



On the Rise – Fernhorn Bakery, Part 2

By Jane Valencia

Thomas Vroom and Jordan Ashley Beck own and run Fernhorn Bakery. In true Island fashion, the story of their bakery is nested within several stories related to the local economy and resilience. In Part 2 of this series, we learn about the wheats that Fernhorn uses to create their delicious, nutrient-dense, and unique-flavored breads.

The French word, *terroir*, refers to the combination of factors, including soil, climate, and sunlight, that produce a region's characteristic foods and unique flavors.

"The reason we use Washington-grown grains," Thomas explains, "is location. What cultures have had throughout history is their *terroir*. This food tastes the way it does because it was grown in that location." Certain kinds of cheeses or varieties in wines are examples.

"We can be a global community and still have our local foods that are cherished and taste different. We're not going to escape globalism at this point, as much as some people want to. But having Washington-grown wheat will be different. Because we get more rain, we get a lower protein, and so the gluten's not as strong as in Eastern Washington, where they can produce a higher-



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Fight Inflation Locally With CSAs

By Stephen Buller

The official annual rate of inflation reported in April 2024 was 3.36%. That word "official" usually gives credibility to facts and figures, but if you know anything about inflation, you know the opposite holds true here. The consumer price index (CPI) tracks "a chosen basket of goods and services." Chosen by whom? By people at the United States Bureau of Labor and Statistics who want you to believe inflation isn't as bad as it is.

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Update on Planned PSE Upgrades

By Caitlin Rothermel

In February 2024 in The Vashon Loop, Jenny Bell reported on Puget Sound Energy's "tree wire" project, a PSE program working to clear roadside vegetation and upgrade Vashon's power infrastructure. "Tree wire" is sturdy and well-insulated, and considered likely to fare well in storms, resist tree falls, and reduce the need for frequent or severe trimming of trees and vegetation.

Relevant to Island residents, this project will impact street frontage – the trees and vegetation that provide a buffer between private property and roads. In many cases, this means that PSE infrastructure will need to be moved from the existing county right-of-way locations and further back, onto private property.

A number of residents have been contacted by PSE to request an easement for this work. Out of concern for the lack of local discussion before PSE's implementation of the program, the Vashon-Maury Community Council has formed a PSE Activity Advisory Committee to better understand and address this issue.

Since February, the V-MCC PSE Activity Advisory Committee has confirmed that every pole on the Island is currently subject to 2007 "clear zone" regulations administered by King County (KC) Roads. And more specifically, as part of the 2019 KC franchise agreement with PSE, PSE must provide a plan to ensure that every Island electric pole is moved 10 feet back from the edge of

the road. This will affect a large number of local private property owners.

The following motions have been drafted and approved by the PSE Activity Advisory Committee, and approved by the V-MCC, and will inform the basis of the next discussions between V-MCC, PSE, and KC:

Motion 1: The V-MCC calls upon PSE to restore property rights enshrined in statute into new easement agreements entered into with Islanders, including updating the language of PSE's Standard Overhead Easement Clause #4 to mirror the language of RCW 64.12.035(1)(c). In cases involving potential threats to PSE's systems by vegetation, RCW 64.12.035(1)(c) requires that PSE "attempts written notice by mail ... indicating the intent to act or remove vegetation and secures agreement from the affected property owner of record for the cutting, removing, and disposition of the vegetation." Right now, PSE's Standard Overhead Easement Clause #4 eliminates the requirement that PSE obtain, or even attempt to obtain, a property owner's agreement. Out of respect for Islanders' property rights, that should change.

Motion 2: The V-MCC calls on King County (KC) Department of Local Services (DLS) to present a community wide public briefing summarizing the KC Roads "clear zone" program.

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Legends of Vashon Coon Tales

By Orin Edwards

Growing up, my family kept chickens. Most everybody did in those days, it was considered normal. Just part of being here. Of course, you could also get store-bought eggs from up at the grocery. White for Easter, for dyeing and decorating. Mother could make them look like jewels. We kept our flock to between 10 or 20 birds and my chore was to bring scraps and feed in the morning and then collect the eggs after school. Pretty easy work.

A flock would get whittled down one way or another, carried off by a hawk or eagle or even a dog, but easily the worst culprit was raccoons. One morning, the rooster was lying dead and two hens were missing. There was good chicken wire around that coop, a woven steel type you can't get anymore, so I knew right away what varmint was responsible. I declared a war of vengeance on them.

You can use a box trap or a cage trap, but that has some problems. It's not uncommon for raccoons to run in packs, and if you catch one with the box, the others will wise up right away. Plus, you never really know what else you might catch. Same with a leg trap, only worse.

The other problem is, if a raccoon is stuck in there, it might decide to run around like a whacked beehive trying to claw its way out. Nobody wants to see the aftermath of that. So, I used the method Mr. Hansen taught me, who knew all about coons and kept them as pets until, well, let's not get ahead of ourselves.

What makes a raccoon special is their fingers. They can grab and hold things as well as us, and they're just about as greedy. So, what you do is get a Mason jar, put some salmon in with the shiny skin left on, plus a half-dozen colorful marbles. Then you screw the lid on tight, take a hunting knife and stab through the lid. Pry that open far enough so a coon can force their hand and arm down through it, but not too easy. Then, you set that out near the scene of the crime.

Two things will happen. They'll reach in, but not be able to draw their hand back out with the salmon. But they'll keep trying and generally get stuck. And you'll hear the marbles rolling in the jar.

There's an even better but less fun version of this finger trap, known as a dog-proof trap. It's easy to set, won't get other animals, and is so coon-temptingly reliable you can catch three or four at once. It won't hurt them, and their instinct will be to pull away, so you can walk up and give them a nice stern lecture. Setting these around a chicken coop protects the flock and has yet another benefit ...

Back in those days, the preferred expedient for humane dispatch was a shot of 22 Remington. And people were accustomed to thinking differently about the stripe-tails. Bart Hansen, for example, raised them both for fur and food. Their meat is succulent, dark, and every bit the equal of pulled pork.

After catching that first offender, I walked over to the Hansen farm and felt proud to contribute to that evening's dinner. Sweet revenge. But that's another story.

Vashon Has a Welcome Song!

By Erin Durrett

Everyone is invited to take part in the welcome ceremony for the Blue Heron Canoe at this year's Vashon-Maury Island Low Tide Celebration! Join us on Saturday, June 21st from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at beautiful Point Robinson Park.

For all the peoples of the Salish Sea, it is customary that those who are hosting a party sing a song of welcome as a canoe family arrives on their shores. In 2008, Mike Evans, Snohomish elder and skipper of the Blue Heron, gifted us the welcome song we have been singing to him and his paddlers ever since.

This is a fun chance to learn some words in the local indigenous language - Lushootseed - and to put them into action with drums, clappers, and lots of neighbors as we call out to the paddlers as soon as we see them on the water on their journey to Vashon from Des Moines!

The Low Tide Celebration is a day of free family fun on the beach at Point Robinson, communing with all our neighbors in the water and around the shore - from the tiniest of sand fleas, to plentiful anemones, clams, crabs, snails, and barnacles, to the eel grasses and seaweeds - and lots of humans, too!

There will be food courtesy of Iyad's Syrian Grill, tours of the lighthouse, lots of booths with children's activities, and information on efforts to support wildlife and



habitat on Vashon. Naturalists will be on the beach to help everyone learn about and appreciate the beauty and vital roles every creature and plant plays in keeping the waters full of life, clean, and healthy for everyone.

Welcoming the Blue Heron Canoe is a way of honoring the peoples who lived in harmony with this natural abundance here on this Island for thousands of years, and celebrating our process of learning how to do that, too!

There will be a get-together at Ober Park on Friday, June 21st - 4 p.m. by the water fountain - to learn the words and rhythm of the short welcome song and ceremony, and everyone is welcome! Bring drums, rattles, and clappers if you have them - if not, your hands work great! If you have any questions, email me at allmusicissacred@gmail.com.

Marj Watkins for Mayor of Vashon!

By Rich Osborne

Marjorie Watkins was born 100 years ago, on July 21, 1924, on Chehalam Mountain, Oregon. She was raised on the Oregon coast during the Great Depression. Her family, the Brunsons, were loggers, farmers, and hunters.

At age 14, Marj started writing a regular column for the Tillamook newspaper. She wrote ad copy for Fred Meyer at age 19. She has written many cookbooks and novels during her life, as well as writing the "Island Epicure" column, first for the Vashon-Maury Island Beachcomber, then for The Vashon Loop. At this time, Marj continues to write "The Island Epicure" with her oldest daughter, Suzanna Leigh. Marj is also working on the final book of her trilogy, about the family of her many-times great Grandfather, Charlemagne, as well as on a family memoir.

