



THE VASHON LOOP

Vol. 22, #3

OWNED BY ISLANDERS ~ PRINTED IN SEATTLE ~ FREE

March 7, 2025

Find bios & extra photos at vashonloop.com

The Case of The Fortunate Sheepdog

By Marc J. Elzenbeck

On Monday, February 10th on Wax Orchard, the road was still dark at 6:47 AM. Something had knocked over a big Murrey's blue bin near 249th, plastic and metal recycling was blocking southbound lane. I steered around and my kid said, "If you ran over that, it might've popped a tire."

A half-mile further down, a dog was sitting on the west berm just past the Nashi Orchards gate. He was still as a statue, a large cream-colored shepherd or Maremma type. Fixated east, not a glance to us. In the headlights, I could see that his right ear was cocked upward. I wanted to blame him for mayhem, but have never before seen a dog behave like that. Rather than causing trouble, he seemed to have a thought bubble above his head: "I'm Watching." I frowned and slowed down.

Just as my full attention turned back ahead, a man walked directly in front of our car. No hand motions, no warning. Staring right at us. I braked and steered left to avoid him, but he increased stride out into our path as we came to a full stop atop the double yellow lines, less than 10 feet to spare. He was in his 20s, average build, fit. I did not detect hostility in his countenance as he walked up to my window. If anything, his only expression was no expression. What shrinks would call a lack of affect.

With the spilled recycling, my mind had filled in that a big dog might've done it, and our interloper had a different big dog with him. Presumably trying to round it up, so my instinct

Continued on Page 3

Our Sound Adventures



By Seán Malone and John Sweetman

Seán and I have had many adventures on boats over the decades. Some involved fishing and crabbing, but most involved "outboard" motors which were always cranky and infused with "trouble." Trouble starting, running, and just plain ordinary reluctance to do what they were supposed to do.

Seán and I had different theories as to what could mitigate these issues. His theory was to involve the inanimate beasts in a war of creative words of a nature, let us say, not suitable for a wholesome family environment. My approach was to find tools.

One time, we planned a trip to Blake Island on his boat, "Odeon," a 1960s vintage 25-foot Coronado. We prepped well with ice, juice, water, beer, and Cheetos, as well as various grill items, but planned on fishing and crabbing to add to the larder - plenty of gas for the old Johnson 5HP.

We made our desultory way out of Quartermaster and set our crab pots, picking them up some hours

later, with sufficient keepers placed in a five-gallon bucket. It was June and light all day, so we slowly made our way around Point Dalco just as the tide turned. At about that point, our small tank of gas, about two gallons, appeared to run out, so no worries as we had a full five-gallon tank in reserve.

Seán tried changing the tank over, and soon arose a "great noise," as the little hose connector somehow lost a spring and the little ball that sealed it to the motor. The "great noise" was Seán displaying a clever (and even unique) assortment of muffled curses only slightly diminished by the fact that he was upside down in the aft engine well.

Since we were in the midst of a series of minor whirlpools and slightly adverse winds, I went forward to clip on the jib ... just "in case," but merely 25 feet away from the source of creative cussing was not enough, even though I had taken a bag of Cheetos with me. Later, I made an effort to apologize for the orange

Continued on Page 5



Littlest Bird Farm

By Andy Valencia

For Kim Kambak, owner of Littlest Bird Farm, her farm is deeply intertwined with a catastrophic event in her life. There was her life before, and then there was how she continued afterward. The latter part happened here on Vashon, as she healed the land and brought it back to life as a farm. In turn, the work of healing the land was also her own therapy.

Kim was born in Oregon into a family with a long tradition of logging. At times she'd sleep right in the logging camp's kitchen tent, hearing her grandmother get up at 3:30 AM to start preparing the food for the day. If you've ever read Ken Kesey's novel about an Oregon logging family, "Sometimes a Great Notion", some of its events could have come straight out of Kim's family history.

