9:15 p.m. local time. A pre-programmed explosive drone is sent to intercept the threat. The Western Way of Life is saved.

Managing Money

By Stephen Buller

How much is a dollar worth? If that sounds like a trick question, it's because most Americans are used to measuring worth in dollars. The dollar is our "unit of account," which is a standard measure of value, and one of the key traits of money.

We could use other units of account: A house is worth ten cars; a car is worth eight cows; a cow is worth 20 trees; and a tree is worth one hour of physical labor. These are hypothetical - I'm neither buying nor selling.

For many thousands of years, in many cultures, this was how people transacted. The shepherd offered sheep, the farmer crops, and the smith tools and weapons. But barter breaks down when the shepherd only needs half a sheep's worth of crops, or when the farmer needs no tools - and the smith is hungry.

Importantly, note that the sheep, crops, and tools are all the direct results of the labor of the person who will "sell" them in a barter exchange. This allows the seller to accurately value their product - the smith knows how hard it is to make a scythe. At the same time, the seller will value their own product relatively lower than someone else's - the smith doesn't have the resources or knowhow to herd sheep.

I believe the above illustrates some strengths of a barter system. However, it gives no "unit of account." (It also provides no "medium of exchange," a single commodity everyone is willing to trade with, or a "store of value," as a sheep only lasts so long.)

Enter currencies, of which there have been countless throughout history. A good currency is a

stable measure of value, denoted as price. Prices will change naturally over time, because of supply and demand and variations in productivity. Prices change unnaturally when a government imagines more currency into existence.

When prices are driven by consumer behavior or larger societal changes, they help all of us to plan, shop, and invest. Whenever you spend your dollars, you are voting for more of something - in a system where your vote actually matters.

When an irresponsible government creates new currency, the first recipients - usually the banks - steal purchasing power from the rest of us. This is called the Cantillon effect: The new currency's impact on prices takes time to filter through the economy. This is why bond and real estate prices are so high; most of the newly created currency is used to purchase treasuries and mortgage-backed securities. This is also why food prices finally shot up during the pandemic; individuals received stimulus checks that were spent on everyday items.

The Cantillon effect is one glaring problem with a system where "money" can be imagined into existence. In my opinion, this is a fiat currency and not money: Money can only be acquired through hard work, or possibly luck. It cannot be willed into existence. That is a big part of why I believe gold is the best money. No human can create gold from thin air.

The dollar is too far removed from our labor. It used to be tied directly to gold, a certificate, an IOU, some placeholder for the real thing. Then the dollar was quietly delinked as the Federal Reserve printed far more dollars than it could support with the gold in its vaults. Then, the two were officially delinked in 1971, so gold no longer supported dollars.

Today, our fractional reserve banking system allows banks to create currency through debt. For example, when a mortgage is taken out on a house, currency pops into existence in the bank's account, and the homeowner "owns" the house. The house becomes collateral, so the currency is supported in a sense, but the price is inflated by the Fed's willingness to purchase underwater mortgages, as well as many, many other toxic assets.

The above issues with our current monetary system result in prices that change not because of supply and demand or productivity, but because our government and the banks are changing the measurement tool. Can you imagine building a house while the marks on your tape measurer change every day? What about running a business while your costs rise unpredictably? Or planning for retirement while your nest egg grows smaller each year as measured by your standard of living?

How important is it for our money to be a stable measurement of value? If you don't build houses or run businesses, ask anyone you know with a pension, social security, or other fixed income.

What is a dollar worth? In 1913, when the Federal Reserve was enacted, a dollar was worth 1.372 grams of gold. Today, it's worth 0.011 grams.

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Dietary Supplements

By Leigh Siergiewicz

Dietary supplements are very helpful when they are good quality, used correctly, and dosed appropriately. Unfortunately, this is often not the case, making them either a waste of money or potentially harmful.

I always tell people not to buy supplements from third-party sellers on Amazon or other websites. I have personally had a patient use a high-quality herbal supplement I recommended that she originally bought through my supplement distributor, then subsequently bought on Amazon for less. She told me when it arrived it was immediately obvious that the product did not look or smell the same, and the label looked slightly different. This was right around the same time this company had sent out a warning that they were aware of counterfeit products.

High-quality herbal products can be expensive but are effective. Taking an unknown product from a counterfeit seller is scary. I have heard similar stories from my colleagues. Please, do not buy online from third-party sellers.