Marj married John Watkins, her childhood sweetheart, at age 20, when



he returned from World War II. An Air Force wife, she raised her four children in Oregon, California, Texas, Louisiana, France, Maine, Okinawa, and finally Vashon Island.

Marj and John moved to Vashon in 1969, just in time for Strawberry Festival. John wanted to live in a place that had good sailing, and where he could teach school.

Marj has lived on Vashon Island for 55 years. She will turn 100 on July 21, 2024. She was a regularly attending member of the Vashon Church of the Holy Spirit until she had to stop driving. A benefactor to many Vashon Island causes over the years, when I asked Marj to run for Unofficial Mayor, representing the Vashon Senior Center, she said "Why not? Those kids could use some help."

This would be a lovely 100th birthday present. Vote for Marj!

The Vashon Loop

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Apple Health Expansion coming July 2024

The 2022 supplemental budget directs the Health Care Authority to develop a medical assistance program that provides Medicaid-equivalent healthcare coverage to uninsured adults who do not meet immigration requirements for federal assistance (no Social Security number).

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La expansión de Apple Health llegará en julio de 2024

El presupuesto adicional del año 2022 ordena a la Autoridad de Servicios de Salud que implemente un programa de asistencia médica para brindar cobertura en servicios de salud o Medicaid, a los adultos que no cuenten con número de Seguridad Social (SSN), o que no cumplan con los requisitos de inmigración para recibir asistencia federal.

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The Vashon Loop Health Disclaimer:

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

We remind our readers that your health is your personal responsibility, your body and situation are unique, and information in The Loop is for educational purposes only. Any health-related content is the opinion of the author alone and should not be used to diagnose or treat medical conditions or prescribe medicine. Consult with an appropriate medical resource or healthcare provider when making healthcare decisions.



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Hypernovelty

Living with the New Capitalism

There’s a joke going around that, in 2004, you had to be a computer wizard to find what you wanted on the internet. In 2014, anybody could do it. In 2024, we’re back to only computer wizards finding what they want.

What happened? My list of culprits would include click farms, search engine rigging, and AI spam. Not to mention government- and corporate-sponsored teams placing and compromising information on Wikipedia and social media. They’re all working hard to degrade the information space, making the internet much less useful than it was a decade ago.

The late, great writer Jerry Pournelle noted that capitalism, unregulated, always ended up with murderers selling body parts. Left to itself, capitalism drifts downward into degradation and evil. All in the search for profits.

In the modern world, what beliefs you hold in your mind are the new golden coins of the realm. Each of those people and organizations degrading the internet are doing so to grab as many of these “coins” as they can. Just like Pournelle’s organ bootleggers, they’ll do absolutely anything in pursuit of their goal of controlling what you believe. Including ruining the internet – and here we are.

Regulators aren’t going to help you, because the forces in play are so



powerful, they’ll just corrupt those regulators. More and more people are recognizing that this problem won’t be fixed for them; they must fix it for themselves. The phenomenon of how to deal with a compromised information world is being termed hypernovelty.

In the “classic” world of news, the New York Times tells you that Russia has a negligible army. The Washington Post assures you that inflation is almost non-existent. Fox tells you that Israel’s army adheres to the highest standards of behavior. And you believe one or more of these sources, because you live in a world of authorities.

In the world of hypernovelty, you always, for every source, look at what these sources tell you as what they want you to believe. You’re presented a shocking story of beheaded babies. In the hypernovelty world, you hold your emotional response at arm’s length. Who’s reporting it? Are different media sources using exactly the same language, suggesting a single source planted the story to each

of them?

Who’s reporting that the story is fake, and how are they supporting their claims? If there’s a picture, has it been used before? Does the background you’re being shown match the reported location, or is it from somewhere else? Can you find the people in the photos in catalogs of stock photos?

People in military intelligence have always looked at the world in this fashion – in peace and in war. Hypernovelty is the approaching new normal where civilians now adopt these same techniques of skepticism, discernment, and analysis. You’re a military intelligence officer for your army of one.

Does it sound exhausting? It really isn’t in the long run. For instance, a very typical media behavior is to publish some highly emotional story that makes you sick with anger. It eventually turns out to be false, but as this becomes apparent, the news simply stops talking about it, moving on to something new and outrageous.

It may seem cold to respond to an emotional story with logic rather than anger. But remember: some of these stories will be false in whole or part. Rather than being lashed with outrage after outrage, you instead have a list of stories which, never being confirmed, fade away from your memory without ever having burned your emotional energy. This leaves you with more energy for the truly worthy stories.

Describing your role as an intelligence officer is so apt that you can literally use military intelligence techniques to help read and deconstruct news stories. During the cold war, the Soviets, with a fraction of the United State’s budget, maintained one of the most effective intelligence services in human history. A number of their documents have since been leaked and translated, and in a future article I hope to cover intelligence techniques, including many coming from the KGB.

In the meantime, read quickly, but believe slowly.

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Update on Planned PSE Upgrades

Continued From Front Page

Motion 3: The V-MCC requests that KC pause the requirement that PSE “bring all non-compliant old poles into compliance” with the KC “clear zone” program (which PSE is pursuing through easement acquisition) until V-MCC, KC, and PSE have resolved PSE activity issues with the Vashon community with the creation of a comprehensive plan regarding traffic safety and upgrades in the electrical system, allowing Vashon-Maury Islanders the opportunity to express their preferred options to address Vashon’s just and unique needs as an island.

The V-MCC PSE Advisory Committee is also looking into potential “clear zone” variances and alternative power line strategies, such as undergrounding.

All information in this story was obtained from the most recent V-MCC meeting and from the VMCC’s PSE Activity Advisory Committee’s FAQ document. To learn more and become engaged with this issue, contact the V-MCC PSE Activity Advisory Committee (<https://www.v-mcc.org/committees>) or attend the next V-MCC meeting.

Have a say in your community!



Vashon-Maury Community Council

Next meeting:
Thursday, June 20th, 7:00-9:00 p.m

Attend live at the Land Trust (meet at 6:30 p.m. for snacks), or via Zoom (go to v-mcc.org, under “Events”).

This month: PSE Advisory Committee updates, votes on community trails signage & more!



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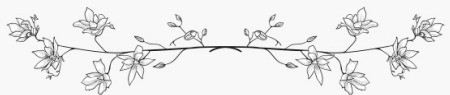


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Whose Beach Is This?

By Suzanna Leigh

My friend Geri told me she owns part of the beach on the north end of Tramp Harbor, where the road to Ellisport runs along the shore (in Washington State, most beaches are privately owned as far as the mean low tide line).

I think she owns the part with the old pilings that once held up a dock, a store, and a hotel. I believe that dock was where oil was brought in to heat the Beall Greenhouses when they were operating. I imagine barrels of oil being rolled up the ravine that runs up from the beach to Beall Road, next to the greenhouses. There is a stream that runs down the ravine, and I imagined the barrels of oil were rolled up the stream.

I wondered, was there more water in the stream in those days? Or was there a pipeline for the oil? Well, thanks to detective work by my friend Mary Alice, I learned the Bealls bought a truck to haul the oil barrels up the hill to the greenhouses. She found this in a newspaper article dated January 5, 1923!

Gulls wash in the water at low tide where the stream runs down across the tide flats into the Salish Sea. They perch on the pilings, sometimes one on each piling. They search for clams in the sand. When a gull finds one, he flies up high with it, then drops it on the rocks and sand below. If the gull is lucky, the clam shell breaks, and the gull has lunch. The beach is littered with broken clam



May Healing Light Shine on You
Art by suzanna leigh

shells.

The pigeons, who live under the old Standard Oil a quarter of a mile away, wait their turn to drink the fresh water and bathe in the stream. Beside the stream, out by the furthest pilings, hundreds of sand dollars and thousands of mussels blanket the sand.

Once I was walking by while the road crew was – finally – fixing the flood that has covered that part of the road for at least two years. They explained that this fix was only temporary, as the permanent fix was stuck in the permit process, because that part of the beach is owned by the people across the street.

A friend wanted to grow oysters at the low, low tide line. The neighbors were up in arms! “Oysters will pollute the beach!” they said, and “There is oil under the sand from the Beall Green House operation! The oysters will be polluted and not fit to eat!” The permit to grow oysters was

denied.

When I had the school in my home, we would often walk down to the beach. The large root system of a driftwood tree was by turns a castle and a pirate ship. We turned over rocks when the tide was low and watched tiny crabs scuttle for safety. Sometimes, we would pick up a crab no bigger than my thumbnail. Its pinchers were too tiny to pinch the small hands of my students. We would admire the little crab for 30 seconds or so, then gently put it back in its home. Then we replaced the rock so that it and all the other tiny crabs could hide from hungry seagulls.

Sometimes, we found moon snail egg cases, and once we found a whole live moon snail. Its shell was about 5 inches across, and its foot extended way out beyond the edges of its shell. More often, we found evidence of moon snails: tiny holes in empty clam shells, drilled by a moon snail lunching on live clams. Often, we found pieces of moon snail shell, smooth inside with blushes of lavender, pink, and cream.