With that sort of background, it's no surprise that Kim worked her way through college by firefighting for the Forest Service. The family tradition continues unbroken; her son also worked for the Forest Service before switching to his current employer, the Bureau of Land Management.

Besides her experiences in rural Oregon - logging, animal husbandry and crop growing - she was also involved in the

Continued on Page 8

Ride To Doctor Appointment? Call a Bluebird!

An Infomercial

By Bernie O'Malley, Vashon Mayor 2016

Oh my, nobody told you we got Island Bluebirds who drive cars? Over Town in the City? Well, it's true. If you have a medical/dental appointment off-Island, a Neighborly Bluebird picks you up, whisks you there, waits for you until the visit is done, then brings you home, true door-to-door service.

WOW. Thanks for letting me in on this semi-secret program. Who collects these Bluebirds for me? The Senior Center Village Manager Fran Brooks. Must be a "catch!" Yes, just 2: be Island residents and minimum 55 years old. That's so easy to have a Village program to keep us Islanders healthy and happy.

Okay, what does this program cost and who pays for this wonderful service? The average Bluebird to Seattle/Tacoma cost is \$115 per round

trip (ferry, mileage, driver). In 2024, Bluebirds provided over 400 off-Island rides. Most of those trips were paid by the King County's Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL), funded by your tax-payer dollars, plus your Grannies donations. Some Island neighbors chipped in an extra \$5 or \$10 or \$20-\$40 as donations to the program.

What's new in 2025? Well, there's some happy news and some not completely happy news. The happy news is that now more Island Neighbors like you will take advantage of this service. Up to now, the "advertising" was just a process of quiet mentions here and there, to slowly grow the service. Now 600+ Bluebird rides in 2025 is quite possible.

The not completely happy news: long story short, King County's 2025

Continued on Page 2

Call a Bluebird

Continued from Front Page

priorities for returning your property taxes (VSHSL) as funding the Island Bluebirds is way less than it was in 2024. So the Vashon Senior Center program now needs additional funding. One method of several methods: ask riders to consider making a meaningful contribution as a donation for their rides, whatever each rider capable of offering. Yes, an extra \$5 - \$40 donation is difficult for many Islanders, and that's okay because making any donation is not required for Bluebird rides.

Other methods: to check in with Councilmember Theresa Mosqueda about her work on this funding problem. And Pramila Jayapal back in the other Washington might have some capacity to help our Island Veterans and Seniors be healthier.

Some Important Notes from the Vashon Senior Center Staff:

The Vashon Senior Center Village program fully expects to keep the Bluebirds available to All our Island Neighbors. The Bluebirds ask you to

consider whatever subsidy your situation comfortably allows in 2025 to keep the Village Bluebirds in flight for medical appointments Over-Town.

Off-Island Bluebirds are for medical appointments only: requires 24 hours absolute minimum notice, a week is preferred, a month is helpful.

Bluebirds are available On-Island for appointments, shopping and other errands.

Requests for Bluebirds depend on your Village Neighbor's availability as a volunteer driver.

Do you like to drive in the City or on Island? Are you ready to be a Bluebird? Or do you have questions about how to use the service? Call Fran at 206-485-4335!





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.

island chiropractic
health awareness center



Dr. Chrissy Now
Available on Thursdays!

253-922-0450
www.myislandchiro.com
17917 Vashon Hwy SW #7, Vashon, WA 98070
Open Tue & Wed 8:30am-4:00pm
Thur 9:30-12:30 & Fri 9:30am-3:00pm



Book Here
Expanded Hours!

Mammograms

onsite mobile screening event



April 2, 2025 • 1pm-4:30pm


Early Detection Saves Lives!