I have also had patients tell me many times that a particular brand of a supplement I recommended worked for them, then they switched to a cheaper brand and no longer experienced the beneficial effects. Many less expensive products don't have a dose that is adequate to have an effect.

For example, zinc is commonly used for a cold or mild acute illness. I have read packages of zinc lozenges that have as little as 3 mg of zinc, when an effective short-term dose for acute illness is more like 50 mg. I imagine part of the reason zinc lozenges are dosed so low is they can give a strange mouthfeel, but if the dose is ineffective, it's pointless. Capsules easily provide a large-enough dose. Always take zinc with food; it can cause an upset stomach alone.

Vitamin D is extremely important for the immune system, cognition, bone health, and so

Health Matters

much more. It is impossible to know the correct dose for you without a blood test. When someone is very low in vitamin D, a large dose for a few months can make them feel dramatically better. You should re-test after a short-term large dose regimen to measure the effect. It is possible, but difficult, to overdose on vitamin D and cause significant harm. Back when I was a student, a patient at the teaching clinic misunderstood dosing instructions and accidentally overdosed himself on vitamin D. It caused calcium deposits in his muscles and other very unpleasant symptoms.

Some of the worst offenders of low-quality supplements are multilevel marketing companies. Their products often have the highest prices with the lowest doses. Some claim their products are "certified pure therapeutic grade" or something similar. If you know what company I am talking about, that phrase is a trademark with no backing. They are the only company certified like that because they own the trademark, and it is not verified by any third party.

In general, I advise against buying big box store brands, or anything from a compelling online sales pitch. There is a short list of direct-to-consumer brands I approve of on my website. This is a topic I wish more people knew about because supplements often get a bad name when it's actually a product quality issue.

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



Contact us at editor@vashonloop.com



**Dr. Leigh Siergiewicz,
Naturopathic Physician**

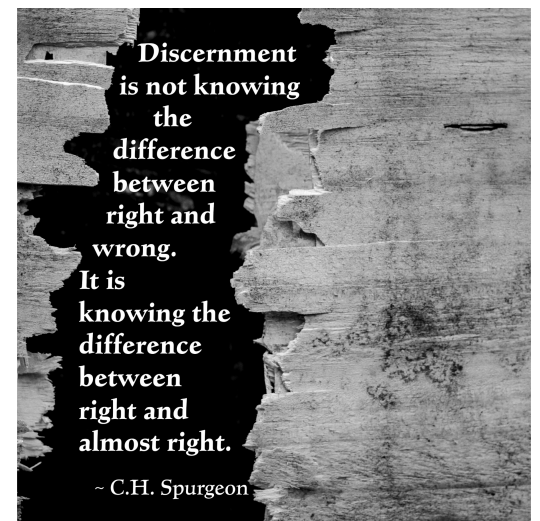


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From the Roasterie –

The Magic of Cold Brew, Part 2

By Eva Deloach

Light Roasts vs Dark Roasts

When it comes to cold brew, opting for a light roast can be a game-changer. Light roasts preserve the unique and intricate flavors of the coffee beans, which can be more pronounced and nuanced when brewed cold. The extended brewing process of cold brew allows these delicate flavors to develop fully, resulting in a bright and vibrant cup with subtle notes that might get overshadowed in a dark roast.

Additionally, light roasts tend to be less oily, reducing the chance of a greasy mouthfeel and keeping your cold brew clean and refreshing. So, for a crisp, flavorful, and truly refreshing cold brew, light roasts are the way to go!

Our Favorite Light Roasts for Cold Brew: Guatemalan Reserve and Lady of the Mountain

Our Guatemalan Reserve coffee is grown in the rich volcanic soils of

Guatemala. These rare Bourbon-style beans are fully fermented and nearly wild, giving them a unique and vibrant character, chocolate come to life, offering a delightful coffee experience with every sip. This is what we use in our cafe, so if you are looking to replicate our drinks at home, we recommend Guatemalan Reserve.

Lady of the Mountain coffee comes from the high mountain regions of Costa Rica, from the farms of Luz Marina. This coffee has an incredible story, and is light-medium with a honey post-roast, resulting in a light, crisp, and refreshing cup. The unique fermentation process enhances its natural sweetness, making it a perfect candidate for cold brewing.

Conclusion

Cold brew coffee offers a smooth, less acidic alternative to traditional hot-brewed coffee. We invite you to try cold brewing with these exceptional coffees and experience the rich, smooth flavors that define The Vashon Island Coffee Roasterie.