I picked up one of these shells once, an especially pretty one, and admired its beauty before putting it back on the sand. Later, we all sat on a driftwood log and ate our snacks.

One child dropped a piece of cheese in the sand, and I tossed the sand-covered cheese to the seagulls. One gull caught it in her beak and

swallowed it down. A few minutes later, as I bent down to help a child with his shoe, a shell dropped down beside me – the very shell I had been admiring earlier. I looked up to see the gull who had caught the cheese flying away. She had dropped the shell as a gift for giving her the cheese!

If that gull thought the shell was hers to give, does that mean the beach belongs to the gulls? On Google Maps, this beach is called Crow Beach; does that mean the beach belongs to the crows who hold conventions there? I believe the crows think so.

In winter, wigeons and ducks swim in the shallow waters of an incoming tide. One morning, I came down about dawn. A flock of geese was just waking up, taking their morning baths in the freshwater stream. The sound of honking in the distance told me another flock was coming; as they swooped in and landed in the water in front of me, the geese already there started greeting them loudly. Sometimes, an eagle would soar overhead, and all the water birds would take to the air at once, calling “Beware! Danger!”

Does the beach belong to the wigeons, ducks, and geese? Or to the eagle, or to the heron standing on one leg at the water’s edge, patiently waiting for an unwary fish? Who are we, humans, to think the beach belongs to us?



I Can See Now ... the Pane Is Gone

By Seán Malone and John Sweetman

“Hey! That Western gray squirrel is back!” And sure enough, that troublemaker was back pestering the Douglas squirrel, and we had a protective obligation to the native rodent versus the invasive Western gray bully type, that ate a lot of Seán’s birdseed for his wild birds, which the squirrels irritated and ran off.

Seán dragged out the old BB gun and lobbed off a shot through a corner of the 3 x 3-foot glass pane that had pulled away from the frame. The BB traveled about as slow as last year’s mail, but ricocheted and the invader went back to chattering his irritation at us, while our little Douglas squirrel happily had his fill of bird seed.

The almost imperceptible recoil of the worn-out gun, however, caused the old glass in the deteriorating window to just fall out. The pane was so old that the glass had ripples in it, distorting our view of outer Quartermaster Harbor, where our secret crab fishing hole was.

It was at John’s suggestion that Seán bought the log cabin on a half-acre of high-bank waterfront, overlooking outer Quartermaster Harbor, and moved from Ferry County to Vashon. The 500 square-foot log cabin was built about 1955 by Ole Anderson, a Vashon house builder and carpenter. The massive white chimney and fireplace were built from beach rock.

We used Seán’s white chimney and the pink house to triangulate where our secret crab hole was, in 90 feet of water, deep compared to other parts of the harbor. We had found 24 crabs in one trap. We reported the Dungeness crab over six inches. There was no limit to the size of the red rock crab and also no limit to how many we could catch. Though the red crab were generally small, both of us agreed that their meat was tastier than the Dungy.

“You think we ought to replace this window?” Seán asked.



From Seán: We’d discussed this work for a few years, as the large old window became more like a “trapezoid” than the conventional “square” shape. Several handymen had looked at it and disappeared without calling back.

“I think it’s a lot of work, but we have all summer, and if we work twice as slow, we could have it done before September.”

Since no one would do the job, John decided that we would do the job together, but would be sure to take longer lunch breaks than if we were working for wages for some wage tyrant. Thankfully, we were our own tyrants and adjusted our conditions to suit. I was able to pay John \$25 per hour, though he was worth five times that much.

It turned out that the old log cabin beach house had serious rot in some structural elements. When it came time to make a decision, I was offered a demo plan that wasn’t up to stuff by our standards, and refused to fly it because it was too dangerous.

John dealt with each problem nicely, including what was said to be a “foundation.” We had to lift and replace several logs that had just rotted out and some needed splicing, as well. We turned to our background of “growing up on the beach,” and scavenged all kinds of driftwood. If you look closely at any old beach cabins, you will see how they were built many decades ago, using “found” items creatively. We had also scavenged items over

the years from Loren at L&S Cedar, from the “free” box.

While we were rebuilding the old wall and attempting to square things up, we had the old window out and decided to rebuild it. Like many other cabin parts, the window was likely salvaged from some long-ago industrial building, as it had antique joints and square headnails. In the meantime, we covered the open space with plastic, which at least kept the pesky squirrels out.

John was the designer, and I helped with my limited carpentry skills. I built a wood frame for the missing window, which helped keep the wind and rain out. Due to lack of time, the window project took place from early June to early September.

It turned out that we hadn’t used “square-headed” nails in this country since the 1860s, when we switched to wire nails. This cabin was built in 1955, which meant that some of its parts were older than dirt. The re-building of the front window cost \$642 in materials. Labor was \$1,525.

John spoke of the fun we had doing it, while I was amazed at the talent John had for creative solutions that made the window replacement such a complete success.

The squirrels always looked at me askance. If they saw me carrying the BB gun toward the door or new window, they exploded off either end of the deck, chattering their displeasure.



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Sunday Service at
10:00AM

“Heard,” “Behind,” “Thank You, Chef”

By Deborah H. Anderson

The television show “Chopped” is my go-to for all seasons. If you haven’t seen it, the premise is simple, and the action is intense.

“Chopped” is a game show where four chefs from various demographics and styles of cooking in the restaurant industry have to prepare an appetizer, entree, and dessert in three separate rounds, each involving a basket of unknown ingredients. Each round, someone gets eliminated until the dessert round, when there is one final winner. The prize is usually \$10,000. In tournaments, it may be more.

Sometimes the chefs are home cooks. Frequently, there is a theme. For each round, there are four random items in each basket. The chefs have to make them into a proper dish with creativity, good execution, and beautiful presentation. They have 20 minutes for the appetizer and 30 minutes each for entrée and dessert.

Why is it my go-to? It is not only because I love food shows, but also because the show’s premise and rules are full of life hacks.

First, “Chopped” gave me this strategy, for when I am pressed or feeling overwhelmed: What are the four biggest resources I have to work with, and how can I combine them to get something done? Works every time. I ask that question of myself and boom! Progress! That focus has brought order to chaos innumerable times.

The second life hack I take from the show is the verbal protocol in the kitchen and restaurant industry. Specifically, three phrases: “Heard,” “Behind,” and “Thank you, chef.” When the chefs are giving instructions to each other, they say “heard.” When they are moving around one another in the kitchen, they say “behind” (or “down the line”). When one chef critiques another, they say “Thank you, chef.”

I started to wonder – what would be the effect if we all used those three phrases in everyday life? If, when someone gave feedback on receiving information, we said “heard,” would that change how we listen? Or, if we let each other know where we were in relationship to their physical, life space, or journey (“behind”), would that make things coordinate more smoothly?

If we all said, “thank you” when someone gave us a critique or advice, would it change how we spoke, knowing that the person was going to say, “thank you”?

I think these phrases create harmony because, in the kitchen there is a basic respect for each other, everyone has a common goal, and everyone is eager to develop their skills and abilities, gifts and talents, to a higher level.

*Can't stop drinking
and want help?*



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
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Of Innocence and Demons, Part 2

By Michael Shook

Once one’s facade of innocence is peeled away – invariably in a painful manner – nothing ever again looks quite the same. This is a good thing. Among the many salutary effects I experienced as a result of my “fall to earth” was the collapse of the notion that humanity is perfectable.

Like so many idealists (especially those on the left, I have found), I held onto that belief through thick and thin, despite mountains of evidence to the contrary. I was convinced to my bones that if humans could just create the right situation for themselves – the right home life, the right work life, the right education, the right attitude toward ... what? All things? All things! – then all things would of course be wonderful, and everyone would be happy.

Ah, but life – a pitiless teacher, thank God – again and again confronted me with a reality that imposed itself upon my ideas of how things ought to be, and in so doing, helped disabuse me of such ideas.

Lord, was I earnest! I was part of the legion that Joseph Campbell speaks of at the end of his lecture, regarding the myth of Kirttimukha, in “Myths to Live By.” That legion consists of those who “know how the universe could have been better than it is ... without pain, without sorrow, without time [and so] without life ... [and] those who think – as do many – ‘Let me first correct society, then get around to myself’ are barred from even the outer gate of the mansion of God’s peace. All societies are evil,

sorrowful, inequitable; and so they will always be.”

“All societies are evil, sorrowful, inequitable; and so they will always be.” Is this pessimism, the cynical sneering of one who has a bitter heart? No. The United States, to use the best example at hand, is arguably the most open, most tolerant and equitable, most widely prosperous society in all of human history. People swarm here from every nation on earth, not a few risking their lives, simply for the opportunity to live and work in a country where they can bask in unprecedented freedom, and carve out a life – perhaps even become wealthy.