All major insurances accepted, no referral needed for annual mammogram screening. All results are sent to patient PCP and patient. Please bring picture ID and insurance card to your appointment. A woman is eligible for a digital mammogram screening if she:


- is at least 40 years of age
- has not had a previous mammogram in the past year
- has no current breast problems or complaints

**J.G Commons
Community Room**
17300 96th PI SW
Vashon Island, WA 98070


Call 888-204-9214 to
schedule an appt

assured
IMAGING



a Rezelut company





Zellerhoff

Construction inc.
EST 1984

Excavating, Septic Systems,
Rockeries, Land Clearing,
Landscaping, Site Prep, Roads
Water Systems - install and repair
Licensed & Bonded

zellerhoffconst@gmail.com
206 900-3268

When Birds Talked and People Sang

By Erin Durrett

Everyone who lives on Vashon, no matter how young or old, has had an amazing experience with birds: a song so sweet it melts your heart, a majestic heron sweeping over the water in the early dawn light, or the screech of an owl hunting in the depths of a windy night.

Stories of the Salish First Nations show us how to know birds as powerful messengers of the sacred, like Raven who discovered the first tiny, frail humans hiding in a clam shell and brought down the sun, moon and stars to give us light and fire so we might survive!

Join Māori storyteller Amelia Butler as she shares beautiful ancient tales of birds from her homeland of New Zealand and inspires us to draw on our own experiences to create stories of the bird beings we know and love.

Tuesday, March 11th from 6:00-7:30 pm at the Vashon Land Trust Building.
All ages welcome! Freewill donations appreciated.



VASHON ISLAND
COMMUNITY CHURCH

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

**Sunday Service at
10:00AM**

**The Vashon
Loop is
published
monthly**

The Vashon Loop

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

Contributors: Eric Coppolino, Daniel Hooker, Marjorie Watkins, Anne Cotter Moses, Alex Soriano, Pam (aka Gates) Johnson, March Twisdale, Michael Shook, Emilia Flor, Erin Durrett, Chef Julia, Dave B., Cynthia Sadurni, Melanie Farmer, Bernie O'Malley

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/>
March 7, 2025

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.

End of Life Conversations at the Vashon Senior Center, 2025

**On Fourth Fridays,
through June**

**March 28, 1:00-2:00 pm
Death with Dignity –
Law, Procedures, and
VSED**



This series is coordinated by Jane Neubauer. Topics to be covered include health care directives and other planning documents, hospice services and medical aid in dying, legacy, and burial options.

**Vashon Senior Center
10004 SW Bank Rd**

To request an event for your group, volunteer with us, or request a speaker, contact:
Susan Pitiger 206-818-4232
Jane Neubauer 206-584-9463

Giraffe: Slow Fashion, Artisan Goods, and a Global Sensibility

By Caitlin Rothermel

Walking into Giraffe, located in the heart of town, always gives me that peaceful feeling of entering a special place. Every corner is so carefully arranged. The store's warm tones are so inviting, making me feel both restful and attentive. When I visited most recently, soft yet peppy Malian music was playing in the background.

The shelves of Giraffe are lined with unique goods – olive oil from the West Bank, jewelry made from new and reclaimed materials, and – more recently – blankets from Sackcloth & Ashes, a company that donates a blanket to a shelter for every blanket purchased.

Each item has a story and was made with intention. At the heart of it is Priscilla Schleigh, Giraffe's founder and owner. Her journey to opening this Fair Trade boutique began decades ago.

A Path to Fair Trade

Priscilla's interest in global communities began in her childhood – she was influenced by her parents, who were active in international outreach. After college, Priscilla lived in Haiti. She taught sewing at a trade school and later worked for three years at a children's hospital.

At the hospital, Priscilla established a little shop called "Hand in Hand," to sell local artwork to visitors. Priscilla credits this to "having an entrepreneurial spirit from my father, and recognizing the amazing talent of the Haitian People." That early experience planted a seed.

