

Find bios & extra photos at vashonloop.com

Myocarditis by the Numbers – Part 3

By Caitlin Rothermel

New information is now coming out quickly regarding myocarditis caused by the mRNA vaccines. On April 16, 2024, the United States National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM – formerly the National Academy of Science) released an expert report finding a causal relationship between the SARS-CoV2 mRNA vaccines and myocarditis.

The language is meaningful. In previous myocarditis articles, I covered research showing that the injections were associated with myocarditis. Now, the NASEM has looked at the evidence and determined it is reasonable to say the mRNA vaccines caused myocarditis.

What makes for causality? For the NASEM experts, it required a “yes” to three key questions:

Have we seen myocarditis occurring in the time frame after vaccination?

Has a mechanism of action for how the vaccine could cause this damage been proposed, and does it look feasible?



Has the injury (spike protein from the injection) been found in the heart tissue of patients?

This is a pretty definitive finding, achieved after careful evaluation. But many other causation stories still need to come clear for the mRNA vaccines. For example, I keep hearing and reading that more myocarditis cases happen after COVID disease than after mRNA injection.

That’s a pretty bold statement of causation, and yet it is said so casually. I decided to do some research. First of all, I learned that many articles that make this statement never indicate where their evidence is from, something that would typically be considered deceptive. Secondly, when evidence is cited, there are two studies most often mentioned; it’s worth knowing what they say:

The first is a self-controlled case series from the

Continued on Page 9

Class Action Lawsuit Offers Boon to Local Business Owners and Highlights Growing Concerns About “Bank Taxes”

By March Twisdale

If you’re a consumer, this article will offer new information regarding the growing push back against “Bank Taxes” designed to skim the cream off the top of local economies everywhere. If you’re a business owner, this article will point you in the right direction, should you wish to submit a claim.

This topic is too complicated to be covered in one article, so I won’t try. What I want Islanders to know is that valid claims to get money from this settlement **must be filed by May 31st, 2024.**

Who qualifies? “All persons, businesses, and other entities that have accepted any Visa-branded cards and/or Mastercard-branded cards in the United States at any time from January 1, 2004 to January 25, 2019.”

“This is an historic antitrust class-action settlement that provides some relief for U.S. merchants after years of paying allegedly inflated

Continued on Page 8

Rhubarb Patch on Hardscrabble Mountain

By Seán Malone and John Sweetman

Seán and I spent several decades in Ferry County and had a number of adventures, some of which we can tell now that time has passed.

The County is not the largest of the 39 counties of Washington state, but is the most remote, and like Vashon, is basically surrounded by water. Roads are mostly old wagon trail traces. Two (free) ferries serve across a large lake (Roosevelt) behind the Coulee Dam, and the County has the highest passes in the state.

I was the County Assessor and had to traverse remote places, usually by myself, and would occasionally run into pot-growing operations and paranoid Vietnam vets with bad attitudes. Mostly, I got to know the vets as I was in a Veterans of Foreign Wars group that provided some aid, but the squatting pot growers from California were touchy and would occasionally use firearms to defend their operations.

Why anyone ever grew pot on forest service land was a mystery to me, as the Ferry County climate intimidated even kale, and the high country was full of range cattle that could detect anything green in the late August harvest season. No fence could prevent 50 or more range cattle from anything that looked tasty.

At that time, pretty much everyone in the County had some sort of firearm on hand. But the attitude toward firearms was pretty much the same as toward having chains, jacks, come-alongs, fence pliers, and other

mere tools. Things that might come in handy.

I had an 1864 Navy black powder “cap” and ball Colt. That thing was too heavy to wear, so I just kept it in an oily bag behind the seat of the old Ford, which Seán owns now. As a “defensive” weapon, the advantages were slight. It propelled a lead ball mostly in the direction where the barrel pointed, but released a dense cloud of smoke, and better yet, fiery sparks of unburned black powder.

So, if I ever had to use it, not only would I be hidden from sight, but could hope that whomever it was aimed at would have their hair set on fire.

In all those years, the old Colt only had one sort of unintended casualty. We would run across “slow hens,” which were a particularly tasty grouse that could be knocked off with a rock in late August. I ran across a large one that just sat on a log and taunted me. After tossing a few inaccurately placed rocks, I retrieved the old gun and fired a shot from about 20 feet.

Sure enough, I got him! But I could find no evidence that he was hit, so I was pretty sure he died of fright or merely smoke inhalation. The delicious roast was, however, tinged with faint aromatic sulfur. Later on, I learned that there was such a thing as “grouse season,” and it was not in August.

Seán always had his .30-40 Krag with him. We think that the gun was a

Continued on Page 5

Elderflowers

By Kathy Abascal

The elders have just started blooming on the Island. Each spring, I am a bit surprised by how many elders grow here, as they only become noticeable when their flowers appear. In the Northwest, we mostly have red-berried elders (*Sambucus racemosa*). The red berries are not toxic in small amounts, but are definitely nauseating, unlike the purple berried *S. nigra* that grow back East and can be used to make a nice syrup. The flowers of all elders, however, make a wonderful medicine.

Historically, herbalists considered elderflowers a more useful medicine than the berries. While both are antiviral, only the elderflowers are said to be diaphoretic. Diaphoretics are used to bring on a mild sweat in fevers. That sweat cools the body, which helps bring the fever down. Elderflower tea is sweet and delicate, and is a great herb to have on hand to drink when you are coming down with a cold or some other virus. It is fabulous for children as it is pleasant and a safe medicine.

Gathering elderflowers can be a bit of a challenge, but is an enjoyable one. You will see tons of elders waving their flowers at you, but when you get closer, you will usually find them barricaded just behind a good-sized blackberry thicket or a touch too far away on the other side of a muddy ditch with a patch of tall nettles. Elders are abundant though, and despite these challenges in the end you will ultimately have no problem



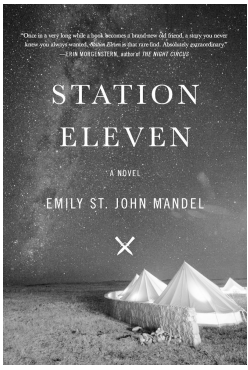
gathering enough flowers to last you until the elders bloom again the following spring.

Elderflowers have an interesting fragrance that bounces back and forth between delightful and just a bit fetid. As a result, they are very popular among a whole host of spring pollinators.

I grew up in Sweden where elderflower beverages are very common. In fact, Ikea offers a very nice elderflower concentrate that is still available even after Ikea eliminated many of their Scandinavian foods. I like to have the concentrate on hand. It makes a refreshing summer drink that slakes the thirst and, like the tea, has some antiviral properties if you are getting sick.

Continued on Page 9

Book Review



Station Eleven

By Emily Kiefer

In "Station Eleven" by Emily St. John Mandel, we follow the collapse of civilization as we know it.

Though that sounds bleak, the story also serves as a new beginning; one of introspection and the evidence of the enduring power of art. Mandel's prose tells tales from before and after a devastating pandemic wipes out 99.6% of the planet's population, elegantly weaving together the lives of a cast of characters whose threads intersect in an unexpected web. This is a true tale of human resistance, a real what-if. What would happen if such a devastating event swept up nations? How would I, the reader, attempt to survive?

At its core, "Station Eleven" is a meditation on the human condition - our resilience, our capacity for kindness amidst incredible circumstances, and our relentless pursuit of meaning in a world that often seems devoid of it. Through the lens of a post-apocalyptic landscape,

Mandel crafts a story that is darkly haunting and yet holds a core spark of hope. With each passing chapter, this book reminds us of the fragility of civilization and the endurance of human creativity through such utter devastation.

As the reader gets to know several core characters from both the past and present, we learn more about their inner lives and resilience. Though the massive catastrophe is the backdrop, these personal stories are a beacon amidst such hopelessness. These people show us how it is possible to hold onto one's humanity and even find joy within extremely dark times.

Twenty years after the pandemic struck down civilization, a group of characters tour the barren landscape of what was once the area around Lake Michigan, all while performing elaborate Shakespeare plays with musical accompaniment. Though some in their group ask themselves why they do such frivolous performances for a world hell-bent upon survival, the answer becomes clear: Humans need more than just the act of surviving. We need enjoyment; we need hope to continue on. And these people, self-named "The Traveling Symphony," give the scarce populations a spark of the old world; something unnecessary, yet a distraction. A slice of comfort.

Though published in 2014, the novel makes a stunning impact when read today in the context of our own experienced global pandemic. Although this fictional pandemic was on a much higher scale, the themes hit home for anyone who was affected by

COVID-19, which is nearly the entire planet's population. That is why, for myself and many readers, it strongly makes one appreciate life on today's earth and everything we take for granted.

Public gatherings, the warmth of hugs, having a group of friends over for a boisterous meal; these are things we and the characters in "Station Eleven" lost. Even electricity was no more in this fictional world. So yes, today's life may quite often seem bleak. Yet, Mandel's poignant novel illuminated the appreciation I feel for being able to still experience the simple luxuries of human existence that have not yet been taken from us. It is indeed a contemplative reminder of our shared humanity in a world

with so much darkness. I recommend this story to anyone who desires a powerful reminder of gratitude.

Emily Kiefer, frequent Vashon visitor, reads 80 books a year. She loves perusing the book shops, and calls the Lavender Farm her favorite place on the Island.