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

Island Epicure – Breakfast Delights

By Marjorie Watkins and Suzanna Leigh

(Updated and expanded from Loop article Dec 5, 2013)

Some people can get by without eating breakfast. Not me. I wouldn't last until ten o'clock without. My usual breakfast starts with a small orange and continues with granola and fresh fruit topped with whole milk yogurt. Sometimes I raise the protein level 3.5 grams by stirring in a tablespoon of Adams natural peanut butter.

My son John chooses a high-protein breakfast of a slice of ham, a scrambled egg, toast with cherry preserves or marmalade, and coffee. When we have overnight guests, we often make waffles or crepes and serve them with cottage cheese or ricotta, and peach or cherry preserves. We choose whole fruit over juices. It tastes better to us and still has its fiber.

Here is a favorite waffle recipe, adapted from my sister-in-law Jean Hall's Oat Nut Waffles. Try them on a weekend morning when you have time to make them, and when your kids or working family members have time to enjoy them. This recipe is in my book "Wholegrain and Gluten Free," soon to be available again on Amazon and from DragonRider Press.



Gluten-Free Oat Nut Waffles

2 1/4 cup water

1 1/2 cups Bob's Red Mill guaranteed gluten-free rolled oats

1/2 cup raw cashew nuts, sliced almonds, or almond nut butter

1 tbsp olive oil

1/2 tsp salt

Combine all ingredients in a blender. Blend until light and foamy, about 1/2 minute. Spray cold waffle iron with olive oil. Let batter rest while waffle iron is heating. The batter will thicken as it stands, and the dry ingredients will absorb liquid. Blend again briefly.

Bake in hot waffle iron for 8-10 minutes. Set the timer. Waffles should be brown and crisp and easily come out of the waffle iron. If the waffle is reluctant to leave the waffle, give it another minute or two to cook.

If using a Belgian waffle, spray it with oil while cold as above, and heat it until the dial in the little round window reads: Cook. Ladle in enough batter to almost fill all the deep squares. It will spread as it begins to cook. Bake 3 minutes. Turn the waffle over and bake another two minutes.

Eat with yogurt and fruit in season.

Suzanna makes her own yogurt. She says, "I got tired of all those yogurt containers going either to recycle or to the landfill. It just seemed like such a waste!"

Roasted Fall Vegetables

By Chef Julia, Le Cordon Bleu Chef

Roasted Fall Vegetables

Embrace the autumn flavors with this simple, yet satisfying, roasted vegetable medley. This one-pan dish is a colorful and nutritious feast, perfect for a weeknight dinner or seasonal gathering.



Ingredients

- 2 cups carrots, peeled and cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 2 cups of butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 2 cups white sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 2 cups red sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 2 cups patty pan squash, peeled and cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces.
- 4 cups Yukon Gold potatoes, unpeeled, cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 2 cups red onion, cut into half-inch wedges
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp fine sea salt
- 16, 2-inch sprigs of fresh thyme
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 Granny Smith or Honeycrisp apples, peeled, seeded, and cut into eight pieces.
- 8 sprigs flat-leaf Italian parsley, stems removed, torn coarsely
- 1 orange for zest

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place carrots, squash, white, and red sweet potatoes, and potatoes in separate containers. Add water and let soak for several minutes. Drain water and pat veggies dry.

Pour olive oil into large mixing bowl; add all vegetables (not apples) and toss to coat. Stir in 3/4 teaspoon fine sea salt, thyme, and red pepper flakes. Spread vegetable mixture evenly on a 12" x 18" rimmed sheet pan.

Cook 30 minutes; stir vegetables and add the apple pieces. Continue to bake for 30 minutes. Stir again. Then bake until vegetables and apples are brown and tender, about 20 more minutes.

Transfer to serving dish. Garnish with remaining fine sea salt, torn parsley, and orange zest. Enjoy!

Homemade yogurt

Makes two quarts

Heat half a gallon of whole or 2% milk to 185 degrees, or just below boiling. This changes the protein so that it makes better yogurt. Let the milk cool to lukewarm or to about 120 degrees. Stir in 1/4 cup plain yogurt with live bacterial culture. (Read the label when you buy it; not everything called yogurt has live yogurt bacteria in it).