And yet, there is tremendous evil here in the form of violence, and I do not mean the kind of physical violence (shootings, assaults) that for most of us comes readily to mind, though it is part of the evil to which Campbell refers. That violence is real, of course, and pernicious, the result of an interplay between myriad social and economic disparities and, I believe, the collapse of community and the community virtues that accompany a sense of place.

No, the evil I am thinking of is older and deeper, and lies at the root of Campbell’s phrase above. It stems from the fact that, simply put, humans are animals. As animals, our physical needs must be met, the same as any other animal – clean air, clean water, nourishing food, adequate shelter, and a mate. This is obvious to all who consider it, even casually. And we tell ourselves that there is no



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evil in any of it. We’re just going about our lives, doing what we need to do to get along. What harm is there in that?

And it is true that, if we went about acquiring these things, as do the deer, the owls, the coyotes, the bees and the fishes, and all other animals, then indeed we would not only be innocent of any evil-doing, we would be plainly, simply, purely innocent, as babies are innocent. But our human lives are not so simple as that – and again, this is obvious to any who consider it.

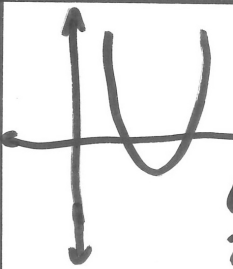
“Life eats life.” All living things act from and with power, and the more power I have, the closer I am to getting the requisite necessities. Oh certainly, when things are good and there’s plenty to go around, people can afford to be, and are, magnanimous, and love of fellow humans is broadly cast. And this is done sincerely and with good intentions, and is, as it ought to be, engaged in and heartily commended.

But because we can reason, and (more importantly) imagine, we look into the future and, uncertain of what it holds (because we are far from omniscient), we fear a shortage of the necessities. And so we hoard, we

stockpile, we amass as much wealth as possible, hoping that when things go sideways, as they inevitably will, we will ride out the storm, if not in luxury, at least in plenitude, and will thus maintain our lives, along with our very important social status.

To accomplish the above, we engage in all sorts of dubious behaviour, inflicting violence incessantly. Not to our own, of course. But to some other someone or someones who are faceless, unknown, with no way of intruding on our day-to-day activities. This is done unwittingly, and not so much unconsciously as thoughtlessly. That is, we rarely ever consider it, which is utterly normal, and does not reflect some inherent evilness on our parts. It is more that we are busy with our lives, getting through the day. There are kids to get off to school, meals to plan, cook, and clean up after, and careers that consume most of our time and energy through the week.

Whatever is left over is what gets allotted to spouse, friends, and (hopefully) some recreation. In the midst of the whirlwind that is day-to-day life, there is often little time to ponder who, what, or where might be suffering some ill as a result of our actions ... (to be continued).



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The Clothing Drive: A Hand Up

By Daniel Hooker

Two Stories.

A young woman, maybe 35 years old, came to the table. “Do you have any formal dress clothes? I just got a job. It starts tomorrow.” She went on to explain that, in Seattle, someone had broken into her car and stolen all her clothes and shoes. She was nine weeks pregnant. “I need this job.”

Many people donate to the clothing drive, but what is not often understood is that the drive is serving not only the homeless, but the working poor.

After packing up the distribution for the day, I went to Brian at Granny’s Attic, and told him this woman’s story. With a gift card and an offer of extra clothing for her, I headed into the aisles. You may not realize it, but I have good taste in clothes. I found her a pair of black maternity pants, two formal suits, and two dresses that she could wear to work or away, and a pair of low-heeled leather boots, barely used.

She was blown away. “Oh, my God!” She was in tears at people’s generosity.

Another story, one involving Ethan, told with his permission:

We had three baby quilts.

“Those are junk,” was the opinion about them. “It’s been weeks and no one’s taken them. You should put them in recycling.”

But I kept them.

One day, Ethan, a young man, comes up. He contributes clothes, and sometimes takes some. Sometimes, he helps set me set up the table. He’s



going through the blankets, and then stops, and stares at one.

“Oh, my God!” He takes a photo, and sends it through his phone to his mom. They are both Islanders.

On the phone, his mom starts crying. She had sewn that blanket before he was even born.

At the Clothing Drive, 80% of the clothes, bedding, shoes, and jackets given away are to members of the working poor. Your donations matter. Good-quality professional clothes can make a difference in someone’s ability to show up at an interview or a job. Donations for gas are also very appreciated, and can be given as a gift card from Williams Heating & Fuel.

The Clothing Drive is about helping people at the grassroots level, and giving them not a hand-out, but a hand up.

Fight Inflation Locally With CSAs

Continued From Front Page

The CPI has been manipulated and obscured for many years for many reasons, and if you want something closer to reality, I encourage you to do some reading at shadowstats.com. They provide CPI metrics using methodologies employed by the government in past decades. These older metrics show overall rates of inflation consistently above 10%, spiking to 17% in 2023.

For the purposes of this article, however, we’ll focus on the cost of food. Is a 3.36% annual increase in prices in line with your experience at the grocery store over the past few years?

I’m hearing a resounding “No,” and the grocery store is not to blame. Mismanagement of the U.S. dollar is the problem. Because you and I don’t have much input on our national currency, let’s look at something within our control. The grocery store is a wonderful convenience, but there are ways to supplement your food to save money, build resilience, and support your local community.

Vashon has multiple farms that operate community-supported agriculture programs. There are nuances to how a CSA can operate, but simply put, it’s a subscription to receive food on a regular basis for a set timeframe at a set price. Just like large-scale farms sell futures contracts for their crops, locking in prices in advance based on costs at planting time, CSAs usually sell a weekly supply for a given harvest.

There are many advantages to CSAs. The total cost to you will likely be less than at the grocery store because the farmer can avoid distribution costs and other overhead.

Product quality will be higher because the food is fresher and you can directly ask the farmer questions about how they’ve grown or raised their products, and express your preferences. You will also build relationships with your neighbors who work hard to grow all kinds of foods.

There are costs, as well. You will usually need to pay up-front for multiple weeks. You will have limited choice of what you receive, in some cases. And you’ll need to go through the food each week or it will spoil – as all truly fresh food does.

All these factors mean that CSAs will work better for different people in different situations. With the additional benefit of reducing your carbon footprint, I personally enjoy basing my vegetable intake on what we get from our CSA and supplementing where necessary. We also have a wonderful bread subscription and enjoy Vashon beef. If you’re looking for a way to reduce food costs, eat healthier, and support Vashon farmers, look no further than your local CSA.

I want to leave you with a final note on the importance of semantics. Today, most people speak of “inflation” with regards to increases in prices. But which prices? As with the CPI, these numbers can become complicated. Were there little to no price increases prior to the pandemic, or did they simply appear in other areas, like the stock, bond, and housing markets? It is crucial to understand that, if our government continues to increase the quantity of our currency, prices will continue to go up. We are \$35 trillion in debt and counting...

Vashon-Maury Clothing Drive

Where: Vashon Food Bank

When: Wednesdays, 10AM–2PM
(except the first Wednesday of the month)

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

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

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

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

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Vashon Has a Coyote Problem

By March Twisdale

In 2014, there was a high profile coyote attack at Misty Isle Farms. Three Willamette Valley ewes, brought in for the Vashon Sheepdog Classic, were killed overnight. The next night, government-sanctioned hunters shot and killed two coyotes as the pack returned twice, moving confidently toward the flock, passing many tents and dogs without hesitation.

Maggi McClure was interviewed about the attack and the “new coyote problem.” According to an August 2015 article, she had never heard of a coyote attack on Vashon until the previous year, when they began attacking her sheep. At the time of the interview, they had attacked 13 of her flock, killing nine, despite McClure having a burro and two llamas as guard animals.

The killing hasn’t stopped. Scores of beloved pets and livestock (chickens, dogs, cats, ducks, geese, sheep, baby sheep, goats, baby goats, and more) are being killed annually by a rapidly increasing coyote population.

As reported in Susan Riemer’s October 2016 article, “Vashon coyotes: Expect their numbers to rise, wildlife experts say,” Brook Zscheile of the Wildlife Services division of the United States Department of Agriculture made it clear to a crowd of nearly 100 islanders that, “without any intervention, we’re going to see more and more coyotes and more and more conflicts.” Brooke went on to explain, “the coyote population increases on a J-curve, with a moderate increase initially, and then an abrupt, steep spike.”

Oh, but it’s all natural, right? We’re returning to how it used to be! No, we’re not.

According to a 2015, Cascade PBS article, “Coyotes aren’t native to Vashon. In fact, they’re not native to the Northwest. They started out in the Southwest and the edge of the Great Plains.” Humans far, far pre-date coyotes, as natural residents of the Puget Sound, making us Vashon Island’s long-standing top predator, while coyotes are an invasive, non-native species.