The Vashon Loop is published monthly

PSE PUGET SOUND ENERGY
Join us at a wildfire open house to learn about PSE's wildfire program and how you can prepare if there's a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).
Tuesday, May 14, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.
Vashon Center for the Arts
19600 Vashon Hwy SW
Vashon, WA 98070
Swing by anytime between 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. There is no formal presentation.
Habrá personal que habla español disponible.
Learn more or visit our self-paced, online open house: pse.com/wildfire

Vashon! Sign up for health insurance and fix problems!
Regístrese para un seguro médico y solucione problemas!
Meet with Miguel from King County Public Health
1pm - 3pm, at Vashon Library (inside at the back)
Wednesday, May 15
Wednesday, June 19
Se habla español
Wednesday not convenient? Call or email Miguel Urquiza 206-477-6965 or 206-491-3761 miguel.urquiza@kingcounty.gov

THE MADRONA GROUP John L. Scott VASHON ISLAND REAL ESTATE
Spring into ACTION!
It's a great time to sell a home - call for a free home valuation today!
Professional representation and expertise make the difference. Place your trust in our John L. Scott team.
(206) 567-1600
VashonOffice.JohnLScott.com
13401 Vashon Highway SW

Get that giving feeling
Our programs are more than just fun adventures in the forest; they are sanctuaries of learning, healing, and belonging.
GIVE BIG MAY 7-8
Vashon Wilderness PROGRAM

The Vashon Loop

Editors: Caitlin Rothermel, Marc J. Elzenbeck, Jane & Andy Valencia

Contributors: Eric Coppolino, Seán C. Malone, John Sweetman, Kathy Abascal, Daniel Hooker, Marjorie Watkins, Michael Shook, March Twisdale, Anne Cotter Moses, Suzanna Leigh, Stephen Buller, Eva Deloach, Emily Kiefer, Ali Elsberry, Tioga Webb, Alex Soriano

Comments: editor@vashonloop.com
Placing ads: sales@vashonloop.com

Distribution: The Vashon Loop is a monthly newspaper, with 3,000 copies printed per issue; the paper is distributed to multiple sites throughout Vashon-Maury Island, and all content is also available at our website.

https://vashonloop.com/
May 7, 2024

Address: The Vashon Loop, P. O. Box 2221, WA 98070

Loop Disclaimer

Paid advertisements and articles submitted to The Vashon Loop in no way express the opinions of the publisher, editor, other advertisers, or staff. We reserve the right to edit or decline to print submissions. AI-generated content in whole or part is not acceptable for publication. Articles are used by the kind permission of each author, who continues to be the copyright holder.

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 Community Care Center

What if the new VCCC works as promised?

By Andy Valencia

Way too many people are dying from their addictions. The latest United States annual report on drug overdose deaths puts the count above 111,000, but that is only a small portion of the misery present throughout our society. The federal budget allocates more than \$42 billion dollars for drug programs. But how does money turn into solutions?

Enter Seattle Indian Health Board (SIHB). Their sudden appearance on Vashon with the purchase of the old VCCC site resulted in a lot of questions. Let's be honest, in this year of 2024, most things that suddenly jump into your life are not good news. The real questions are: Will they be good neighbors? Will they help people?

SIHB is not a newcomer to the operation of recovery facilities. They ran the Thunderbird Treatment Center in Rainier Beach for decades and are still present in Pioneer Square and Lake City. They've been looking for a new site for a treatment center since 2020, when they closed the original Thunderbird.

The SIHB facility on Vashon won't ever be accepting trauma cases directly from a 911 call. Delirium tremors, heroin overdoses, and withdrawal episodes will all continue to be handled over on the mainland.



The people arriving at VCCC will be a good way along on the path to recovery. Some will even have families along, providing the parent an emotional anchor, and sparing them any worries of what might happen to their children in, say, the foster care system.

Imagine someone at this facility, recently emerged from the fog of acute addiction, but with lots of recovery work in front of them. The physical and mental health benefits of access to nature are beyond question, and SIHB's new VCCC location can make this connection a seamless part of their reconnection with the world in general. Any of us can drive a few minutes and be walking in a forest, along a pond, or at a shoreline. In Seattle it's mostly asphalt and buildings, with maybe a shuttle bus ride to places like Lincoln Park. Other than that, it's just the Nature Channel.

Because VCCC backs right up against Land Trust trails, it's trivial for patients in their earlier phases of treatment to be taken, accompanied, out for a walk. As a patient's recovery

progresses, they can range further out. A longer walk can reach a pond, and a short shuttle bus ride reaches KVI, Winghaven, Lisabeula, or even Point Robinson and our Troll. These things don't automatically heal you, but they can be a powerful part of the healing process.

VCCC's plan is to house about 60 people. Some aren't ready to go out, some with supervision, still others on their own. Will SIHB send out somebody - or lose track of somebody - who then causes trouble? Almost certainly. But that's already true; you may not be aware of just how many people are already living on the fringes of Vashon, some of them entirely on their own as they grapple with serious addictions. Each and every resident at VCCC will have professional treatment and monitoring; it's hard to ask for a better starting point.

The history of our continent includes far too many dark stories of how the native peoples were treated, and the psychic marks are still very present; the native part of our population suffers from addiction at a rate several times higher than the overall population. There's something

inspiring about the SIHB bringing this new place of healing into existence. Although they won't treat Native Americans exclusively, helping that population is one of their strengths.

People will come, and hopefully most of them will heal up. They might join our community, or they might move on - but come back to visit us with their family in the future because it's a bright spot in their memory. This is only the beginning of this story, and there will be much more to say, but we can start with this: Why not let our beautiful Island and its unique community help those in need?

News You May Have Missed

Widespread farmer protests in the EU

Fake job interviews hack your computer

Gold beans catch on as money in China

These and more at:
vashonloop.com/missed

Get Island Eyes on Your Business

- A great advertising value
- Runs all month
- Put your business in front of the Island
- This ad costs only \$36!



This Could Be Your Ad!

Contact us at sales@vashonloop.com

On The Rise – Island Bakery Makes Good, Part 1

By Jane Valencia

Visit the VIGA Farmers Market on Saturday morning, and you'll come upon Fernhorn Bakery and their selection of fresh-made sourdough organic breads and bagels. Taste, and you know you're eating a bread like no other, attentively made, nutrient-dense, and with unique, vibrant flavors. Please join us in a conversation with Thomas Vroom, the baker, and Jordan Ashley Beck, the maker, who tend to the business of this family-run bakery.

Thomas Vroom loved "Bill's Bread," handmade on the Island and available only a few days a week at Thriftway. But, as a commuter, he could never purchase it. This kind of bread, rather than packaged bread, was what Thomas wanted to feed his family. It wasn't until 2018, when he suffered an ankle injury that left him unable to walk for a time, that he acted on his interest. He began reading about sourdough, then started making it, and hasn't stopped baking bread since.

Regarding the starter, Thomas explains, "I had a book that laid out the steps of how to build it yourself with just flour and water. Everything that the starter needs is in the wheat already. The starter is made with flour, water, and time. The wheat berry has the bacteria and yeasts; humans provide the optimal environment for fermentation to occur."

Thomas experimented with different wheats and grains for making starters, but keeping several starters going is laborious. He now keeps just a rye and a wheat active. He feeds the starter only whole grains, which provide nutrition, minerals, and bran - nutrients that are stripped out in commodity flour.

Jordan explains, "The life that the grains Thomas uses gives to the bread is so much more abundant than from a highly processed flour that



has sat on the shelf for a long time. These ones just come to life the minute he starts working with them."

"The first time I used Washington-grown grains was such a difference," Thomas continues. "Just in the feel of the dough, it feels much more alive than the stripped-down commodity flour. I'm sometimes surprised people can even bake with commodity flour. It is a testament to wheat that it can go through an industrial process and still make a loaf of bread, but often it is supplemented with malted barley to give it a boost. Still though, the fresh local wheat is much better."

When Thomas began baking, his family soon had more loaves than they could eat. Eventually, he began giving bread to friends.

"Then our friend, John Runyan said, 'This is the best bread I've ever had. Let me buy it from you.'" Jordan says. That led to starting a bread club for six people. "We were baking at that time out of my childhood bedroom. And then we grew, got our first little Rofco oven and had 32 people with a wait list. It was really kind of exciting.

"And then came the pandemic. We reevaluated everything. Thomas is an electrician by trade, and I'd been managing that business. He was so much happier making bread. And that was the great reckoning: what are we doing with our lives? Are we spending our time well? Are we happy while we're doing it? We were really lucky to live in this

kind of family compound and felt secure enough to be able to take a leap and try it."

They closed the electrical shop. During the pandemic, Bill Freese retired from professional bread-baking. So, in April 2021, Thomas and Jordan moved their baking into Bill's Bakery, technically a food processing facility on his property. From there, Fernhorn Bakery began selling at the VIGA Farmers Market, Thriftway, Vashon Bakery, and some farm stands, and to continue their bread club and online orders.

Needing to expand and have more available electricity, Fernhorn Bakery recently moved, and now bakes in the Wax Orchard Cannery, a fascinating old agricultural building and piece of Vashon history. The ability to run multiple electric ovens at a time has upped production. The walk-in refrigerator provides a low-temperature space for the dough's slow fermentation process.

Thomas explains the process for making their bread:

"The first day you have to build the starter up. Anywhere from 10 to 20% of the loaf is from the pre-fermented wheat, and it takes about a day to build that up. The next day, it gets mixed up and that starts the process of fermenting the entire loaf. When the dough is ready, it gets shaped and put in the refrigerator. During that time period is when all the flavor develops and the yeasts do their work of converting the sugars which give rise to the loaf. The fermentation alters the phytic acid - which makes some of the nutrients more available during digestion. It's like any pre-fermented food, like sauerkraut or kimchi. It makes some nutrients more available."

On the third day, the bread is baked.

With this fermentation process, does Fernhorn Bakery find that some customers with problems tolerating wheat are able to eat their bread?

"Absolutely," Jordan says. "We hear that a lot."

Thomas explains, "That results not just from the fermentation, but also because the grain is

Continued on Page 7

Of Innocence and Demons

By Michael Shook

This summer, I will turn 70. There will come an anniversary in August – late August, if I remember correctly. One would think I might remember clearly the date, given the life-changing experience that it was. Let it suffice to say, late summer.

Here, a little background is necessary. For my 40th birthday I had received a book from my cousin, “Myths to Live By,” by Joseph Campbell. It’s a collection of 13 talks the great mythologist gave at New York City’s Cooper Union Forum from 1958 to 1971. My cousin had had the good fortune to attend a class with Campbell, and she knew of my interest in mythology. And she’s as keen a bibliophile as I, hence the most excellent present of the book.