Put in clean glass quart jars. Wrap with towels to insulate and keep it warm so that the little yogurt beasties can make the yogurt. You want a folded towel to set the jars on, several layers of towel around the jars, and a towel over the jars to keep in the heat. Let set overnight. Voila! Yogurt for breakfast!

Other uses for your yogurt:

It is really yummy with a little maple syrup!

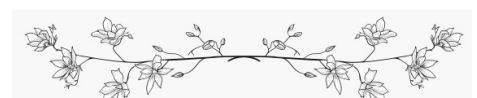
Blend with blueberries to make a breakfast smoothie.

Make tzatziki (cold cucumber yogurt soup)

Use as a base for salad dressings

Use in baking

Keeps well refrigerated for a week or so.



Two Poems in Tribute to Leonard Cohen

By Claudia Hollander-Lucas

Two poems in tribute to poet-songwriter Leonard Cohen, who died shortly before the 2016 Presidential election. "Outlaw" takes creative license to an excerpt from "A Street" and "No Halleluias" is my poem in response to the 2016 and 2024 elections.

Outlaw

It's going to November
for many years to come,
fated hearts adjusting to
that strict November drum.
I see the ghost of culture
with notches on its belt
salute some new conclusion
that most of us have missed.
So let's drink to when it's over,
and let's drink to when we meet.
I'll be waiting on this corner
where there used to be a street.

No Halleluias

Reason lost in
maddening runes
Listen to sad
Cohen tunes.
Delusions rise
past selfless deeds
schadenfreude
tramples seeds.
Fine-etched fingers
roll worry beads
steady what's hewn
in democracy.



Old Michaelmas and Blackberry Bramble

By Jane Valencia

Michaelmas - the Christian Feast Day of St. Michael the Archangel - is celebrated on September 29th. But I recently learned that this feast day was once celebrated on October 10th or 11th, and that "Old Michaelmas," at least in Britain, also commemorated the day that Satan was cast out of heaven.

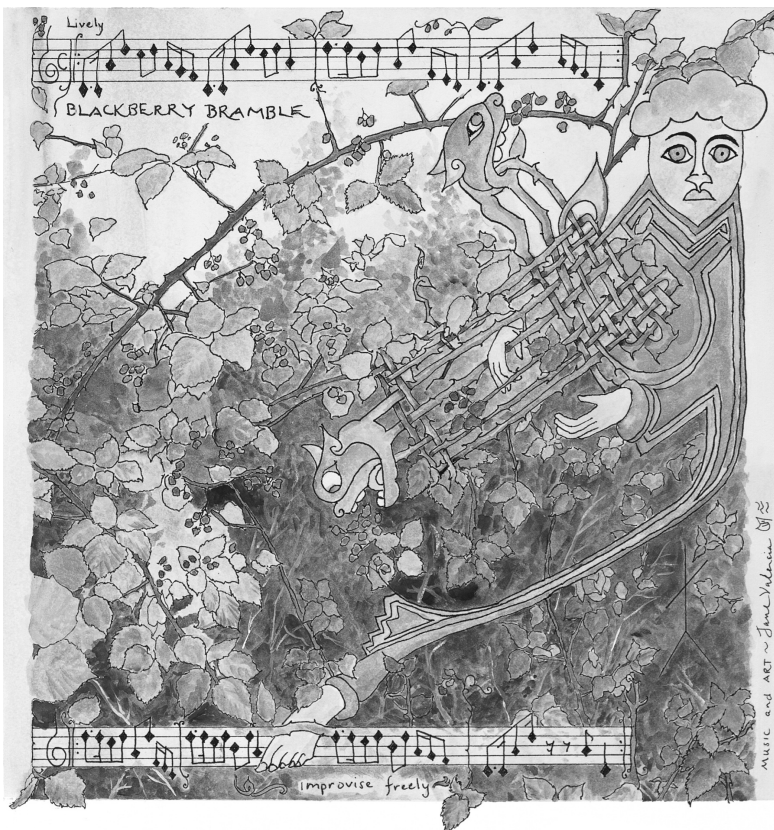
To fill you in, St. Michael the Archangel fought against Lucifer and the other fallen angels. He is considered to be the leader of the heavenly hosts. He is our protector in spiritual warfare, and, as the Prayer to St. Michael goes, our defender "against the wickedness and snares of the Devil." In reading about Old Michaelmas, I discovered that when Lucifer hurtled to earth, he fell into a blackberry bush. The ensnarer became the ensnared!