Will we curb their population, and protect our domesticated and wild migratory bird populations, or let the coyotes overpopulate themselves into a disaster for us, local wildlife, and the coyotes themselves?

Island Resilience

Islanders living around Augie’s Christmas Tree Farm have a front-row seat as the local coyote pack wipes out flocks of Canadian Geese on their annual migratory journey. The Vashon Bird Alliance celebrates Fisher Pond as a great bird sanctuary, yet migratory water birds have all but disappeared. When new flocks of Canadian Geese arrive, the panicked screams of birds being murdered all night long makes me close my windows.

Three weeks ago, a neighbor on Gorsuch came home from work to find her beloved ewe and three healthy, baby lambs slaughtered by coyotes who dug a hole under her fence. Another neighbor lost a kitty to a coyote, in broad daylight, not 20 feet from his house, while his teenage daughter watched in horror. My friends in town lost a beloved duck and pet cat on the same evening. An entire wooded community along Wax Orchard has given up on having chickens or pet cats. Perhaps because the local coyote pack broke into one family’s fancy “catio,” slaughtering their two kitties while they slept? Another friend near Camp Sealth has escaped predation, thanks to having fiercely dedicated guard dogs, but her neighbor down the same driveway has lost nine sheep in the past year. These are the instances I know of personally, and I’m only one of 10,800 people living on this Island.

For the month of June, let’s all ask our fellow Islanders, “Have you or anyone you know lost an animal to coyote predation?” I’ve yet to meet a person who didn’t have at least three stories.

Personally, we’ve been dealing with almost daily incursions onto our property between noon and 2:00 p.m. When a coyote successfully killed our favorite hen, we chased it off the property. Along the way, it dropped the hen and I quickly picked her up. To my surprise, the coyote reversed course, advancing on all three of us, despite a wildly barking dog and two humans aggressively shouting and waving hands in the air.

I’ve heard more than a few Islanders say, “Will it take a child being attacked before we decide to do something?” Others hotly reply, “That would never happen!” Oh, really?

According to the 2015 Cascade PBS article, “In April 2006, [Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife] officers euthanized two coyotes in Bellevue ... after two young children were bitten while their parents were nearby.” In July, 2015, four children in Irvine were attacked by coyotes, including a 2 year-old child. “They opened the garage up and the coyote came in and actually got the child on the neck area and part of the cheek,” California Department of Fish and Wildlife Lt. Kent Smirl told ABC’s Los Angeles station KABC.

Our chickens are still free-ranging, but only because my family is obsessive about protecting our animals. We take turns being “on guard,” for hours at a time. Most people can’t provide this level

of protection, causing many to give up on home-grown eggs entirely. Or, they convert pasture-raised flocks into “locked up, grain-fed” chickens with a lower quality of life and eggs that nutritionally resemble factory-raised eggs.

From a sustainability, environmental and health perspective, this is the exact opposite of what we want to see happening on Vashon Island. Which brings us back to the consequences of non-rural attitudes in a rural environment.

In 2017, my neighbor lost his two beloved donkeys to a cougar, adding to a string of livestock losses that included more donkeys, alpacas, and sheep. According to Susan Riemer’s article, “Vashon Cougar Killed After Year on Island,” “wildlife officials originally believed the cougar would eat only deer.” Mistake number one. Why would a young, male cougar spend hours chasing down tough, rugged, healthy deer through dense foliage and forest, with a good chance of losing his prey, when the Island is covered in fat, juicy meals trapped in small, open fields? The answer: he wouldn’t.

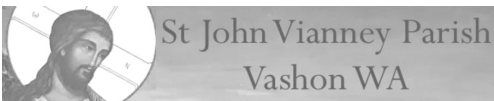
When we fail as the Island’s top predator, it’s the animals who suffer. Including the cougars and coyotes. By allowing this young cougar to develop a taste for livestock, we ensured its death. By allowing coyotes to reproduce freely on an Island awash in easy food sources, with no other predator to contend with, we have created a situation where the coyotes will eventually lose.

Coyotes are masters of resource conservation, always hunting the easiest, fattest prey. Just like the cougar! So, I have a question. Why did we trap and kill the cougar after it killed a handful of animals, but the coyotes are being allowed to slaughter hundreds, with no organized response from us humans?

Vashon Island would do better to choose to not co-exist with this invasive species. With coyotes, we are losing more than we gain. How ridiculous to live on an Island with ample space for free-ranging chickens, only to cage them, because we aren’t willing to manage our predator population? What’s the point of wide-open pastures if livestock must be locked up in a barn every minute their human isn’t home to stand guard over them? And an Island-wide army of livestock guardian dogs isn’t the answer, either.

It’s time to shoulder the burden and privilege of our status as “top predator” and manage the Island coyote population intentionally.

Editor’s Note: Please see this article at vashonloop.com for hyperlinks to references.



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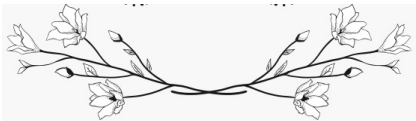
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Let There Be Light!

Continued From Front Page

Thomas drives up to Chimacum or to Skagit Valley. His story of buying grains locally extends into stories of the farmers from whom he buys.

"The farmer up in Chimacum has been a grain farmer his whole life. He's a third-generation grain farmer who grew up on the Eastside, but now he lives in Chimacum. He's farmed grain there for a quarter century. And he works with the Breadlab, growing out new varieties or varietals that they produce."

The Breadlab is a Washington State University plant-breeding program that “explores the diversity and quality of locally grown grains for various culinary uses.” Regarding wheat, the Breadlab breeds for climate stability, disease resistance, flavor, and baking quality, and has trial fields throughout the region.

Thomas continues, “There are purple wheats, blue wheats, and a whole color spectrum of wheats that are fascinating and flavorful. And they have different attributes ... we’re not so interested in that we have to have these giant Instagram-worthy loaves. We just want to provide a solid food for people that’s nutrient-dense, and that they can know they’re only a couple steps away from the person that grew it. The farmer in Chimacum who I get from also mills it: The loop is very tight, from the field to the person’s plate.”

Thomas has met a lot of the farmers from whom he buys wheat. At a grains conference, he met and talked with a couple of the Skagit farmers, and with Cairnsprings Mill – which mills wheat only from farmers committed to soil health. Cairnsprings Mill makes sure that farmers don't use neonicotinoid-coated seeds, due to their documented harmful effects on humans, pollinators, and wildlife; nor can they use glyphosate, a harvest aid.

Regarding connection, Cairnsprings Mills states, “Most of our farmers come out of our personal network; so personal, they even casually

As one delves into the stories behind the work, the loop is indeed small ... and fascinating!

For instance, Thomas speaks of farmers outside our region. “There are some great farms over on the east side of the Cascades that have some beautiful wheats that I want to try. Getting them over here is the issue. Some of them only sell a minimum of a pallet. It’s a little more difficult to get that, store it, and use it before it can start to turn. In my situation, I don’t have proper green storage.”

One of these farms is Moon Family Farm in Horse Heaven Hills, southwest Washington, where it is extremely dry. They are fifth-generation. According to Thomas: "They do no-till and dry farm everything. They never irrigate, because it would be ridiculous to even try in that arid climate, but they get incredible wheat. It's so flavorful. They're so deliberate in the way they farm."

Moon Family Farm briefly describes their growing techniques. “Foremost, we use the dryland cropping method: an ancient, natural farming technique, honed over millennia by generations of farmers, and perfectly adapted to our ecosystem. We grow a single crop, on a single field, by carefully preserving the precipitation of two years to nourish it. No irrigation water is used in the production of our grain.”

Doesn't that make you want to find out more about dryland cropping?

Furthermore, Moon Family Farm's commitment to low-impact food production that regenerates healthy land, extends to every acre of their farm. "We restore degraded lands and return native sagebrush steppe to the landscape. We provide wildlife and pollinator habitat and refuge. We host university research on better-adapted grain varieties and farming techniques."

Philosophies and actions like these underlie the ingredients that make up the breads that Fernhorn bakes and sells.

In the world of locally grown wheats, quite an array of choice is possible. At the same time, it's ever-changing and one needs to be flexible. A particular type of flour may unexpectedly become unavailable. "I learned the hard way when I started coming up with formulas like, okay, my pizza dough has durum and this wheat and that wheat. And then all of a sudden, the durum was no longer being produced."



"Sometimes I like to get red wheats, purple wheat, blue wheat, green wheat, brown wheat all lined up, and look at the variation of colors, which are all so pretty. Anytime I get a new wheat, I'll bake a hundred percent with that one just to see how it reacts, and try to figure out that wheat before I start incorporating it into loaves. My whole-wheat loaves are a mix of red, purple, and blue wheat."