I had been reading the essays avidly for some weeks, and took advantage of the ferry ride to and from Vashon to read, and re-read, different chapters, and different parts of chapters. I did not live on Vashon at the time, but the construction company I worked for was engaged with several projects for a client who lived on the Island, and the ferry ride, as Islanders know, is a fine time for reading.

There was one lecture in particular that I wrestled with – “The Confrontation of East and West in Religion.” Specifically, I was trying to “get hold” of the ending, which concerns the Hindu myth of Kirttimukha, which in turn involves

the god Shiva and his interaction with a demon who demanded Shiva hand over his bride, the goddess Parvati. For weeks, I had read and pondered the final passage that ends the lecture. Something in it spoke to me, plagued me, discomfited me, to such a degree that I was becoming obsessed with it.

So, I found myself on the ferry ride home, going over the tale again. I remember putting the book aside, getting out of my truck, and strolling up to the bow. It was the old “Rhododendron,” a beautiful boat, with its wooden trim, lovely benches, and strong lines. The mountain was out in all its late-afternoon glory. The water sparkled, the sky was a clear blue, all the colors and textures of the Sound resided in splendor.

And looking out over that water, to Mt. Rainier, I suddenly felt a powerful charge go through me. It was a sort of illumination, or a shock, something that struck through my whole self. I cannot say what exactly it was, except to say that it was ... an experience. I could try to explain, but that would be foolish. You would only have the explanation, not the thing itself. It would be like me telling you what chocolate tastes like, without you having eaten chocolate. You would have all kinds of ideas about it, and perhaps things you could imagine, but you would not know the taste of chocolate.

But it was real. In that flash of a moment on the ferry, something in me irrevocably shifted. In the larger

Island Voices

scheme of my life, it marked a change of course, as if stepping onto a new path. Or, perhaps, simply seeing for the first time that I had a path, and that it was mine, and mine alone, to be trodden.

But what does this have to do with innocence, let alone demons? The key lay in Campbell’s commentary on said myth of Kirttimukha. In the tale, Shiva has to protect a demon from another demon that he (Shiva) conjured up, a demon of pure hunger, made to eat the first. The second demon, unable to eat demon one, is starving, so Shiva tells him to eat himself. The demon does so, until nothing is left of him but his face, shining, suspended in air.

Shiva is delighted, and names the demon “Kirttimukha, Face of Glory ... No one who refuses to honor and worship you will come ever to knowledge of me’ ... here at last was a perfect image of the monstrous thing that is life, which lives on itself... [and] the first step to the knowledge of the highest divine symbol of the wonder and mystery of life is in the recognition of [this] monstrous nature of life, and its glory in that character: the realization that this is just how it is and that it cannot and will not be changed ... [one must learn] ... how to live in it in the joyful sorrow and sorrowful joy of the knowledge of life as it is.”

When the lesson of that myth struck home, it began to work on me, slowly transforming my clinging to a

world that I thought should be different from what it was, to an acceptance of what it is. As part of that process, it began to break down the interior barriers to knowledge of my whole self, barriers that I had erected and bolstered throughout my life. I began to understand and accept my own monstrous nature, to see that I was much more than just the parts I liked, or that gained the approval of others, and that the same was true of others, indeed of all of us. (I must make clear that this was a process that has taken place over years, and continues to this day. And by no means should the reader interpret this to imagine I am somehow “enlightened,” or necessarily even wise.)

As for my own “monstrous nature,” part of what was revealed to me was that I was as capable as anyone of eating life, that in fact, eating life was all that sustained me, and all other living things.

And what was further revealed to me was that to understand these things was to no longer be innocent (to be continued).

Get Ready for Summer Dancing!

West Coast Swing
& Latin Dance Class
May 16th – June 6th



For more information
and to sign up, contact
info@weslansdance.com

Legends of Vashon – One Night at The Airport

By Tioga Webb

Ever since I’ve been out on my own, most of my housing has been “informal.” There’s lots more places than you might think to bed down for the night. It isn’t always dry and comfy, but the price is right. And sometimes you see things.

I wrote about my time down near the bog. But for a while before that, my nightly accommodations were over at Vashon’s airport – the original one, the one which is still open. It had a lot to offer, with tons of buildings, water, and always an unlocked plug with power in case you needed to charge something. There are woods, undergrowth, and trails heading out in many directions, so it’s easy to avoid awkward conversations. Nobody’s going to keep following you once you duck into those deer trails.

Airplanes have white, red, and green lights to avoid collisions, there’s also lights at the airport for planes flying in after sunset. After about a week of sleeping alongside one of the less-used hangars, I was getting pretty familiar with the routine. Planes would arrive into the night, but it got pretty quiet after about 10:00 p.m.

On my last night at the airport, I went to sleep at my usual 9:00 p.m. or so. I think a couple planes came in after that, but I was used to it and hardly woke up. There’s lots of life in the forest, so I wasn’t too concerned when some sounds of cracking twigs and swishing brush woke me up. I checked my watch – 3:00 a.m., prime time for deer. Luckily, my watch was one of the old, radioactive ones with glowing paint on the hands. Its light was so faint, it didn’t even ruin my night vision.

There was some muttering of voices, and then an angry hiss made them all fall quiet again. Uh oh – not deer. The sounds continued and came close, and at first I thought they were coming after me. But who cares about one ratty old trespasser? And they wouldn’t come in through the woods. This was something new. I lay as still as I could in my

sleeping bag.

The next trail over from me was a full trail, much wider and more open than my own escape trail. The sounds got closer, and I was relieved to see the first figure emerge on that trail. There was enough moonlight to see that it was a man, and he stopped just outside the boundary of the forest to carefully study the whole length of the airport. As he turned in my direction, I shrunk down as low to the ground as I could, because I could see he was carrying a long gun of some sort.

Whenever I replace my sleeping bag, I try to get one in camouflage. Being hard to see is mighty useful if you’ve settled on somebody else’s property, and it paid off that night. The guy looked back and forth several times, never spotting me, then turned back to mutter something into the forest.

A second man came out of the forest, also armed. He joined the first one, and they stood, one looking up the runway in one direction, one guarding the opposite direction. That first guard said something into the forest again, and four men came forward. They weren’t armed, but instead were carrying something that was hard to make out in the low light.

They came up to the first guard, and there was some back and forth grumbling. The guard’s voice got quiet and angry, and then two of the unarmed ones put down their bundles and walked out onto the runway. One stopped on our side, the other crossed over to the other side, running fast. Then I got it – he was afraid a plane was going to come down on his head.

That was stupid! Those planes had all sorts of lights so they wouldn’t run into each other. I looked up into the sky, and saw ... something. It got closer, and there it was. An airplane. No lights, no engine sound, but a plane quietly approaching in the moonlight. It seemed like it was coming in at a pretty steep angle, probably because it had cut the engines and was gliding down.

The two guys held up their arms, and their flashlights glowed with a dim red light. I guess this was to give the pilot some guidance on his landing,

because as soon as the plane touched down with a quiet bump, they lowered their arms. The plane rolled along until it reached them and stopped, and then they turned their lights off. The two men ran back past the guards to join the other two, and then they picked up their bundles. All four plus the two guards went up the plane. I could finally hear its engine, idling.

I was wondering if I could make myself scarce while they were busy, but froze when I saw a third guard had come out of the forest behind the four unarmed workers. Smart, two guarding front, one guarding their back trail, and the workers in the middle. I don’t like to think what they’d have done if they found out they had an audience.

A door on the side of the plane slid open, and there was a bunch of busy work, hard to see from where I lay. They finished, and things became clearer. Each pair of workers had poles resting on their shoulders, from the forward one to the back one. One pair on the left, one on the right, and some sort of fabric stretched between the two poles. Kind of like stretcher bearers. What were they hauling? It must have been at least a hundred pounds of weight.

The group headed back towards the forest, the pair of guards once again in front, and the single rear guard let them all pass as he continued to watch the airport.

The plane suddenly revved up, still dark, and droned down the runway until it lifted into the air. It banked and disappeared, its noise quickly fading away. I watched the plane so closely that when I looked back to check the folks on the ground, they were all gone.

Maybe. I kept thinking I saw that rear guard’s shape here and there at the wood’s edge, and although I wanted to light out of there, I kept thinking I’d wait a while longer to make sure he was gone. I heard a vehicle start up in the distance, but even then I wasn’t sure it was safe to move. Somewhere in there, I fell asleep, and the next thing I knew was the light of morning waking me up. I

Continued on Page 5

Rhubarb Patch on Hardscrabble Mountain

Continued From Front Page

veteran of the Spanish-American war. Today, Seán has that gun up on a rafter in the cabin and it serves well as a rod to dry out his socks. I have no idea what happened to my old Navy Colt, and even if I could find it, the barrel was too short for socks.

Seán has a few stories, because we were all over the remote county areas getting wood and staking mining claims:

I looked over the bank on Hardscrabble Road and spotted an acre of rhubarb waiting to be picked. It was an old homestead on what is now national forest. I loaded my pack with rhubarb to take home and can for the next winter. It turned out that the rhubarb was too old and stringy. It wouldn't be canned, even after adding sugar.

There were abandoned mines on the top of the ridge looking down, a good place to look for crystals and a possible vein of gold. But the mines had been abandoned due to the absence of gold. You couldn't see over the ridge to Torroda Creek Road, which is where I was headed to take the long way back to Republic, through Waconda.

Little did I know, as I wound my way down from the ridge, what I would run into near the bottom. I stopped on a curve near the bottom. Rifle fire was hissing through the leaves of the trees hanging over the road.

Around the second curve, I came upon three guys on the porch of a small cabin. I made the appropriate accusations regarding the rifle fire, and the person holding the rifle replied that he had been shooting at a coyote, not me.

Since I was living on Trout Creek Road and selling firewood, I knew what was going on. I have a printed log of having cut and sold 3,000 cords over 20 years. I still have a written letter from the Forest Service, of great support, for my service to Ferry County. If I had all that wood, I could cover the town of Republic four feet deep in firewood. Father Morbeck did not tell me my stories would reappear in the months and years ahead.