I'm sure most Islanders agree that falling into blackberry would cause anyone grief. And, indeed, tradition has it that the Devil, caught in this particular earthly torment, became enraged. He cursed blackberry, spat upon it, scorched it with his fiery breath, and, according to Cornish legend, even urinated upon this vigorous and jabby plant.

As a result, blackberries are not to be harvested after October 10th. You may think to yourself, why would I want to harvest blackberries anyway, their delicious summer goodness being long past? Let this little legend help you set aside any lingering temptation to pick one last berry, and leave blackberries well enough alone until next year.

An Irish proverb, says: "On Michaelmas Day, the devil puts his foot on blackberries."

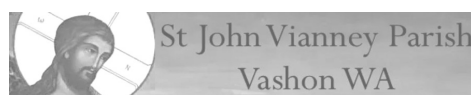
Life is surprising. After reading about the Devil and blackberries, I recalled a Celtic-inspired illustration I'd painted several years ago of a man with a thorny harp entangled in a blackberry bush. I had even



composed a rambunctious tune, "Blackberry Bramble," to go with the art. Is the entangled man the fallen Lucifer with his once-heavenly harp? Who are the beasts? I don't really know. I suspect that this illustration contains many possible stories. The Old Michaelmas legend merely suggests one of them.

Enjoy the illustration, and this little journey with blackberry and the old liturgical year, and if you play an instrument, you might try plucking out this tune. Then head out to field and forest to admire bold and abundant blackberry.

Oh, and if it's past October 10th? Leave any blackberries you find on the vines.



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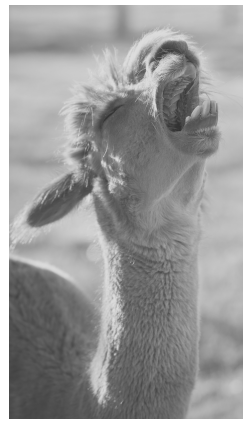
Blackberry Bramble

Jane Valencia



Laughing Llamas Chronicles

By Daniel Hooker



Q. How do old hippies count their wives?

A. One Missis 'Ippie, two Missis 'Ippie, three Missis 'Ippie

~

A friend reminded me of the hit song, "Walk Like an Egyptian."

I tried that.

Then I had to find a Cairotractor.

~

I just tried the new firefighters weight loss system. This morning was quite successful, in some ways. I burned 2,000 calories.

That's the last time I leave the brownies in the oven while taking a nap.

~

Sundays are always sad.

But the day before is a Sadder day

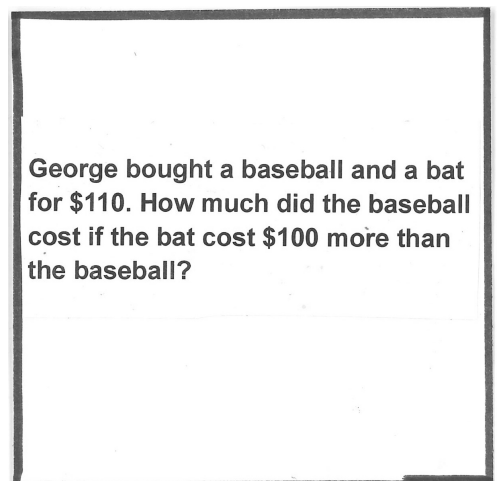
~

I started telling everyone about the benefits of dried grapes.

It's about raisin' awareness.

Math Puzzle

By Anne Cotter Moses



Island poetry in these pages

How about yours?



Submit your poems to The Vashon Loop!

Write to: vashonloop-poetry@janevalencia.com

The Observant Frog's Log

By Alex Soriano



Aries (March 20-April 19)

Events will proceed quickly this month, and there is little you can do about the decisions that someone close to you makes. Your best course of action is to see your options for what they are at any given time, and make the best choices you can. You may be looking at an opening over the next few weeks that could develop when a previously hot-and-heavy emotional situation shifts, and suddenly you find that you have more freedom. Of course, you always had it. There are a diversity of ways this could manifest, though it's essential for you to know what you want, and to remember who you are outside the definitions into which any relationship may seem to confine you.