To be concluded in Part 3. Join us as we return home to discuss 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.

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Breeding for Profit:

chemical inputs.

When one thinks of a wheat field, they imagine “amber waves of grain,” which are fields of ripened wheat about waist-high. This used to be wheat, but really it has now been bred for mechanization, from sowing to baking the cake-like slurry that results in the loaf many people are familiar with, in a plastic bag sliced 1/2" thick, and white as a Victorian woman's ankle.

This wheat has been bred to grow short, as it doesn't need to outcompete weeds, which have been killed by herbicides. It's uniform, genetically the same, easy to harvest with the machine built for its characteristics and maximum profitability. (Profit is little, as one needs massive acreage to achieve a large enough harvest to offset the inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, and the list goes on.)

The bran is brittle, to be easily removed by roller mills, which is fine because this wheat was bred to reap the endosperm only. The bran and germ go off to other processes, but aren't meant for a loaf. There have been farmers who have tried to grow industrial wheat organically, only to fail, as it is bred to grow with

I have to ask: Is this something we should be putting in our body? This highly effective method of destroying soil for corporate profit has given rise to the “heirloom” or “heritage” wheat buzzwords. Are those varieties better for the planet? Not necessarily, but it is part of an answer to a bigger question.

I use modern wheat varieties that are bred for disease resistance, organic/regenerative cultivation, and they happen to taste good and bake well.

I suppose what I'm really conversing about is cultivating a sane food system with people in mind. We need the flora, fauna and funga. We need to eat and breathe and create art. We don't need to race to the bottom for a dirty buck and a distracting cat video, only to succumb to poor health from a lousy diet that humans have not adapted to thrive on.

In summary, commodity wheat is bred for processes and profitability, rather than a healthful environment for the beings of this planet.

A wise person once said "I'm sorry I didn't hear your question, but I'm pretty sure the answer is 'diversity.'"

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Blueberries Are Fabulous

By Kathy Abascal

Blueberry plants are nothing short of amazing. They produce luscious berries that most of us love to eat and are rich in a type of omega 3 fat that we do not get enough of. In addition, blueberry leaves and berries have useful medicinal properties. They grow well in the Northwest, and if we were smarter (which we might be if we ate more blueberries), we would replace our lawns and herbicides with woods and blueberries.

Our bodies need antioxidants to keep free radicals (reactive compounds implicated in cancer and many other chronic diseases) in check. Free radicals are waste products generated by normal cell metabolism. They are also created by environmental toxins, rancid fats, and radiation. In one study, the United States Department of Agriculture compared the antioxidant action of 77 different fruits, vegetables, spices, and nuts. Blueberries placed highest.

Animal studies suggest that blueberries may help slow the onset of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. In one study, old rats (about 60-65 in human years) were fed dried blueberries for eight weeks. Other old rats were fed spinach, strawberries, or a standard lab rat diet.

At the end of the experiment, the rats (now 70-75 human years old) were tested to measure their physical agility, balance, memory, and ability to learn new skills. Those fed blueberries consistently outperformed the other rats, and the blueberries seemed to reverse the decline in mental functioning that often comes with aging. The benefits seen in this study would only require a person to eat one-

Health Matters

half to one cup of blueberries a day!

Blueberries are also good for hearing function and eyesight. Rats respond quickly to sound, but lose this ability as they age. Old rats eating blueberries, however, do almost as well as young rats. This does not mean that blueberries reduce deafness, but instead improve the brain’s ability to respond to sound.

In humans, bilberry (a close but somewhat less sweet relative of blueberry) supports healthy intraocular pressure and thus helps prevent glaucoma, as well as helping to stop the formation of cataracts. The very best, wild bilberries, do contain a bit more of the compounds that are thought responsible for these beneficial effects on eyesight.

However, a good-quality blueberry will have more of these compounds than the average commercial bilberry. This means that blueberries should provide the same benefits for vision as their less available and more expensive cousin.

What else, besides preventing loss of brain function, hearing response, and eyesight can blueberries do for you? Well, they contain compounds that help lower cholesterol levels. Blueberries, like cranberries, can help fight urinary tract infections by making it difficult for bacteria to attach to the bladder wall. In the petri dish, blueberries also slowed the growth of cervical, breast, and colon cancer cells. Finally, blueberry leaf tea is a traditional remedy for blood sugar

issues. In diabetic rats, blueberry leaf tea reduced blood sugar levels by 26%, and also reduced triglycerides by 39%, which does tend to confirm traditional wisdom.

Traditional herbal wisdom also suggests that the smaller, tarter blueberries work more effectively than the larger, sweeter commercial varieties, and herbalists generally prefer wild-gathered blueberry leaves for diabetes. Fresh blueberries are likely best, but studies show that frozen berries retain almost all of the beneficial compounds. Unfortunately, some of these compounds are reduced as the berries are dried or processed, so I suggest eating fresh or frozen, although the old rats did do fine on dried berries.

While smaller, truly wild blueberries are strongest, finding “clean” blueberries is a bit of a minefield. A whole host of chemicals that are toxic to us, wildlife, and insects were found on nearly all conventional blueberries (if you want to learn more, go to this site: <https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/blueberries.php>). And unfortunately, in the commercial blueberry world, “wild” does not mean untreated by humans. If you search for “insecticides approved for wild blueberry pests,” you will find a whole list of strong chemicals approved for use. Herbicides are also approved for use on “wild” blueberries.

My conclusion is that you should either grow your own blueberries (with a good deer fence) or buy organic berries and leaves (wild or cultivated).

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When Fascia Goes Wrong



By Michelle Reed and Sandi Silagi

Here’s how it begins. Parts of your body start to work just a bit differently. But the changes are small, and you’ve adjusted to them.

Things like: You’ve started to sit down when you put on your shoes. It’s so much easier to wear slip-on shoes, you never wear tie-up shoes anymore ...

It could be you’re holding the railing differently when you’re on the stairs. Your forearms feel tighter, your grip is not as strong; sometimes it’s hard to open your hand all the way. It’s upsetting, but you’ve learned to live with it; it’s probably an inevitable part of aging.

Or maybe you’re young, but you had an accident. Now, you have pain in your lower back or legs, you’re walking up the stairs with the same foot always leading, and there are some movements you think you should be able to do again, but figure it must be the new normal.

Your job or hobby could also be causing the problem. Sitting at a desk constricts your arms and shoulders, making your neck tense. Because of that, your upper body can be stiff almost all the time. Or, after years of playing tennis or other sports, you may have a perpetually painful elbow or shoulder.

It’s very common to not pay attention to these small changes until you’re in chronic pain and it becomes a real problem.

It’s also common to assume that

your trouble is due to a muscle or joint injury or weakening, but these situations all point to an issue with your fascia. There are multiple reasons why fascia to become restricted. Repetition, hormones, and injury, to name a few. But fascia is living tissue and can be restored.

What is fascia? It’s the three-dimensional matrix that outlines your entire body to provide your internal support. According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, “Fascia is a thin casing of connective tissue that surrounds and holds every organ, blood vessel, bone, nerve fiber, and muscle in place. The tissue does more than provide internal structure; fascia has nerves that make it almost as sensitive as skin.”

Fascia is highly structured and multi-layered; it is built from cells, hydrating fluids, and the fibrous proteins, collagen, and elastin. Within this extracellular matrix, collagen and elastin weave together to provide dynamic tension and compression that absorbs and transfers impact through your body, ensuring that your long muscle chains work together properly.

But why should you care about your fascia, especially if you’re exercising and generally taking good care of yourself? Because it’s actually not your muscles that are absorbing the day-to-day forces playing out on your body; it’s your fascia. Also, your fascia is responsible for your spinal stability and your ability to integrate with your core muscles. It is your

leverage for movement and strength.

It’s your fascia that adapts to the repetitions and loads the body takes on. It models itself to these patterns. Repetitive use causes dehydration in the fascia. Dehydrated, stiffened, and thickened fascia can easily become a chronic issue. Repetitive use affects most of us. It is part of why cross training is so important for athletes, as well as getting up from your chair every so often for office work. Repetitive use causes stress on the body.

According to Johns Hopkins, “Healthy fascia is smooth, slippery, and flexible.” But fascia that’s under stress becomes stiff, sticky, knotty, or even crunchy. When you get aches and pains, or areas that become hard to move, that’s your fascia adjusting to its new constricted reality. Without restorative work to help rehydrate the fascia and restore its pliability, you’re going to be less flexible, you’re not going to balance as well, and your reflexes will slow down.


There are things you can do to help your fascia recover; most well-known are physical therapy, massage, acupuncture, and yoga. At Core Centric, we are movement specialists and recommend that you talk to your doctor before starting any exercise program. We focus on building awareness to reduce the chance of injury and chronic conditions from happening.