Legends of Vashon One Night at the Airport

Continued From Page 4

still waited until the first regular pilot drove up and began preflighting his plane. Then I finally got out.

That was a while ago, and I expect the airport has lots more security cameras and stuff to keep things civilized. But I'm just as sure there are still plenty of lonely county airstrips where things happen at night and you don't want to be anywhere near them.

Which brings me to helicopters. But there are people who know more of that story than myself.





VASHON ISLAND COMMUNITY CHURCH

9517 SW Cemetery Rd.
PO Box 2479
Vashon, WA 98070
206-463-3940

Sunday Service at 10:00AM

Sailing Into the Sunset

By Suzanna Leigh



My beloved and I had a "Qufi" wedding; I am a Quaker and Rich is a Sufi, so we combined traditions.

We were married on the solstice, on the beach at Lincoln Park in Seattle, where friends from Seattle could find us easily, and friends from Vashon could simply walk off the boat and walk to the park. Jim Hauser officiated for the Quaker tradition of witnessing our union, and Khadijah, murshid (teacher) of the Rahaniat Sufi order, orchestrated the Sufi piece. The band played Turkish ilahi's (songs celebrating Allah and the Sufi saints).

My son James sailed Eli-Oh, my little Catalina 27, up from Quartermaster Harbor and anchored it off the beach. After the ceremony, and after we had eaten our fill of the potluck generously provided by our friends, James rowed us out to the boat in our blue dingy. He took the helm while Rich and I enjoyed the super moon awash in sunset colors as it rose beside Mount Rainier. That night, we put James ashore and anchored in Tramp Harbor. Then our adventures began!

In the morning, when I looked over the side of the boat, I saw clams on the sandy bottom. Out came the lead line to measure the depth. We are a bit old-school; instead of a depth sounder we use a lead line, a line with a weight on the end, marked with knots every fathom (6 feet). When I felt the weight hit the bottom, I checked the knots. The water came almost to the two knots, indicating two fathoms. We were in ten feet of water. Not a problem; we only draw four feet, and the tide was already at its lowest.

Rich rowed us ashore and we pulled the dingy up as far as we could. We stashed the oars in the dingy and tied the yellow painter to the bottom of a piling at the shore end of Standard Oil Dock, then walked the quarter-mile home for lunch. Several hours later, we came back ready to set sail. Problem: The tide had come way up. The dingy was afloat, out of our of reach, and about to be

pulled under by the submerged painter.

Luckily, our neighbor, Tim Bear, was way more limber than either Rich or me. He swung down from the dock onto the dingy and cut the painter, freeing the dingy. We replaced the line, and off we went on our first honeymoon together (now we take annual honeymoons, usually on the boat). As we passed Spring Beach, we were blessed by a dolphin. She swam around the boat two or three times, then headed off toward Camp Sealth, while we continued north to Blake Island for the night.

The next morning, we practiced sailing east of Blake Island with just the jib, while we waited for the current to change in Rich Passage. The current there can run faster than Eli-Oh can travel, so it was imperative to have the current going with us. Rich Passage is narrow in places, and the ferry from Seattle to Bremerton passes through there.

Of course, it was in the narrowest place that the ferry caught up with us. I tried to raise the main for more speed and maneuverability, but dang! the halyard must have gotten tangled somehow! Rich finally got the outboard started, and we made a pit stop at Illahee State Park to untangle the halyard.

What a fine sail we had up the east side of Bainbridge Island! Until we spotted a big, dark gray cloud catching up to us, a squall for sure! We started the motor for extra speed and pulled alongside the little public dock, Keyport - where we had reserved a bed and breakfast - just in time.

As I stepped off the boat and took one wrap around the cleat with the mooring line, the squall hit, with a gust of wind that would have pulled the boat out of my hands but for the cleat, and left my non-sailor husband, still on board, wondering what to do.

Our hosts met us at the dock and walked with us in the pouring rain to Garden View Bed and Breakfast, a block away. We spent the next day laying in bed, making love, and doing all the things newlyweds do. That's when it hit me: O my God, we are married! I felt our energies click together in the way only a true marriage can do.



Art by Suzanna Leigh

Top-quality lawn, tree, and landscape care

Beautifulizing Vashon properties for 25 years.



Efficient, thorough, skilled, and trustworthy.

Contact Randall Snowden, 206-578-2614



All Things Rich

Olive Oils, Vinegars, Spices & Salts Sauces and Dragons!

Waterfront Market at Ruston
allthingsrich99@gmail.com
206-713-6917

Come see us Waterfront Market at Ruston 5101 Ruston Way 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM



PANDORA'S
SINCE 1983
QUALITY PET PRODUCTS

206-463-2200

Not all pet shampoos are created equal.

A pet's skin pH level is different than ours. Frequent bathing can strip the skin's natural oils. But then there's that leaky dandruff.

And don't get us started on hot spots!

We've got something for every fur type and skin condition, including shedding!

17321 Vashon Hwy SW
Hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-6:30
Saturday 9-5, Sunday 12-5
pandorasboxpetproducts.com
Instagram: pandorasboxshopcat

Get more Vashon Loop online!

Read our back issues at vashonloop.com

Time Together – Lavender Sachets

By Ali Elsberry

With Mother’s Day coming up, or perhaps the approaching birthday of someone who appreciates gifts from the heart, here is a little idea to make with little hands.

Spring is an excellent time of the year to get crafty; leaves have emerged, blossoms have opened, and the weather has improved, which makes gathering your materials that much more enjoyable. Plus, that energizing spring energy has everyone excited to be spending more time outside!

I have done this project with my children at various ages, and it has always been a hit. What you will need:

A couple handfuls of colorful

leaves and flowers (dandelions, clover, periwinkle, and Japanese maple leaves all work well)

Two 4”x 4” pieces of white or light-colored cotton fabric, or one 4”x 8” piece (to fold in half)

A hammer or large, flat rock

A thick wooden cutting board

Dried lavender buds or other nicely scented, dried herbs

Sewing machine or needle and thread

Go outside with your children and collect your plants; make sure to get at least a couple handfuls of various colors and patterns for best results. Jane Valencia has some wonderfully informative articles on harvesting; see her tips in the April

2024 and August 2023 issues of The Vashon Loop.

Find a flat and clear space to work – we prefer to be outside on the deck, but a dining room table works just as well. Place your fabric on the cutting board and put a flower or leaf on the fabric, then place your second piece of fabric on top (or, if using one larger piece of fabric, fold it over on itself).

Take turns hammering over the entire flower, periodically checking that you are using enough force to get the desired color and print applied (or conversely, not hammering too hard and causing it to break apart or become too enmeshed in the fabric to remove). When finished, you should have a colorful impression of the flower on your fabric. You can then carefully peel off the plant matter left behind and compost it. Repeat this process until you have the look you want.

Now, depending on the age of your children, you can stop here – the fabric can be framed and made into wall art, you can even get creative and cut the fabric into a flower shape first – or you can keep going and make it into a sachet.

For the sachet, sew your fabric together (make sure that the most colorful/printed sides are facing inward!) until it forms a square, but leave about a 2” opening on the last side. Flip the square inside out, using a pencil to pop the corners out, and then fill your newly formed pouch



with your dried herbs, making sure not to overfill. When the desired loftiness is reached, stitch up the hole by hand.

Now you have a thoughtfully handmade little gift that wonderfully showcases spring colors and shapes, and smells delightful! In time, the print will start to soften and eventually have more of a watercolor appearance, which is equally as lovely.

Some tips:

Experiment with all sorts of colors, shapes, and sizes of flowers and leaves.

Overlapping multiple flowers and leaves when hammering can give you a variety of colors and designs.

You can also make specific images by intentionally placing flowers or leaves one at a time to “draw” out your picture.

Go even bigger and make a scented eye pillow by using larger pieces of fabric and adding some dried beans, to give more weight in addition to the herbs.

Missing a Headlight?



Been putting off bulb replacement?

Flat fee install \$100
On site in Vashon
Most models

Text MJ, 608-695-8200

Let There Be Light!



“TO CARE ABOUT THE FATE OF THE NATURAL WORLD, CHILDREN MUST LEARN TO LOVE IT, TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS NOT SEPARATE FROM THEM, BUT PART OF THEIR HUMANITY.” RICHARD LOUV



Dr. Cori Bodily-Goodmansen
17147 Vashon Hwy SW, #111
(206) 259-0216 (call or text)
drcori@vashonchiropractic.com
www.vashonchiropractic.com

VASHON CHIROPRACTIC
Individualized wellness care using low-force techniques



VASHON ISLAND BUSINESS ESSENTIALS

Payroll, Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Business Consulting

Stephen Buller, CPA
206-463-3302
info@vashonisland.biz
17147 Vashon Hwy SW, Suite D

Need a Controller?


Many small businesses reach a point where they need expert accounting and finance help, but don't have the budget for a full-time position.

VIBE has you covered: Our team of a 15-year CPA and five staff accountants will ensure things are done right – and at the right price.

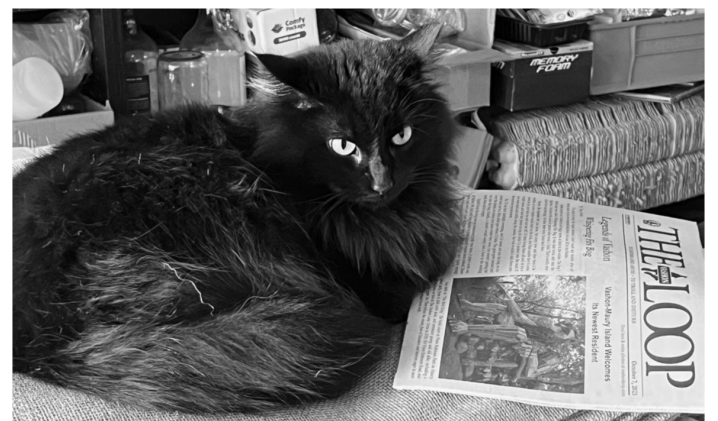


Algebra Tutor For Hire!
Call Anne Moses
206-355-2222

“The longer I live, the more deeply I learn that love – whether we call it friendship or family or romance – is the work of mirroring and magnifying each other's light.”