Back in the United States, Priscilla found an unexpected, long, and

formative career with Nordstrom as a wardrobe consultant. She also became involved with a 10,000 Villages Fair Trade store, first as a volunteer, and later as a board member. Priscilla eventually came to manage the 10,000 Villages store in downtown Seattle, solidifying her connection to the Fair Trade movement.

After some time in Alaska, Priscilla found her way to Vashon Island, where she managed the Heron's Nest and a home-based hat-making business. Encouraged by a friend to take an "Artist's Way" class, Priscilla voiced a long-held dream: to open her own Fair Trade store.

Within weeks, an opportunity presented – an affordable space to rent, thanks to a local friend – and with the support of Priscilla's husband and the community, Giraffe opened in 2006.

Unique Goods with Unique Stories

Today, Giraffe carries products from 40 to 50 countries, each one carefully sourced. Here's Priscilla's priority: "Every product in the store has to have a good story, balanced with being a good-quality product."

This includes jewelry made from reclaimed bullets in Ethiopia, and multicolored, intricately carved animal figurines from Kenya – these were crafted from discarded flip-flops collected on beaches. Giraffe also carries Thistle Farms bath and body products, which support women survivors of trafficking in Tennessee. Every purchase contributes to a meaningful cause.

Among Giraffe's other standout items are handwoven table linens and hand-block-printed textiles, organic cotton sheets and towels, and a food



Priscilla Schleigh in front of the large map in the "Giraffe" store. The map specifies all the countries the store carries products from.



section that includes a selection of spices and signature salt blends (the salt is curated by Priscilla's husband).

Many of these goods come through trusted Fair Trade organizations. Priscilla also travels when possible – most recently to Guatemala and Kenya, where she met artisans she has worked with for years.

What is Fair Trade?

Priscilla explains Fair Trade as a system of ethical commerce that prioritizes fair wages that reflect local living standards; gender equity in employment; safe working conditions; and respect for cultural heritage.

Vashon Island has embraced Giraffe from the start. "A lot of people here have traveled and understand Fair Trade," Priscilla says. "Hand-crafted home and personal goods create beauty and change for good in the world."

Visit Giraffe

As the seasons change, stores adapt. Right now at Giraffe, winter clothing is 30% off, making it a great time to invest in some well-made foundational items. Priscilla focuses on slow fashion – high-quality pieces that last and are a pleasure to look at and touch. "I don't believe in fast fashion," she says, referring to landfills increasingly filled with inexpensive clothing that may not have ever even been worn.

Budget doesn't have to be a barrier. At Giraffe, any shopper can find a meaningful and reasonable gift, like small, handcrafted painted hearts or clever miniature animals painted on seedpods – perfect for a child wanting to buy something special.

Again, at Giraffe, every item has a story. So, when you visit, say hello to Priscilla and her staff and let them know what you are curious about. You may find that exact thing that you never knew you needed.

You can also visit Giraffe online at <https://giraffehome.com>.

The Case of the Fortunate Sheepdog

Continued from Front Page

was to be helpful. In the four seconds available to assess, however, my morning brain was starting to catch up. A man had been standing alone in the dark. He advanced to recklessly block our vehicle. A sentinel's alerting behavior about 100 yards to the north had likely saved his life.

As his face and figure started looming over my window without greeting, I stopped lowering it. Added factors were: transporting my kid to school; our own dog in the back seat, a moment away from barking next to my left ear; and we were parked in the middle of a dark, well-traveled road.

There was no visible weapon, but his demeanor was both aggressive and strange. I turned the wheel a quarter to the right and flexed the gas pedal, thinking to pull over. Our confronter then screamed "FOGGGGGK!" and punched the side mirror so hard it sounded like a shot. I kept going.

Then came a barrage of questions from an adrenaline-amped teen. Why would someone do that? Should we call the cops? Will you take a different way back? I said it wasn't the first time something similar had happened. No, not the same. Similar. I'd head back to check after the ferry.