The Core Centric System uses

foam rolling, dynamic full-body movements, and other conscious body adjustments to increase somatic awareness and calm the nervous system, rehydrate the fascial body, and restore the efficiency of movement patterns. Our system sets you up with exercises and movements you can do on your own.

This restorative work is not a replacement for cardio or resistance training, and often includes cardio and resistance training. But it is a great way to make those exercises work more efficiently for you, and to help you move better and feel better. Some of our clients are incredible athletes, but they come to Core Centric so they can keep on being an effective athlete. Other clients exercise moderately and find that working with Core Centric helps them maximize their current fitness level.

If you want to improve and maintain your quality of life through movement, and are intrigued by the idea of becoming more proactively aware of what your body needs to move and feel better, please contact us at info@corecentric.com for a free consultation. We will make recommendations based on your individual needs, at a range of price points. Our services include classes, personal training, buddy classes, and workshops. If you have Medicare supplemental insurance (Aetna or Premiera), use FitON to maximize your health insurance benefits.



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From the Roasterie

By Eva DeLoach

In 1982, our founder, Jim Stewart, established the Vashon Island Coffee Foundation – a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting small coffee farmers and communities around the world. From the highlands of Guatemala, to the tiniest farms and largest plantations across the globe, Jim has witnessed first-hand the challenges faced by coffee farmers and the impact of modern agricultural practices on the land.

One of the foundation’s earliest projects was in Santiago Atitlán, a municipality nestled between three volcanoes – a region scarred by violence and turmoil during the Guatemalan Civil War. Here, amidst rugged mountains and wild landscapes, coffee farmers toil tirelessly to produce some of the finest coffees in the world.

Partnering with coffee exporter Alvarro DeSola, Jim embarked on a journey to empower these farmers, building lasting relationships based on trust and support. Through the foundation’s initiatives, farmers are encouraged to preserve old-growth

trees, practice sustainable land stewardship, and uphold traditional methods of cultivation and processing.

By adhering to these principles, farmers to this day not only produce coffee of the highest quality, but also contribute to the preservation of Guatemala’s rich biodiversity. They are spared the ravages of slash-and-burn agriculture, and embrace sustainable farming practices that ensure the long-term health of the land.

Jim is committed to offering just compensation to these farmers, enabling them to maintain their independence and livelihoods. Through Direct Trade, we ensure that farmers receive fair prices for their exceptional coffee, empowering them to invest in their communities and pursue a better future for themselves and their families.

Experience Guatemala’s finest with our Guatemalan Reserve – a testament to the enduring legacy of tradition, craftsmanship, and the unwavering spirit of those who call these lands home.



Island Epicure – Smørrebrød

By Marjorie Watkins with Suzanna Leigh

A favorite hot-weather meal inspired by our Danish relatives

When I was a young woman, “Onkle Hans” came to America from Denmark to visit his cousin Lily, my mother-in-law. He always remembered that. When we were coming back from Crete in 1974, we went up to England and took a boat to Denmark to see him.

When we got to the town of Fredericia, we checked into a hotel and called Onkle Hans. We told him we would like to come visit and asked when would be a good time. We already had a hotel, so he didn’t need to worry about that. He said, “Hotel! You aren’t going to stay in a hotel! You are going to stay with me!” His retirement community had a little place for guests, where we stayed.

Onkle Hans was quite an old man by then. His girlfriend, Agnes – well, he called her his girlfriend, but she was more like a caretaker – called at 10 o’clock every evening to tell him, “Hans, it is time for you to go to bed now.” He wanted to show us interesting things in Denmark. After our first day of touring, Agnes called up and said, “Onkle Hans is an old man now. You must not make him

tired. I am coming with you to make sure he has a good time and does not get tired.” So, we let her into our little tour.

Agnes took us to a tower, something like a church, with 15 flights of stairs! Agnes made him climb 15 flights of stairs! Onkle Hans did very well, better than we did.

There were brown cows in Denmark. They had huge udders and gave lots and lots of milk, so the Danes are famous for their cheeses. When you opened up Hans’ refrigerator, it really smelled horrible! It was the brown cheese. I couldn’t eat it, but it was a favorite of Onkle Hans. I guess you like what you grow up on.

We went to visit a cousin in another town, Augland. The cousin asked, “Would you like some bread and butter?” Well, we’re not enthusiastic about bread and butter, but we wanted to be polite guests, so we said, “We’d love it!” She and her son’s girlfriend went off to make the bread and butter.

After awhile, she came back from the kitchen and said, “The bread and butter is ready.” The table in the spacious dining room was covered with all different kinds of salads, cheeses, and other foods! No way

Dehydrated Egg Powder Recipe

By Lyndsey Braun-Palmer

Everything spring-like is springing into action, including egg production! I’d like to introduce a favorite method for creating shelf-stable eggs – dehydration! Dehydrating eggs when you are producing more than you need is a great way to store this food essential for future use. Here’s my step-by-step guide.



Dehydrated Egg Powder Recipe

Ingredients

- Fresh eggs

Instructions

- Crack the eggs into a bowl and blend them thoroughly until the yolks and whites are fully mixed.
- Pour the blended eggs onto a non-stick dehydrator tray or lined baking sheet if using an oven. Spread the mixture evenly to ensure consistent drying.
- Dehydrator option: Set your dehydrator to 135°F (57°C) and let it run for about 10-12 hours until the eggs are completely dry and brittle.
- Oven option: Preheat oven to the lowest possible setting (around 150°F or 65°C). Place the baking sheet in the oven and let the eggs dry for 10-12 |hours, checking occasionally.
- 4. Once the eggs are fully dried, break them into smaller pieces and grind them into a fine powder using a food processor or coffee grinder.

Usage:

- *To rehydrate eggs:* For each egg needed, mix 1 tbsp egg powder with 2 tbsp water. Let it sit for five minutes before using it, as you would a fresh egg.
- *For baking:* If using the eggs in baked goods, you can skip the rehydration step. Simply add the egg powder and the corresponding amount of water directly into your mixing bowl, along with the other ingredients.

Tips:

- Store the egg powder in an airtight container in a cool, dry place to maintain its shelf life.
- Label the container with the date to keep track of freshness.
- Dehydrated egg powder can last up to a year if stored properly.



could we eat them all. Evidently, she was always prepared to serve a “smørrebrød” banquet for company.

Today I give you an easy to put together lunch, an “Island Epicure – Smørrebrød,” as our Danish relatives called it. It can be composed of leftovers, or of a variety of salads, cheeses, and meats. We like:

Smørrebrød, or “Bread and Butter”

Ingredients

- Pumpernickel bread slices
- Butter
- Lettuce
- Very thin slices of meat
- Slices of tomato
- Pickle slices
- Olives
- Pickled beets
- Slices of cheese
- Hummus



- Mayonnaise
- Horseradish
- Honey or Dijon mustard

Everyone starts with a slice of bread and chooses from the offered ingredients to put together what they want on an open-faced sandwich. Served with a potato salad, this makes a delightful and filling meal.

Vashon! Do you have a favorite recipe you’d like to see published in The Loop?



Share it with us at editor@vashonloop.com

Two Poems by Margaret Roncone
At Matthews Beach

the proximity of water
thins words
lying on my back
watching the wreckage
wind has made of clouds
voices above me sound frail

lake awaits the dark hung
awning of dusk to turn its skin
a sheet of shimmering melancholy

in its immenseness,
magnifies battered blue

Alice Through the Looking Glass I am pulled under
and through

I am mortal or immortal
drowned or saved

a silver hook dangles
before me

I long to form words
whose mouths
hang open...
omissions
Ophelia
origami

I, topple topsy-turvy
in the weightlessness of wave

my mother, the river, I flow towards,
morning, a raft, I cling to


this lake, an upturned bowl

chipped from years of wear;
filled with ancient rain
shorebirds washing wings

and I, hungry for words
will dip in and pluck.

Island poetry in these pages

How about yours?



Submit your poems to The Vashon Loop!

Write to: vashonloop-poetry@janevalencia.com

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Earth Is A Drum We Dance On
— after Michael Meade

Earth is a drum we dance on. sky an anthem of blue. sea a roiling story of biting shore. we savor ageing skin. part billowing curtains with a steady knee. shake our tight fists at our world turned gray.

By Margaret Roncone

Llaughing Llamas Chronicles



By Daniel Hooker

Q: What do you call a paper airplane that can't fly?

A: Stationery!

~

I bought a new thesaurus, and all the pages were blank. I was left without a word.

I thought that joke was funny, so I told it to two young people in their twenties.

They asked me what kind of dinosaur that was. I said, "Google it!"

~

I just found out today why you should walk at least a mile in another man's shoes before criticizing him.

You'll be at least a mile away from him.

You'll have his shoes on.

If you're wise, you'll get his car keys too. It's safer that way.

~

From my landlady:

Q: Why did the fork break up with the spoon?

A: Because she was stirring up too much trouble.