~ James Baldwin



I never, ever want to miss an issue of “The Vashon Loop”

How about we mail The Loop to you? Directly to your home.

Contact us about a special, paid subscription!

It could be the purr-fect arrangement.

Write sales@vashonloop.com to learn more.

Pruning, Part 3 – Fruit Trees

By Kim Cantrell and John Rettmann

Hope you all are enjoying this beautiful spring. As the trees are budding out, the blossoms have been nothing short of gorgeous, and the early pollinators are at work.

Let's continue forth with talking about pruning; this time, we are getting specific in our endeavor. In the first two articles on pruning basics, we covered the fundamentals for pruning most shrubs and trees. For part three, the focus is on the care and pruning of fruit trees, in particular steps you can take to avoid damaging your apple trees with excessive or inappropriate pruning, and steps to take if damage has already been done.

Fruit trees have different requirements and considerations, especially if your goal is a productive tree with lots of wonderful home-grown fruit. I'm delighted to share the advice and expertise of Kim & Company's and Little Bird Gardens' expert on pruning fruit trees, John Rettmann. John has a deep love of trees and has been increasing his knowledge, understanding, and techniques for many years. He is a valued member of my team and I guarantee you will hear his name in the gardening world for years to come.

Your apple tree told me to tell you ... that you've killed it. Well, it's only a matter of time. Her trunk is rotting, branches splitting, and water sprouts are reaching skyward as a hopeless effort to escape your once-in-a-blue-moon hack job. She's turning 92 years old this spring, and even though she grew tall and strong in her first 50 years, for some reason people nowadays say she's too big.

Trees are ruined by a one-two punch. A harsh pruning, followed by years of nothing. Pruning hard can doom a tree, but the sad thing is, abused trees cause their own demise. Only strategic, skilled pruning can reverse the damage. Here's how to save it.

To begin, you need to know what your tree wants. Left to its own devices, a tree has two goals: reach mature size, as determined by the genetics of her roots, and develop a structure for fruit-bearing branches. Trees can't bear fruit on first-year growth. Apples, for instance, only really start to bear fruit on third-year wood. Old wood also

Island Resilience

becomes less fruitful. Fruit spurs age, and new growth often shades out the interior of a tree.

This natural progression gets disrupted by pruning. Good pruning helps maintain airflow and young branching on the entire tree. It helps the tree fight off diseases, prevents limb breakage, and increases yield. Not to mention, it makes the tree more beautiful, because the interior branches are visible, the tree is balanced, and the wood and leaves are healthy.

If your tree has been improperly pruned, I recommend you find a tree rehabber. Not just someone who cuts trees a lot, but someone who knows what anthracnose is (a common fungal disease), who can identify a fruit spur, or count the years of growth since the last pruning.

In the late winter, when there isn't risk of a hard freeze, have the pruner come and cut out the worst large limbs. This should be fewer than 6 cuts, to begin to untangle the canopy of the tree, and will allow for easier summer pruning. Ask the pruner when they need to come next. If your tree is struggling, they may want to wait a whole year, or they may be anxious to come for a summer pruning, to start suppressing growth. One way or another, your tree should be pruned again within the next 14 months. And mind you, rehabbing a tree takes at least three years.

When your pruner comes for the second visit, they will continue thinning out your tree. If the tree's pruning budget allows, they will also start shaping fruit-bearing branches. Water sprouts may still remain, but you need to understand that, for fruit trees, water sprouts are a bad habit, and like bad habits, we have to first develop healthy habits before we can totally quit. Cutting all of the "offensive" branches off at once will cause the tree to either fail or fight back harder than before. Most trees allow for no more than 30% of the healthy branching to be removed in one year; this is your pruning budget and includes water sprouts.

This third phase is when the fun begins. The tree should finally start to look balanced and should no longer be producing water sprouts. At this point, the pruner should not have to make more than one or two major cuts per year.

Fruitfulness will start to increase. Old wounds are healing. Your pruner should now be able to prune your tree very quickly, not even needing to remove the full pruning allowance to maintain the tree. If you'd like to learn how to trim the tree yourself, ask your pruner to show you.

As the guardian of your apple tree, remember:

1. **Let the tree be the size and shape it was designed to be.** You can buy trees grafted on dwarfing root stocks. These will be of a smaller mature size. Each species, and even different varieties, have different growth habits. Apples prefer to have a central leading branch and do well with lots of well-developed side branching.

2. **Don't do anything drastic. Make incremental changes year after year.** If your tree was already planted before you got there and it's too big, you have 3 options: cut it down; hire an expert to shrink it down, and maintain it every summer; or change your expectations! Consider that these trees can live for centuries if they aren't compromised. They are beautiful monuments of the natural history of our Island and can enrich the lives of our future generations if we protect them.

3. **Prune at the right time.** Most people believe that spring is the best time for pruning. That depends on what the tree needs. Different goals require specific timing, and different seasons demand different methods.

If you are trying to prevent or cure disease issues, pruning must be done during the dry season. If you are trying to reduce vigor or height, pruning is most effective in the mid to late summer when the trees put energy into fruit instead of growth. If you need to remove a large branch, pruning is the least stressful on a tree in the late winter. Spring pruning actually triggers the strongest response from the tree because it is just waking up from winter and has ample time and resources for growth.

Apple trees can have long, beautiful lives if we let them. We can ruin these treasures by combining harsh pruning and periods of neglect. We can restore these treasures through understanding and consistent care. If you want to learn more about the pruning and care of fruit trees, Vashon is very fortunate to have an excellent resource in the Vashon Island Fruit Club. They host regular pruning workshops and demonstrations. You can learn more at vashonislandfruitclub.org.

On The Rise – Island Bakery Makes Good, Part 1

Continued from Page 3

locally sourced. It hasn't been put through an industrial process, stripping the naturally occurring minerals, fiber, and vitamins, and then enriching the white starch which is left over. Various stabilizing chemicals can be used in different parts of the process of the journey of the wheat berry from field to flour, such as when the grain or milled flour is being stored before packaging. These chemicals don't have to be listed as ingredients."

"One of our customers who can tolerate our bread," Jordan continues, "can also only tolerate wheat from Europe."

My daughter had found that to be true for her, too, during her semester in Italy.

"Generally," Thomas explains, "countries in the EU have different food standards than the United States. Wheat has been grown and used more locally longer, because food traditions demand this. Still, though, some areas of the EU have lost production of their staples for their food traditions. At work over there are the same forces that would like to capitalize on everything possible for profit.

"The fact that some food traditions in Europe have been able to withstand these forces, and that in more rural areas, the food is 'cleaner' due to the nature of the small-scale agricultural techniques - they produce flours similar to those of our local grain economy. Europe has plenty of monocropping and chemical agriculture, but they also ban more pesticides than our U.S. Department of Agriculture or Food and Drug Administration does.

"The stronger food traditions demand that certain processes be less

chemical-laden. Germany's beer purity laws and Ireland's dairy rules are examples, and the list goes on."

Return next issue for part 2, in which our conversation ranges through the lively terrain of Washington-grown organic wheats, Vashon-grown wheats, and food security.

For a list of where to purchase bread on-Island, or to order loaves online, visit Fernhorn Bakery at <https://fernhornbakery.com/>. You can also purchase Solidarity Loaves - gifts of bread for someone in need. See the website for details.

Visit Fernhorn Bakery on Saturdays at the VIGA Farmers Market.



Class Action Lawsuit Offers Boon to Local Business Owners

Continued From Front Page

Visa and Mastercard interchange fees," said K. Craig Wildfang, of Robins Kaplan LLP, co-counsel on the litigation alongside Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd LLP and Berger Montague PC. (Source: PR Newswire)

"The case has been winding its way through the court system for nearly 20 years. Now we look forward to helping class members with the claims process and getting the benefits of the settlement into their hands," said Alexandra Bernay, partner at Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd LLP."

I stumbled upon the above while researching the topic of "surcharges." Across the country (and the world), businesses are seeking to escape "transaction fees" by encouraging cash and/or passing fees back to plastic-using consumers.

According to a excellent and detailed article written by "Clearly Payments" for business owners, titled Charging Customers for Credit Card Fees (aka Surcharging), approximately 20% of businesses have already implemented a system that passes "credit card processing fees/transaction fees" directly back to plastic-using customers. Yes, twenty percent!

Remember that next time you're in Seattle and have the misfortune to run into a "no cash accepted" business. It may feel like we're inevitably sliding in that direction, but the reality is far different. Cash is becoming more and more appreciated and sought after by businesses and consumers alike.

A CNN Business article explains one of the effects of this groundbreaking lawsuit: "The settlement gives merchants the ability to impose surcharges on customers, depending on what kind of Visa or Mastercard card they use. Those surcharges would likely hit cardholders who get rewards such as cash back and airline miles, since those can carry higher swipe fees."

This highlights the blunt fact that every person using a "rewards card" is reaping those rewards not from the bank issuing the card, but from the profit margin of businesses and the increased cost of goods and services paid by fellow shoppers.

The "Clearly Payments" article also answers a plethora of questions business owners may have

regarding various ways and means, methods, and options. Their "pros" list includes: cost recovery, transparency, cash payment encouragement, flexibility, improved profitability, and adaptation to market changes.

Recently, David Hinchman of Vashon Print & Design reminded me of another important illustrative story regarding the "staying power of cash" versus the "diminishing effect of paying with plastic."

If I were to spend a \$50 bill at his store, and he were to spend that \$50 bill at a local restaurant, and so it went for 100 island business transactions in a row, at the end, there'd still be a \$50 bill circulating in our community. On the other hand, if we were to make those same purchases with plastic, after just 21 transactions, that \$50 would have been whittled down to \$25.

This is how 10,800 islanders have been losing millions of dollars a year. But, now we're wising up, and we're not the only ones. Big businesses and government have also been passing transaction fees back to plastic-paying customers for years. I've personally experienced this with Turbo Tax, Ticketmaster, and our own Washington State Department of Licensing. But the list is much longer!