Taurus (April 19-May 20)

The great theme of this time in your life is aligning your ethics with your actions, particularly what you do for work. Most people find this difficult: they work for money, and do what they think of as the right thing the rest of the time. You are not made this way, and it's especially stressful when your sense of justice misaligns with your daily activity. Events of October may shed new light on the topic. Consider that how you conduct yourself, what you actually do and how you treat people represent your ethics—and what you say you espouse is irrelevant. Life is action, not theory. What you do is one thing; believing is another. It would seem that you need to do a lot more weighing and balancing. It's essential that you step back from thinking you're right. This will put you in a vulnerable place you may be quite uncomfortable with: living with uncertainty—for long enough to make some peace with it.

Gemini (May 20-June 21)

Jupiter in your birth sign is the ultimate astrological sigil of good luck. This happens every 12 years or so. You have access to many opportunities for expansion of your life and your plans and also refreshing your ideas about who you are. Yet this time around, there are limits—three of them in particular—and you're probably feeling this tension between your potential and certain restrictions. Jupiter in Gemini can be undisciplined and lack direction; the first factor here to help you get a grip is Saturn in Pisces. All of Pisces is your 10th place, which is about taking action. The Saturn influence is saying that you need tangible goals. Second, actions have consequences. This is about Nessus in Pisces. When it comes to anything you touch or are meekly responsible for, the buck must stop with you. Last, Jupiter is in the process of making a long square to Neptune. This insists that you have genuine and realistic goals. Saturn will help you here; start by eliminating what is not really a valuable personal objective. You can measure value on one simple basis: have you taken action toward that goal? If you have not done so, then it's probably a whim or a wish and not a true personal ambition.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Many years ago (in 2002), I wrote in this space for the sign Cancer: "In essence, you don't know someone until you're familiar with their relationship to their own dark side. Typically, we pretend our partners don't have a dark side. But humans not only have those unlit and unexplored regions; these are often their most vital and attractive aspect. As for the rest of what we call soul, most of it involves how we deal with our power struggles, hormonal impulses and fear of death. So, having learned a few unexpected things about



Planet Waves

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



yourself in recent months, and being in an unusually strong position in life, take a look at those close to you." Skipping to the present, there is quite a bit that is coming through from the direction of relationships, partners and your wider environment. Are you experiencing some facet of your own karma—or are the influences coming in from outside of you? There will be certain lines that are easy to draw, and others that are more difficult. See if you can get this discussion going in your intimate relationships.

Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)

You have several important decisions to make, and it will help if you understand your motives. The ability to see and acknowledge one's inner drives is a kind of superpower that can save you all kinds of trouble. There is an astrological key, which is to study the things that make you distrust others. The essence is to honor those doubts rather than to ignore or rationalize them. This is not about you becoming a suspicious person but rather honoring your own observations. And this includes maintaining your situational awareness: paying attention to what is happening wherever you are, and in whatever capacity you are there. The theme of your solar chart, particularly with the solar eclipse, is that you are on the verge of seeing many things you've been missing. This information will help you socially and in business and may reveal the opportunity that you need the most.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)

Alice A. Bailey, the author of *Esoteric Astrology*, wrote that in ancient times, Virgo and Scorpio were one sign, which later split into two. One clue is the similarity in their symbols, though no technical information is provided; this is one of many Atlantean topics that surfaces in her unusual book. Imagine, though, that the integration power of Virgo, the drive to mental perfection, and the need for self-autonomy, were blended with deep and watery Scorpio. Many factors, all of which involve the planet Mars (ruler of Scorpio, and also of Aries, where you strive to find completion in close relationship with others) are saying it's time to differentiate yourself. While one potential response to this possibility would be separation anxiety, when you reach a space of wholeness without the need for another, the experience may be one of bliss and liberation. I don't think you want to depend on anyone else to experience yourself as a whole being, because that's not true as long as anyone can leave you feeling separated from yourself.

Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)

A solar eclipse in your birth sign may come with some pressure, a feeling of fate, and a sense of too-fast movement. Yet there are few better invitations to improve your life in every way. The eclipse is a moment of forgetting and of remembering. There's a shift in continuity, and an interval of possibility. A shadow is cast across the Sun, and also the Sun's illumination as it falls on Earth. So you might say that in various ways, you get to see things in a different light. And that different light is just what you need to make sense of the world and your place in it. This is no time to have a fixed viewpoint on anything, especially yourself. A diversity of long-range influences are calling you into a whole new sense of your being.