I responded: Just in tine!

~

My Effervescent Thoughts

By Robert C. Leung

My ever effervescent thoughts
rising like the tiny bubbles
in my grandfather's ginger ale
through my gold tinted consciousness
the pop, sparkle, fizz
tickles my nose and disappears my memory
leaving only the distant tangy taste
of ginger upon my tongue
A tantalizing
tortured
hint,
a sweet happy
childhood confection
of recollection.

Coffee Tea

MWB

Anu Rana's

June

Editor's note: In the May Issue we mixed up two of the jokes. We are reprinting the two jokes – corrected – here. We regret the error.

Q: Why do cows have bells?

A: Because their horns don't work!

~

Q: Why do cows have hooves?

A: Because they lactose!

By Anne Cotter Moses

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The Observant Frog's Log

By Alex Soriano

Aries (March 20-April 19)

It's time to mix it up, by which I mean add some diversity to your daily experience, get out more, and reach for the life that you want to have. Planets in Aries are saying it's time to connect with your motivation and your sense of direction and purpose. Stick close to the people who are inspired by you rather than those who are spooked by your determination and creativity. The big news of the moment is that (as of May 25) Jupiter is now in Gemini. A dense concentration of planets centered in Aries is starting to fan out a little, and Jupiter's new home will bring out your best social qualities. You don't need a stock prospectus for an initial public offering, just a page or two that outlines your goals, your potential customers, and your approach to connecting the two. If you're in a more conventional career, refresh your CV and your LinkedIn forthwith and make the future real-starting now.

Taurus (April 19-May 20)

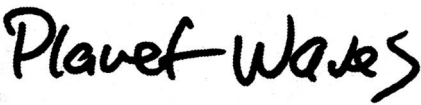
Before Venus and Jupiter leave your sign, they form a conjunction in the very last degree of Taurus. This represents some kind of late-breaking news about how fortunate you are to have the life that you do. You are in possession of all kinds of personal gifts and attributes-some inherited, some earned. If you're going to express your talent, wisdom or abilities, others will be on the receiving end. This is not showing off or bragging, and you will not sacrifice your privacy if you keep your focus and stay on-mission. Venus and Jupiter entering Gemini hints strongly at possibilities opening up. Give yourself time to reassess your agenda before you home in on a specific point of focus. You need to work in a logical order, and reach a point of completion before you move on or expand your agenda.

Gemini (May 20-June 21)

For the first time since mid-2012, Jupiter is about to return to your birth sign. This will last a year. Not only that, Jupiter arrives with Venus, and recently the small, strange, and meaningful planet Sedna arrived in your sign for the first time in 11,400 years, as did the comet Oterma. These minor planets might be subtle influences on an ordinary day, but when they are joined by the giant Jupiter and sensitive, gift-bearing Venus, you know something special is going on. There is a positive message here for everyone, though a special message for you. And that is to put your faith in the unlikely, the unseen and the unknown. Stay tuned to your subtle senses and your inner being; you are being given tools to find your way into yourself where the real information is.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your mind is becoming a different place, with different properties and facets of awareness you've never noticed. Think of it as an expansion of the range of your senses, though not the normal ones. You are being granted access to your full spectrum of introspection and intuition. A portal is opening into what Jung called your "individual unconscious," which in turn opens to the collective unconscious-a realm we all share and that few notice. Part of your challenge is learning where the valve is to control this flow, and at this time above many others, avoid



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

mood-altering substances. (This applies equally to those with Cancer rising and the Moon in Cancer.) It will be challenging enough sorting out what is real from what is not; what is true from what is false; what material is yours and what belongs to others. There has never (and I use that word cautiously) been a time when self-awareness in inner reflexiveness was more vital than now.

Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)

What seems like random forces working in your favor are anything but happenstance. There is spiritual agency of some kind; how you might describe it depends on your framework, though there is a large and encompassing quality to the protection and guidance that's surrounding you. In my reading of your solar chart, the keys to tapping into this quality are pleasure and creativity. What passes for luck is often the creative principle: creativity is spiritually active. It energizes something in consciousness and in relationships. One last thought-you don't need to make a division between success in a tangible form and doing the right thing for yourself and the world around you. The division is artificial, often used as a wedge to numb people to the effects of greed, or to make them feel guilty and vulnerable. Dharma is its own reward.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)

How do you define success? Make sure that you know, because that will determine the success that you get. You're being given a hand of wildcards, in the form of Jupiter moving over the midheaven angle of your chart: visibility, success and the power to take action. Think carefully what you want to accomplish. One temptation will be to proceed forward in all directions; that would not get you very far. I propose that you choose an idea, a project or a task, and go with it. It appears that someone in your life is trying to assert their will or desire toward you, or over you. This feels natural enough; you've experienced this often in your years on Earth. Deep down, you know who you are and what you want. Now would be a good time to bring your knowledge to the surface. Your life is your own.

Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)

Venus, the Sun, Jupiter, and two subtle planets entering your 9th house-Gemini-are calling on you to expand your horizons and see the greater possibilities that existence is offering you. Yet the most significant of these is the vast and unexplored territory within yourself. Electronic versions of an inner life abound, and we are all drowning in this environment, submerged beneath the digital waves. The prevalence of pain, depression, loneliness and free-floating rage have never been like they are today. Jupiter in Gemini is about feeling good, within your own mind and your own skin. The more this is under the

guidance of your own creativity, the better. Even as you look out at the world around you, recognize that what you're seeing is at least halfway to a dream you're dreaming; a mirror in which you're ultimately looking at yourself. The world is a map of your consciousness.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

This can be a profoundly fulfilling time for you, though that comes with the recognition that all we perceive and experience is a kind of fleeting dream. Your pleasure and sense of beauty will be greater if you don't cling to it, or to anyone, or to yourself. Then you will feel the grandeur of life, and of your existence-a fact often obscured by attachment and a narrow view of oneself. The movement of many planets, especially Jupiter, will help facilitate that, though you may find yourself distracted by your involvements with other people. Freedom is a state of mind; confront your own history and the things about it that persistently disturb you. As you clear those spaces, they become where fulfillment enters-of a kind you've felt only rarely. You might think of it as standing up for yourself.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)

Sagittarius is perhaps the ultimate sign of pursuit: the hunter who goes after what he or she wants. And you can do so with single-pointed determination represented by the arrow (in the words of Alice Bailey). However, no matter how much of a sporting mood you may be in, the time has come to learn the power of attraction. Direct your energy not outward but inward, and explore your creative process; you have a passion, many passions, and developing what you love will turn up your attractive energy and draw people and things to you. You will find what you're looking for in the studio rather than the exhibition. The astrology much burning in the fire signs, coupled with cool, cool Jupiter in Gemini lighting up your house of relationships and the 'total environment'. You are becoming highly sensitive to your environment, in a way that is entirely new. It's almost on the level of vibration. Your state of mind will affect your ability to sense who and what is around you. Monitor that carefully.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

You will never be one of the crowd, so you might consider having some other social goal. It isn't that people don't like you; they do, but you see the world your own way, and you have ways of doing things that are not the usual ho-hum. More than anything, you aspire to a kind of self-determination that makes people nervous. The particular discipline you need right now is to confront a problem, or the artifact of one, lingering from the past. This is shaping your state of mind, bending your thoughts in a negative direction. The sooner you start to unravel this, the better. When you come across a disturbance you know is related to what I'm talking about, you can 'follow it in' and see where it goes. This is a little like observing a penny sinking into a pool of water, and seeing where it lands. If you can do

this, you will learn something each time.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

Yours is an air sign, and it's now being lit up by Jupiter's arrival in your fellow air sign Gemini. Just to give you an idea how rich this is, if you're looking in an Aquarius chart for fun, pleasure, personal expression and the kinds of daring that we wonder how kids survive, check your 5th place, Gemini. The Sun has arrived, and so has Venus, and now Jupiter, and this has got to feel like the best case of spring fever you've ever had. Your chart is bursting with the impulse to experiment with life-real life, direct experience in the physical world, with actual people who have actual bodies and conduct conversations in spoken words. There is more going on-two subtle planets are also newly in your resonant air sign Gemini. This describes unusual opportunities to experiment with life, and only you can decide if life is a risk worth taking.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

While there is much that will unfold before the summer solstice of June 20, you are headed in the right direction. Your charts between now and then come with two bold messages. The first is to keep your affairs in order, and work toward that every single day. When in doubt, tidy your space, organize your computer, clean your phone, back up your data. There are many things that you possess that you don't need, and you can make excellent progress by passing a bit of them forward every day. Take care of your inner life and as the month progresses, the opportunities in your outer life will begin to become evident. Yet always remember that everything stems from your inner life and where you stand with yourself. Never allow yourself to think you're "of two minds" on any matter. You are always one self, united with your Creator.

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If it's not okay, it's not the end.

~ Fernando Sabino

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