Shouldn't small, locally owned businesses be as protective of their profit margin and expenses as big businesses? And, shouldn't we be encouraging them every day? Yes, and we do.

Vashon Islanders love their local business owners, because they are our neighbors and friends. We are tremendously lucky they choose to do business here, so we don't have to take a ferry for all the goods and services that make our awesome Island lifestyle possible and enjoyable.

It's important to remember, when Islanders pay with plastic, business owners don't mind. We all know there are times when that is the only or best option. In those cases, as an aware consumer, we can let our local business owners know we're happy to cover the transaction fee ourselves. By working together, we will keep Vashon Island's economy strong and resilient.

To ensure Island businesses are aware of this Class Action Lawsuit and its rapidly approaching deadline, please share this article far and wide.

Quickest and Best Start for Business Owners: Go to this website and click the button to submit your claim: <https://www.paymentcardsettlement.com/en>

Still have questions? Contact the Class Administrator at 1-800-625-6440 / www.PaymentCardSettlement.com, write to Payment Card Interchange Fee Settlement, P.O. Box 2530, Portland, OR 97208, or send an email to: info@PaymentCardSettlement.com.

Editorial Note: Settlement details quoted or summarized from the Official Court-Authorized Settlement Website and the Settlement Long Form Notice. Visit our website to follow the various links.

The Best Money

By Stephen Buller

Most people know the golden rule: Treat others how you wish to be treated. Here is a lesser-known golden rule: He who holds the gold makes the rules. Most people I meet think of gold as a commodity, a shiny metal, or pretty jewelry, but when I say gold is the best money, they get confused or skeptical.

While there have been countless "currencies" throughout history, I'll argue gold is and always will be the best "money." There is a reason money rule-makers, from the fictional Iron Bank in "Game of Thrones," to the very real Federal Reserve, stack it in their vaults - and you should too.

To work well, money must be a 1) medium of exchange - people widely accept it as payment, 2) unit of account - its quantity is easily defined so it can act as the value measuring stick, and 3) store of value - it maintains its value over long periods of time. The concept of money has become abstract and complicated, I believe intentionally so. A one-word answer to "what is money" would be too simple ... wouldn't it?

To understand why it should be that simple, let's look at another well-known metal: Steel is arguably the best construction material. It's used in every aspect of our daily lives, including homes, cars, appliances, equipment, tools, and weapons. This is mainly because of its strength but also its abundance and relative ease of use in manufacturing and recycling.

Similarly, gold has innate characteristics that make it the best money. It is fungible, meaning each bit of gold is identical to the next, and divisible into any size - making it a good unit of account. It is durable and inert, doesn't corrode or oxidize - making it a good store of value. It has few viable industrial applications, so its stock quantity on Earth is stable, and it has been desired by humans for 6,000 years - making it a good medium of exchange.

Gold as a physical currency is also usually an alloy, with small amounts of silver and copper to add durability. If you compare gold to its competitors - of which it has had many - nothing else can compete. Two interesting comparisons today are Bitcoin and the United States dollar.

Bitcoin is a wonderful unit of account and has a stable stock. It fails as a medium of exchange because it's so young, and its durability could also be tested in the case of a catastrophic power failure.

The dollar is the greatest medium of exchange ever, used by more people in more transactions than anything else in history. It fails as a store of value because its design mathematically demands it lose value over time.

To be fair, gold has the weakness of being heavy. It's more difficult to carry than either a one-gram rectangle of cotton and linen, which could have as many digits on it as you can fit, or a digital drive, which could theoretically hold any amount of Bitcoin. With today's technology, a digital gold standard could give us the best money of all.

That would require a standard where every unit of digital money is supported by a specific measure of gold, not a fractional reserve system, which allows banks to loan out multiples of the value of assets it holds. This detaches money from reality. If everyone demands their money at once, it simply does not exist. Today, we have a fractional reserve system that is completely detached from gold/money and has no limits on how many multiples of the baseless currency can be created.

The value of all our labor - as it can be traded for another good or service - our time and passion, our blood, sweat, and tears, is captured in the form of money. When we use faulty money, the fruits of our labor are easier to steal or misdirect through inflation. Because of this, I believe one of the most important pillars of an enlightened and prosperous society is "sound money." If everything is going up in price, it actually means your unit of measure is going down in value. All fiat currencies go to zero sooner or later. Gold is still here.

Cash on Vashon!

Pay today with cash, for a reason

1. To save a business money on transaction fees
2. To give a business more control over their profits
3. To support your local economy and community
4. To keep cash alive!

Headley Holistics, LLC

Bringing You Holistic Solutions for Equines, Canines, and the People Who Love Them!

Headley Holistics

17710 112th Ave. SW ♦ POB 868
Vashon Island, WA 98070
Hours: Thursday-Saturday, 9:00am-6:00pm
www.headleyholistics.com
Like us on Facebook and Instagram!
[@headleyholistics](https://www.instagram.com/headleyholistics)

Meat by-products or "meals" are defined as any part of the slaughtered animal not fit for human consumption. This doesn't necessarily mean just specific parts of the animal; it could also mean how it is handled.

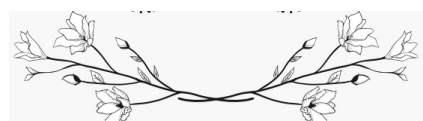
For instance, raw materials left unrefrigerated after slaughter are no longer fit for human consumption but become "animal by-product meal" and are then added as fillers in your pet's food! The difference between "animal by-product" and "animal meal" is whether it has been rendered (dried and fat cooked off). By-products not even fit for animal consumption are rendered to create "animal meal."

Check labels before you buy!

Melanie Farmer

Archetypal Astrologer

ayurvedicastrologer@gmail.com
206.370.4394



Elderflowers

Continued From Front Page

I consider the elderflower concentrate an important part of treating the flu. Although the saying goes "feed a cold, starve a fever," there are studies showing that it helps to consume some simple sugars (in a healthy form) when dealing with influenza. Your elderflower drink will help lower your fever and help your immune system fight off the flu at a time when you are unlikely to want to eat. D -d

I used to make my own elderflower syrup every year. While I have grown a bit lazy and now only gather enough for tea, I highly recommend homemade elderflower syrup. In my experience, it is stronger than the Ikea concentrate and is more golden and fragrant. The recipe is quite simple:

Gather 30 or more flower clusters (most of the flowers should be open rather than in the bud stage). When you get home, cut away the main stalk from the flower clusters. You do not want any thick stems in the brew at all. Rinse the flowers gently in a strainer and put them in a large pan or crock. Cut two lemons into thin slices and add them to the flowers. Heat six cups of water to boiling and stir in four cups of sugar. Keep stirring until the sugar dissolves. Dissolve 1½ to 2 ounces of citric acid (which you can get at Minglement) in some of the hot syrup, then add it to the rest of the syrup.

Pour the syrup over the flowers, cover and let it stand in a cool place for 5 days. Finally, strain and bottle it. I keep my bottles in the fridge because, if the concentrate is not heat-processed, it may ferment and become fizzy in a way that I do not like. When you are ready to have a glass of elderflower drink, just add one part concentrate to 4 parts cold water. I often use sparkling water to dilute the concentrate as I find the fizziness of the final beverage delightful, whereas I am not fond of the fizziness of fermented elderflower.

Gathering elderflowers is a wonderful way to connect with plants, it provides a good reason to get out in the fresh air and enjoy the semi-rural nature of Vashon, and an opportunity to gain a stronger sense of how plants and health go well together.

Health Matters

Myocarditis by the Numbers – Part 3

Continued From Front Page

United Kingdom, conducted from December 2020 to August 2021. The investigators combined data from the English National Immunization database with patient information to look at hospitalizations or deaths from myocarditis, pericarditis, and cardiac arrhythmias.

You'll want to pay attention to how the cause of myocarditis was defined in this study. Myocarditis was considered injection-related if the patient had received a vaccine in the past 28 days, and myocarditis was considered COVID disease-related if the patient had a positive COVID test in the past 28 days and had not received an injection in that time period. After the second injection and after COVID infection, respectively, investigators found an increase of 1 and 4 events per 100,000.

There are many reasons why this study does not make sense as definitive evidence. Self-controlled case series are usually used to evaluate vaccine safety early on after a product is released. But since it has been a few years since the original injections were administered, a more current comparative analysis, looking at a large number of U.S. residents, would be more definitive.

From this perspective, the second study – a U.S. cohort analysis, conducted by the National Patient-Centered Clinical Research Network – makes more sense. It used electronic health records from 40 healthcare systems to track more than 7 million patients from January 2021 to January 2022. Similar to the UK analysis, the myocarditis was defined as injection-related if an mRNA vaccination was given in the past 30 days, and was considered COVID-related if there was a positive COVID test in the past 30 days and no mRNA injection in that time.


This study found dramatically higher rates of myocarditis with COVID infection than following a second injection – at least a doubling. But these

numbers are also dramatically overblown because this database didn't capture the patients who caught COVID and tested at home, or at a pharmacy, or who didn't test at all. These unrepresented people were at lower risk in general, and because of this, the study actually shows results for higher-risk COVID patients – people were more likely to have side effects like myocarditis.

There is another problem with these studies, related to causality, and it needs to be considered. This research happened after December 2020, when the mRNA injections were authorized for release. Due to this, many if not most study participants were vaccinated while the research took place. And while these studies both assumed that previous mRNA vaccination did not contribute to myocarditis beyond the 28 or 30 days that followed, that's just an assumption; there's no biologic explanation used to support it.

By overlooking this, researchers introduced what's known as confounding – a type of bias that happens when factors that could affect study results are ignored. People who are vaccinated and then have a COVID infection almost certainly have a different biologic (and risk) profile than people with only an infection or vaccination – just like patients with two injections have different risk profiles from patients with one or three. In all these scenarios, the body is exposed (and re-exposed) to spike protein. Many people fall into the category of vaccination followed by infection, because having the mRNA vaccination only provides a few months of protection from COVID.