From there, you will see the world much closer to how it is rather than how it appears. This is a time of gathering those who have similar values to you, who resonate with you both emotionally and intellectually.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

The solar eclipse may stir up some of your deepest fears, desires and concealed memories. Feelings you thought were long resolved, including for past lovers, might come bubbling to the surface. This could include a diversity of ambiguous or conflicting emotions that you thought were long gone. What you're experiencing is a point of release: a kind of cosmic trigger that is allowing you to drop emotional material you've been carrying without realizing it. So, no, you're not going nuts, and what filters into your dreams is not necessarily a reflection of what you want today. From a healing perspective, the important thing is to feel the feelings before letting go of them. This includes a wide range of possibilities, from deep erotic passion to mistrust and suspicion to any concerns about infidelity. There you may be crossing back through territory you've been in before (if you're old enough, the mid/late-1990s come to mind). All in all, this is an important time of review and release.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)

I've read that about 8% of Americans say they don't have a single close friend. I suspect the problem is more serious, as many that people consider friends would be unlikely to come through, or they live too far away to be helpful (or to sit down for a meal together). Countless millions more have no family ties. This is what I hear most: I'm getting old, my friends are either gone or far away, my partner is gone or very sick, I'm away from my family, or estranged from them... and so on. Many have still not recovered from the loss of their support network due to the 2020 incident. Despite the wild reputation of Sagittarius, you have a deep traditional streak, and you're reluctant to blaze ahead into the unknown and untested. Yet the times we are in are calling for liberation from the past, so we can deal with the problems of the present. We are not going to do this alone. Humanity must meet on some new common ground, unencumbered by ideology. You are being summoned to help lead the way.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

The Oct. 2 solar eclipse at the top of your solar chart is urging you into action. Usually you can attract some form of what you want, and your fallback position is to negotiate. Both work pretty well most of the time. But the eclipse is calling for you to take charge of your idea, your message and your presentation. There's an unusual challenge calling you to stand up and step out. You could slip into the continuation of something you've done in the past—something familiar that you're comfortable with. Another interpretation is that you dearly need to let go of what you've accomplished before, and your ideas about it, and do something entirely new. You're a person who takes your reputation seriously, and regards it as something you've built cumulatively. You will need to assert what you know rather than what you're known for. Sure, you can dress for success, though that does not substitute

for being aware and well-spoken. And the part that there is absolutely no faking is using your ability to read the room. Where are people at, and what do they need?

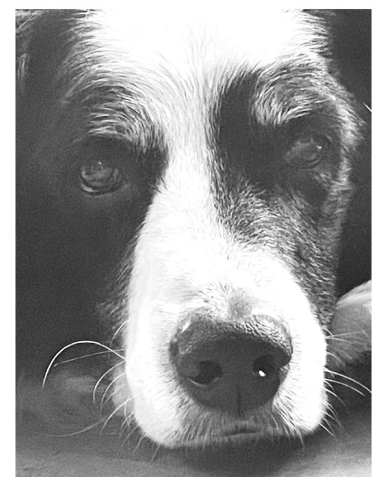
Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

If, as Gordon Sumner wrote, "There's no political solution to a troubled evolution," then that leaves a few possibilities. One of them is a spiritual solution, which can encompass the closely related idea of creative. And that necessitates a relational approach, meaning that we would collaborate—something of an Aquarian speciality, on a good day. We have arrived at this late date, at what is being called "late stage capitalism," even though we don't really know where we are, and it turns out that the thing missing is cooperation. That is to say, for its own sake, and the sake of the participants, and for some larger ideal. People are desperately trying to get from the "I" to the "we," grafting themselves onto all kinds of notions and movements that are ultimately self-serving. We will find the "we" among one another, one-to-one and then in small groups. You find the "we" in your heart when you see someone else's interests as the same as your own.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

You have an unusual opportunity this month to reset all of your balances. This may include clearing the decks of certain financial issues and generally getting your house in order. The Oct. 2 solar eclipse was a release point, and also represents a new beginning. Other factors describe similar experiences, though they are stretched out over a longer time. Saturn in your sign from 2023 into 2025, for example, has you under pressure to make important decisions and to get control over your life. The eclipse in Libra is describing something that is available now. So take the opportunity to settle old debts, to assess your situation for what it is—and as Peter Gabriel said, to know your plastic from your cash. The ongoing square of your ruling planet Jupiter to Saturn in your own sign will hold you to your truth, and keep you focused on your commitments. If you are given a new start, accept it graciously, and keep clearing, keep setting matters right, and keep putting your house in order.

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"Act without attachment to the results, which will never be solely determined by you."

~ Menzan Zuiho