I don't know for a fact if this was the same individual who later that day would hold his family, who happen to live close to that overturned recycling bin, hostage and threaten to kill them. Who would shoot his stepfather and household appliances, attracting 15 police vehicles plus a sniper-equipped helicopter to the Island.

It also may not be the same person who, allegedly out partying the night before, hit a lucky pull-tab at one of the few local businesses that sell them, then was said to remark, "I'll go to rehab

tomorrow!" Who may not have bought a bad batch of drugs with the winnings, haranguing other drivers on the same road the next day, supposedly at times with a pistol. These might all be different actors tied together by hearsay, thin coincidence or a tough band tour.

My focus is practical: What if I'm confronted with this situation again? What are my responsibilities and rights? Where do the former end, the latter begin? Even in hindsight, I'm not sure how proper my actions were. Surely I've enjoyed the rights and privileges of driving, and have written a few Loop articles about it. What if I'd been going 10 mph faster, the posted speed limit, and killed a mentally ill man? Curiosity on these questions is leading to some interesting places, and when they solidify, will be back with a Part Two. For now I'll close with the "Similar."

If you go to see a concert in downtown Seattle, after it lets out and you drive back that night, the odds are pretty good someone will walk right in front of your vehicle. With or without first looking. Those odds are so good now that I've seen it happen three times on one drive. These people were all suffering from some stage of mental challenge, and were also under the effects of heavy, ongoing substance abuse.


When you drive on certain streets in Seattle you've got to be ready for this at all times. I just wasn't expecting it on Wax Orchard Road. Thank you, fortunate sheep dog.

News You May Have Missed

- Layoffs at the IRS
- Spying on the Pope
- Power outage in Chile

These and more at:
vashonloop.com/missed





Smart stories for thoughtful readers at The Loop

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

You can *always* view The Loop's content for free online at vashonloop.com



Let's Consider This

By Michael Shook

In the midst of what could be described as a "Category 5" political hurricane, this is an awkward moment to pose questions that will sting, but they must be given voice. Thus:

If what Democrats have been selling is so good, how is it they've lost not once, but twice, to a man most of them regard as unfit to be a dog-catcher? What are Democrats getting wrong?

These questions should have been asked after the debacle of 2016, yet the party's response, then and now, has been to deny anything of substance was or is awry. Instead, it has doubled down on existing policies and initiatives. The chair of the Washington State Democrats, Shasti Conrad, insists that because the party had such success in-state, more of the same progressive agenda is the course to take nationally for the next election cycle. This is a leadership that, to put it mildly, is seriously out of touch with the broader electorate.

Not all Dems are on board with that status quo. "Our brand is fundamentally broken," said Adam Smith, D-Bellevue, quoted in the Seattle Times. Smith went on to say that colleagues from states outside solid blue areas have expressed their frustration to him with the current approach.

I share that frustration. As a Union carpenter (Locals 470, 206), I've supported Democrat initiatives again and again. Such unwavering support is at an end, though I've no idea who I might vote for come the next election.

There are, of course, varied reasons for my disillusionment with the Democrats, but high on the list is the obsession with how one "identifies." "How do you identify?" or "I identify as ____" have become commonplace.

Certainly, it's appropriate that people feel some identity with a particular group, or goal - that is just politics, or sports, or the OddFellows, etc. But dividing ourselves, dividing others, into "identities" renders the individual forfeit, putting

Island Voices

in its place a caricature, a two-dimensional thing void of personal agency. It's a conveniently lazy way to categorize, to pigeon-hole actual humans, whereby one need make no consideration thereof, except as part of the assigned cohort.

For example, once I was simply a man. However, under the eye of today's more radical Democrats, I am no longer that. Now, I have an "identity" - that of a white cisgender heteronormative member of the patriarchy, a European settler-colonialist occupying stolen land.