I don't think the evidence does a good enough job supporting the contention that myocarditis happens more often after COVID disease than mRNA injection. But at this point, it's probably a fool's errand to study COVID infection and vaccination as separate risk factors, since so many people have experienced both. To help us understand how our bodies are fundamentally changed in the "new normal," research is going to have to meet us where we are at.

BREATHING MANDALA

Do you feel stressed? Stuck? Anxious?

Explore breathwork to relieve suppressed emotions, stuck energy, stress, and so much more ... the breath connects body and mind. As you breathe, so you become.

Contact Tracey Stover, 206-769-0040

Breathwork sessions, Access BAR's sessions
Coaching/energy sessions, Bemer rental

www.breathingmandala.com



Alder pollen clouds
I sneeze, spin, take medicine
The sheep only stare

- By Caitlin Rothermel

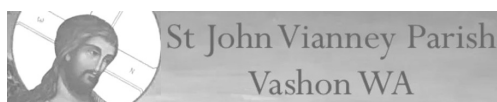
selah health

NAET® Allergy Elimination Treatments

Foods • Chemicals • Pets
Environmental Factors • And More

Say goodbye to allergy symptoms and hello to your favorite foods again!


SelahHealthFreedom.com 720-289-1761




Vashon's Catholic Church
Noon Mass Wed-Fri
Sat. 5:00PM, Sun. 9:30AM
<https://stjohnvianneyvashon.com/>



island chiropractic & health awareness center



Book Here Expanded Hours!



253-922-0450
www.myislandchiro.com
17917 Vashon Hwy SW #7, Vashon, WA 98070
Open Tue, Wed & Fri 8:00am-4:00pm

Espresso, Pastries, Sandwiches & More
206 463-0777



Café Luna

Open Mon-Fri
7-4
Saturday 8-4
Sunday 8-2

Free WiFi

MINGLEMENT

ORGANIC MARKET EST. 1972

From the Roasterie – Lady of the Mountain

By Eva DeLoach

Today we share the fascinating story behind one of our most cherished single-origin coffees: Lady Of The Mountain.

Imagine a blend of beautifully fermented beans – light, crisp, and refreshing – with a buzz of wild honey infused with the scent of cypress. This coffee is more than just a beverage; it's a testament to resilience, determination, and the enduring spirit of those who cultivate it.

Meet Luz Marina, a third-generation Colombian coffee grower whose family's farm, the Santa Elena Estate, nestled in the lush mountainside of Terrazu, Costa Rica, faced a daunting challenge during recent years. An unusually heavy rainy season wreaked havoc, washing out roads, damming up rivers, and destroying buildings.

Undeterred by the devastation, she embarked on a journey of renewal. With unwavering determination, she rebuilt roads, cleared boulders from rivers, and resurrected her farm from the brink of ruin. As the rains subsided and the weather cleared, the hillside revealed a remarkable sight – a silhouette of

Our Lady of Guadalupe etched against the horizon.

In the wake of destruction, a symbol of hope emerged. The area below the hillside became a place of pilgrimage for the local community, a testament to the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity. And amidst this backdrop of hope and renewal, Luz Marina's coffee flourished.

Today, the single varietal coffee that comes from her farm stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of its cultivator and the land from which it springs. And as the forest slowly reclaims the hillside, the memory of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the spirit of renewal will live on for generations to come.

At The Vashon Island Coffee Roasterie, we are honored to share the story of the resilience of Luz Marina and the Santa Elena Estate through our single-origin coffee named in their honor, Lady Of The Mountain. Join us in celebrating the countless stories that enrich the world of specialty coffee. With every sip, you'll taste the legacy of generations past and the promise of a brighter future, rooted in tradition, craftsmanship, and the enduring spirit of resilience.



Island Epicure – Irish Stew (Stobhach Gaedhealach)

By Marj Watkins

One year, back when my husband was alive and well, we decided to visit Ireland for our vacation. We found our way to Dublin and rented a house a bit north of Dublin and near the bus stop. The bus was not due yet, but there was a restaurant beckoning a few steps away. We could see people being served steaming bowls of something that looked delicious! A man at the bus stop said it was Irish stew, and that it was hearty and delicious. We were feeling a bit peckish, so we decided to skip the bus trip for now and to have some Irish stew, Stobhach Gaedhealach.

The mainstay of the stew is potatoes and lamb, and we were reminded of the famine in Ireland when the potato crop failed and so many Irish came to America, bringing with them their recipe for Stobach Gaedhealach. My heart was touched to learn that the American Chocktaw Nation sent money to Ireland during the famine. They knew what it was like to be hungry. Not so long before, they had been forced to give up their

fertile land and migrate north, shivering and nearly starving, to a colder climate.

Irish Stew (Stobach Gaedhealach)

- 3 pounds of potatoes, sliced
- ½ pound lamb shank, cut into bite-sized pieces
- ¼ pound bacon
- 2 large white onions, chopped into little pieces
- 1½ tsp sea salt
- 1½ tsp black pepper
- 10 ounces of water (1¼ cups)

Place half of the potato pieces on the bottom of a large pot or dutch oven. Then place a layer of lamb, onion, and bacon atop the potatoes. Repeat. Pour the water over all. Place a lid on the pot. Cook gently for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Test, and add more salt and pepper to taste.

Serves 6.

Apple Cake – From Pecan Court

By Andy Valencia

This is a family dessert favorite, developed by my late mother, Denise Valencia. "Pecan Court" is the location of my childhood family home.

Apple Cake – From Pecan Court

Ingredients

- 3 cups flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs, well-beaten
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 3 cups sliced and diced apples
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp vanilla extract



Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350°.
- Sift together the flour, baking soda, and salt.
- Combine flour mixture with sugar, cinnamon, eggs, and vanilla extract (added in that order)
- Add apples and walnuts last, and mix.
- Transfer mixture to a greased, floured Bundt pan, and bake for 1 hour, 30 minutes.

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



Restore your body's flexibility, energy and comfort.

MELT and Stability workshops now enrolling.

Scan the code or call.



move better. feel better.

5th Annual Mukai Haiku Festival Winners

Hosted by the Mukai Farm & Garden, the Mukai Haiku Festival 2024 received over a hundred haiku from 12 countries around the world. We are delighted to present the prize winners and their haiku, below.

Category, Heritage

First place:

On Vashon Island
where our ancestors made home –
the strawberries' scent!
~ Geoffrey Philp (Jamaica)

Second place:

Spring at Mukai Farm
Cherry trees toss confetti
Offering their peace
~ Grace McRae (US)

Third place:

we who imagine
place in past & future tense
are weaving the world
~ Brit Myers (US)

Category, Nature

First place:

smell of fresh-cut grass
all the carousel horses
run in slow motion
~ Cezar Ciobica (Romania)

Second place:

winter evening...
a blade of green grass
in a sparrow's beak
~ Shiva Bhusal (Nepal)

Third place:

the ongoing foot
of the slug - leaving me
glistening thoughts
~ Rick Clark (US)

Category, Reflections

First place:

border checkpoint
I leave my past and shadow
behind the red line
~ Chen-ou Liu (Canada)

Second place:

snow falling outside
gnocchi is drying inside
Mom's big heart glowing
~ Renée Roman (US)

Third place:

recall from afar
fragrance of cherry blossoms -
facets of freedom
~ Monica Kakkar (India / USA)

Category, Social Justice

First place:

countless haiku now
written about sunflowers . . .
a war rages on
~ Valentina Ranaldi-Adams (US)

Second place:

begging refugee
in her plastic cup
so many drops
~ Beata Czeszejko (Poland)

Third place:

Banned library books
censorship wearing sheepskin
save rainbow pages
~ Melinda Dubbs (US)

Category, Young Poets (ages 1-12)

First place:

The birds are singing
By the water in the woods
Playing hide and seek
~ Cedar Olson (US)

Second place:

The birds are chirping
The leaves are green and shiny
Shapes between the trees
~ Griffin Davies-Harkins (US)

Third place:

Skates swerve across ice
Crisp snow blankets piny trees
Winter has arrived
~ Ashley Schloss (US)

Category, Young Poets (ages 13-18)

First place:

strawberry season
I'm trying for the first time
my mom's red lipstick
~ Teo Contac (France)

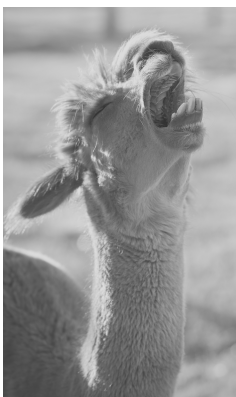
Second place:

The water is blue
The blue is as still as stone
The stone all scattered
~ Axel Codd (US)

Third place:

patiently waiting
for the moment to tell her
my unsaid feelings
~ Eljohn Roque Santosildes (Philippines)

Llaughing Llamas Chronicles



By Daniel Hooker

From Steven at the Vashon Library:

By mistake, I swallowed some disappearing ink and had to go to the hospital.

I had to wait to be seen.

~

Q: Why do cows have hooves?

A: Because their horns don't work.

~

From Thalia at Granny's Attic:

Q: Where do they milk camels in the Middle East?

A: At a dromedary, of course!

~

Q: How many tickles does it take to tickle an octopus?

A: Ten tickles!

~

I replaced my rooster with a duck. Unfortunately, now I wake up at the quack of dawn.

Island poetry in these pages

How about yours?



Submit your poems to
The Vashon Loop!

Write to: vashonloop-poetry
@janevalencia.com

Can't stop drinking
and want help?



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Online Meetings: SeattleAA.org

AA Phone: 206-587-2838

Local Vashon Contact: 206-849-1980

No puede dejar de
beber Alcohol?



ALCOHOLICOS ANONIMOS

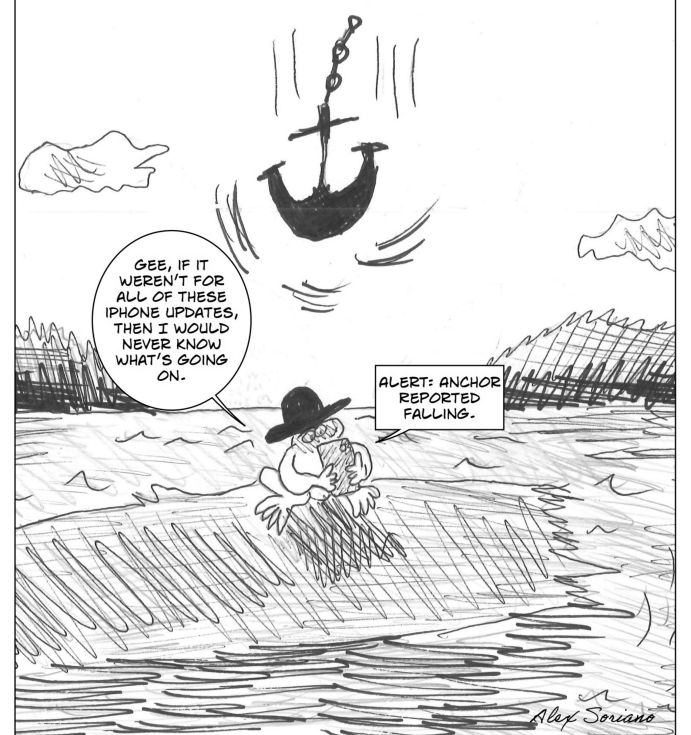
Reuniones de Internet: SeattleAA.org

Telefono AA: 206-587-2838

Contacto Local Vashon: 206-849-1980

The Observant Frog's Log

By Alex Soriano



Please consider becoming a paid
supporter of The Vashon Loop
at vashonloop.substack.com



View our content online at
vashonloop.com

Aries (March 20-April 19)

As part of music study, you learn something, then you learn it again, then a few years later, you might learn it a third time. This is all mingled in with practice, trial and error, forgetting and remembering. With Mercury now moving directly through your sign, covering the places where it was recently retrograde, you're in the company of musicians, for whom learning is a process of repetition, review and the gradual embodiment of your truth. You've reached a point where you can admit the undeniable necessity of knowing, understanding and accepting yourself. Events surrounding the April 8 total solar eclipse will stand as a permanent feature of your psychic landscape around which you can develop a sense of perspective. Treat yourself gently, and remember that understanding will come in different ways at different times.

Taurus (April 19-May 20)

Benefits of the extraordinary astrology of the past month are starting to arrive, timed beautifully with Venus arriving in your birth sign. Yet receiving them is calling on you to do something that's usually challenging for you, which is to be a different person every day. I know it seems trite; we've all heard it from members of the Program and seen it on little plaques in souvenir shops: live one day at a time. This translates to several different skills, one of which is hanging loose. You can accept that people will see you how they see you no matter how much work you put into your appearance. The illusion of control is the problem you're grappling with.

Gemini (May 20-June 21)

As of this weekend, Sedna (distant planet orbiting our Sun) will be in your sign for the first time since approximately when there were glaciers where I am now sitting. Sedna in Gemini (through 2068 or so) is about the mental environment, and there is no environment more important because everything anyone perceives, feels or experiences is processed through their minds. You are entering a vitally important stage of your growth wherein you will learn about the power of your mental state, your intelligence and your awareness. The month ends with Jupiter entering your birth sign or rising sign, and that is not so subtle. You're being bestowed with one glorious year to experience your significance and presence in the world in a whole new way.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Aspire to be helpful, and give others credit for your success. The light on them will reflect gently on you—if you take up opportunities to humbly serve, your winning streak will continue. Not everyone is doing as well as you are right now. Your attention, empathy and kindness will count for a lot. So, too, will your impeccable honesty—especially in situations where you could easily fudge or flirt with seemingly innocent dishonesty. Without knowing where you stand on the use of alcohol and substances, I would add this message coming through with emphasis; please ignore it if it's not about you. The use of mood-altering substances is not a substitute for doing spiritual work, by which I mean any form of inner work. It's just a way of setting



Planet Waves

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

things aside, or dulling your feelings and your emotions. Mars lining up with Neptune is cautionary of any method of skirting what you know are crucial matters of growth. Attend to the personal details of life and love. Do this as a matter of self-respect and let that extend to others, who will benefit from your openness and your example and commitment to truth.

Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)

Though you may not realize it, certain limits on your success have been eliminated, and your options are wide open. Yet going forward, it would help if you see success as something other than vertical. While it's essential that you know what you aspire to, and have an idea of what you define as an achievement, that's only part of the scenario. The state of the world now requires a highly social approach to all matters of business, profession and community affairs. After spending a year in your house of action and success, Taurus, Jupiter is about to move into Gemini. This is a house where it's much more appropriate to stand on level ground with others. Remember that you are seen by most other people as a dynamic, successful leader-type. Play that down by doing plenty of listening to whatever concerns and complaints people may have about their lives. You are in possession of tremendous potential, and you won't get to express it without plenty of kindness, love and support coming toward you. Remember that.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)

The stressed-out state of certain personal relationships is not so much a wakeup call as it is the residue of past attitudes and situations. You have already reached the tipping point; you know that what guided and motivated you in the past is no longer a factor. And though you can avoid and work through what you don't want, you still must have a discussion with yourself about what you desire. If you want to be happy, it's fair to admit that it's a failed strategy. Living passively won't work either; that leaves one option, which is engagement with the people around you. Over the next few weeks, you may have the feeling that you've seen it all before. That is your invitation to "see again", an idea which has entered our language in the word "respect". We live in the age of diss and dismiss, but those who take that approach are revealing how they treat themselves. How you handle your circumstances, how you perceive people, and what you say to them, are all expressions of how you feel about yourself.

Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)

The dust is still settling on the events of April. It will be for a while, though you can now look at those developments from a new angle. Perhaps a physical metaphor will help. Imagine there's a beautiful country road you drive, but you always take it from east to west. If, one day, you start at the west end of the road and drive east, you will feel like you're in a whole other place. It may be similar, but you'll notice many things you just did not see. Then, you may go from feeling like you've never seen it to the hint of dej

vu—have I seen this before? Have I been here? Or is my memory playing tricks on me? I suggest, in any event, that you get the message you're sending yourself; that you take on board the thing you're trying to learn. Experiment with seeing the world as a dream and you as a dreamer. This is merely a thought experiment; as such, you don't possess responsibility for the cause of every ill. But if you loosen up a little, you can start to see how influential are your responses—especially to you.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

The most important thing that the fixed sign Scorpio needs to learn is how not to be so fixed. Mostly, this manifests in your idea of who you are. Your choices and your actions are all expressions of your core idea of your own existence. The problem with flexibility is that it opens up many possibilities, which also means the matter of choice. You seem to plug holes by limiting your own options, or rather, your perception of them. There is a little child in you who wants to go out and play. But she's afraid of having a little fun or being creative, expecting that some brain-dead adult is going to come along and persecute her. I suggest you think of three times this actually happened in the past, with at least two of them from early childhood. It helps to have some concept of what you're healing if you're going to succeed. Parents and teachers often punish children by taking away musical instruments, art supplies, critter-friends and privileges. You don't have to do this to yourself, nor tolerate anyone in your life who does it to you. But the real persecutor is within, and needs to be cast off. It's long past time.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)

The greatest challenge you face involves your personal confidence—not in any task, but on a deep emotional level. Parents and other caregivers give us life, they raise us, they teach us plenty, and they often impart self-defeating tendencies. At the same time, most people instinctively love and respect their parents no matter what they did to them, and you are therefore reluctant to criticize or even evaluate anything they did to you when you were a kid. You're right in the spot where you can work out the issues without a lot of therapy or any form of confrontation with them. You must be honest with yourself, and also not blame yourself for what anyone else did to you. Many of us come from backgrounds where our parents were mild to extreme narcissists. Hand this back to the universe. Take possession of your gifts and take responsibility for your happiness.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

The purpose of life is to do something with it, especially something you've never done before. Something that qualifies is trying to get your attention—and you will recognize this "something" by its appeal, its beauty and by your sense that it may be a little too much fun. For those involved in the distinctly adult game of speculation (by which I mean trading commodities or stocks), you are in a lavish moment and you're likely to be on top of your

game. If so, I suggest you know when (and how) to quit while you're ahead. There is a deep—usually subconscious fear—of the next thing happening, and the bitter angst that it all could end. And it could, though even still, we are given our quantum of time on this planet to experience what beauty we can, to try our best, and to succeed by our own definition of the word—if we are able. Let no one, nor anything, nor any institution, nor any idea, or any fear, suck from you the privilege of living your life with passion and sincerity. If you want to be a revolutionary, live with gusto.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

Most people who have plenty feel like they don't have much at all. They spend their days clinging, wishing they had more. This is essentially a spiritual problem. It finds its answer in the lives of those who have little in material wealth but still love life, and love the people around them. For others, existence is an ongoing struggle—a walk along the line between just getting by and not getting by. For you, this matter mostly plays out as an emotional drama that has nothing to do with your actual financial situation. There is, deep in your psyche, the fear of retribution if you prosper and this sets a self-limiting condition on not just your success but your appreciation of what you have. Every day, do something for yourself, and remind yourself that you have what you need. There is a bottom-line question that you can use throughout your process: are your values and priorities in order? Do you emphasize what is truly important?

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

You've been through a series of personal revolutions over the past month, and you may be feeling the results in the form of reduced anxiety and a more relaxed mind. The changes that your chart describes have granted you resources: awareness of your assets, a sense of new possibilities, and the desire to thrive. It's easy for these qualities to be hosed down by the persistent negativity of the world, so you will need to not only guard them but exercise them as if it's your cosmically bestowed privilege. Speaking in terms of your astrology, the developments I'm describing are largely internal, happening in deeply private houses in your chart. Yet the effects give you resources that you can take with you everywhere, and into every circumstance. Refuse to allow the notion that you don't have enough money to stop you from having a go. One of the gifts of the April 8 eclipse is the ability to manifest the cashflow you need, should that be an issue. Stay close to your creativity, and think better, rather than bigger.



Foresight is to be sought, for hindsight is dearly bought.

~ Robert Southwell