This is a matter in which I had no say, accomplished with neither my input nor my consent. I loathe the entirety of it. But question those labels? Reject them and the idea of such an "identity" in the first place? According to the Dem playbook, I will be seen (graciously) as misinformed, or (less graciously) as just stupid. There's also a distinct possibility I'd be accused of helping to sustain (consciously or not) an inherently racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, Christian-nationalist empire, even though such views are anathema to me.

As these state-assigned identities are disbursed, history too is being made anew, but not to more accurately tell our collective human story. Revision of past stories is a necessary tonic, and beneficial to all when done thoughtfully and with an adamant commitment to truth. However, again in the hands of the most radical Democrats, the revised work is often warped as badly as any of the partial and poorly done histories they seek to correct (and there are many that need correcting). Consider this example:

"[America's] reality was enslavement and injustice and discrimination. America was founded and grounded in racism. And anybody who says differently is being intellectually dishonest."

This is a quote from Rev. Leslie Braxton, featured in a January 17th Seattle Times opinion column by Carlton Winfrey. Winfrey urged readers to make Dr. King's holiday one of "love, unity, and truth." I see little of that trio in Braxton's verbiage, which is badly in need of context, and also, plainly wrong. Yet, this is the sort of statement the Democratic leadership has embraced, again and again. And "anybody who says differently" is not tolerated.

These are but two things for Democrats, and all concerned voters to consider (and yes, Republicans have their own house to sort out). Too many Democrats - too many Americans - live contentedly in deep blue or red bubbles. And, though this would seem to be painfully obvious, it must also be said: living in bubbles, no matter what color, fosters complacency, entitlement, and a distorted vision of the world outside it. That might feel good, but it does not make for practical, effective, humble, and even-handed acts of citizenship and governance (emphasis on practical and humble).

For too long, the Democratic party has been dominated by a leadership infatuated with its own high-handed abstractions, spun in the halls of academia and Congress, showing little concern for the good of the nation as a whole, and instead promulgating a dangerous fantasy of how they believe, fervently, life is "supposed" to be. The result has been an electorate willing to put in office Chaos personified, rather than subject themselves to more absurdities from the Left.

This willingness to take a chance on what the Republicans offered ought to be a bracing tonic for Democrats and their progressive allies. But from what I've read and heard so far, it is still a lesson waiting to be learned.



Hello There. Or Maybe Not?

By Dave B.

My wife and I have been on Vashon for almost 20 years. We have seen a lot of good and some not so good. We are lucky to live in a place where you can be you, get your freak on, and dress not to impress. But I have noticed a shift in attitude.

At first, I noticed it was a summer deal. Tourists were wearing on our souls, ferry traffic (if you can call it that) got to be a battle from both the north and south ends. Stop sign confusion was a hourly occurrence. We forgot how to be polite at a crossing of cars, pedestrians, animals, birds, and the occasional squirrel (my wife's spirit animal).

Spring and fall were a welcome relief. Fall, when the townies mellowed out and the summer people (yes, we do love you) left for their winter homes in Florida or California. Spring, because the clocks moved ahead so darkness was no longer eating at our psyche. Attitudes ebbed and flowed, but our lives in the nirvana that is Vashon always renewed themselves.

One winter day, when it is just us locals, while driving to the dump, I passed by several folks walking along the route. I am a friendly person by nature and waved as I slowed down toward my destination. No one waved back. "Strange," I thought. "Do I have something in my teeth? Do I look deranged? Am I driving like a drunk, unhappy ...?"

Not one person smiled or waived back. Some did not even acknowledge I passed by. I changed my strategy. I moved WAY out of the way to show my concern for my horrible driving and never got a thank you or a head nod.

What was going on here? What did I do other than be a Vashonite? I worried we had lost our Island friendliness. But maybe people were just having a bad day. It happens as winter drags on. I shook it off and finished my dump and recycle run. Maybe folks along the dump road just don't like it there?

I have a bumper sticker on my car that we all know: "You go, no you go." It's a joke to us all being so polite that no one proceeds through the Island stop signs due to our ability to be kind. I find that less and less now at our traffic intersections. I feel that people want to get to where they are going and seem to have the right to go first, no matter who got there first.

Am I wrong? Maybe, but it does happen. My bumper sticker is now a joke, and I would take it off, but I am afraid it will tear off my paint job.

Next, I had one gentleman on my tail coming up from the north-end

ferry dock. He got upset that I stopped to let a car out onto Vashon Highway and called the police on me to report my erratic driving. The next day in the Thriftway parking lot, a nice officer who had a description of my car blocked me in so I could not run, and told me the story of this atrocity. I was shocked. I told him what had happened. He said, "Have a nice day," and left me standing there. Well, someone has manners still!

These observations have continued, and I felt it my Vashon duty to point it out to all of us. We live in one of the most beautiful, private sought-after places in the Pacific Northwest. I was in Ohio this

month and it was -1 degrees. A few inches of snow at 30 degrees a year is not bad.

If we could just be more aware of what I am openly discussing here, and decide to make an effort to bring about change, it would do all of us a lot of good on these rainy winter days and nights. Being friendly, polite, happy and abiding are Vashon traits. Let's all take a breath, wave to that strange truck passing you on the opposite side of the road, and smile at the fact you might have made someone's day.

You would make mine ...



Fall/Spring clean-ups	Gutter cleaning
Year-round property maintenance	Dump runs
Retaining walls	Paving
Roof moss removal	Tree trimming
Mowing	Pressure washing
<p>Call for free estimates, 206-666-5329 www.vashonlandscaping.com, Facebook: RiosLawnMGM</p>	

A Little Health Thing

By Pam ("Gates") Johnson

The on-going health saga of Ma Johnson continues.

After a little heart-related health scare recently, the doctors decided that the root cause may be sleep apnea. We all know at least 10 people who have sleep apnea and are getting along just fine with a CPAP machine, so my fear-ometer dropped to the non-anxiety mode. Following doctor's orders, I made an appointment with a sleep clinic.

About 10 or 15 years ago, I had one of those overnight sleep studies. I went to the clinic in Burien, was hooked up to a bunch of wires and stuff, and told to go to sleep. A tech was watching everything from another room just in case I stopped breathing, so they could wake me up before I died. After a very horrible night, which involved getting up every three or four hours to go to the bathroom, the tech said yep, I had apnea and would probably need a CPAP.

At the next appointment, I told the doctor that I did not want the machine, just in case I might get a boyfriend. I did not want to have to wear an elephant trunk to bed.

An alternative treatment was to have my uvula removed, which I did.

And I thought my problem was cured, or at least mostly better, until 10 or 15 years later, which is now.

My cardiologist set me up with a sleep clinic to have another study done. This was not something I looked forward to. Turns out, the technology has changed, and you can now have the study done in the comfort of your own home and bed, or in my case, recliner.

When setting up the appointment, I was told to come in one day, pick up the equipment and get instructions on how to use it, and then return it the next day. There were two clinics to choose from: one in Federal Way and one in Gig Harbor. I chose Gig Harbor because it involved fewer freeway miles. Yes, I am becoming freeway-phobic.

Appointment day arrived, and I headed out for the Tahlequah boat. While waiting on the dock, I managed to enter the clinic address into my maps, since I had no idea where this new Gig Harbor hospital was. The directions looked fairly easy to follow. My confidence was pretty high as I started off.

I managed to get in the correct lane as I merged onto 16 and headed for the Narrows Bridge, hoping to get in the correct lane again, as there is no

lane-changing allowed once you are on the bridge deck.

As I drove across the bridge, I thought about the times I had driven that road in my 1970-something Ford pick-up pulling a horse trailer. I had a lot more driving confidence then, and there was a lot less traffic.

Of course, I was in the wrong lane once over the bridge and had to do a quick lane change so as not to go somewhere unknown. The GPS told me what exit to take, which was easy. What was not easy was the roundabout at the end of the exit.

GPS said take the third road off the roundabout. It did not tell me if the exit counted as the first road or if should I be in the inside or the outside lane of said roundabout. As one would guess, I missed the turn and headed off over the freeway to another roundabout.

Inside lane or outside lane, or just choose one and take a chance? I managed to negotiate that circle and found myself back at the first one. Second time was a charm.

Got to my appointment on time. The nurse gave me the equipment, showed me a short video on how to use it, and said I should bring it back the next day. Not wanting to make another trip that included another ferry fare and Narrows toll, I asked if I could just UPS it back.

Nope. Apparently, last year somebody did that and it got lost in the mail. The equipment costs \$4,000, so the mail cannot be trusted.

So, I got home, got through the day, and then it was time to saddle up and get this study going. The apparatus consisted of a Velcro belt that goes around your body, above the boobage, with a little battery-operated machine thing that sits on your heart area. On the left side, there was a tube connected to one of those heart rate, oxygen things that go on the end of your finger. The right side had a tube connected to a thing that sticks up your nose.

Once everything was in place, I pressed the button in the middle. When the green light came on, it was working. There were three other lights. If they were green, all was good. If they blinked red, I had to fiddle around with the tubes until they turned green again. Now, try to sleep. Think I got up four times during the night to go to the bathroom and check and adjust blinking lights.

Up the next morning for another exciting trip to Gig Harbor. At least this time I knew where I was going, and only made one wrong turn. Got back to the Island before noon and had lots of time to cook our Thursday night family dinner. Now, I wait for results.

Our Sound Adventures

Continued from Front Page

stains on the slightly mildewed jib.

After a suitable interval, I suggested we just add the fuel from the five-gallon tank to the working two-gallon tank, although I think by then rationality had re-appeared and our solution thinking converged. This concept was harder to accomplish than it might seem.

As space was limited and the funnel was somehow misplaced, we made do with a paper filter, but the coffee tasted funny the next day.

Eventually, we made our way to Blake and enjoyed our crab, although there were certain problems with the rigging and sail raising, but that's another story which did not involve cursing, except on my part because the boom fell on my head.

At Blake, our mutual cursing was extended to the raccoons who crept on board and ate a loaf of bread. Since everything worked out, I have faith that vigorous and sincere cursing is just as effective as having a 10 mm socket and an extra fuel fitting on hand.

Seán elucidates with an even earlier story:

I was four years old, and Dad had a cranky old 10-horse Johnson that only started when it wanted to. Dad rented a kicker boat in Elliot Bay at the mouth of the Duwamish River. I wore my life jacket, and Dad tied me to the gunwale, as he did my fishing pole, in case I caught a 40- pound King salmon.

Dad had a string of epithets that would embarrass a dying pope. The starting rope was not retractable and was wrapped around the flywheel. His cursing did not help to start the engine as we drifted across the mouth of the river. I ducked as Dad pulled the rope, and the knot in the end of

the starting rope hissed as it passed overhead for the last time. We rowed home disappointed.

Shortly after that, we moved to Vashon, where Dad and Mom had purchased five acres a half mile south of the Cove Store. We would hike to Cove to fish for pogys between the planks of the float at the dock. The pogy is a kind of perch, flat in body.

"Fish on!" I yelled, as we could see 20 or 30 fish circling our baited hooks. By deftly turning the fish sideways, I pulled it up through a crack in the planks. Dinner was on its way, though we didn't like their extra bony bodies, more difficult to eat than Cutthroat trout.

We had a creek on our property that emptied into Colvos Passage. It was only a half-foot deep at the mouth, but small Cutthroat would swim up the creek, looking for food. We used fish eggs or worms for bait and fished until we had enough for a family of five.

Dad rented a boat at Lisabeula Beach. It rode on a steel cart on railroad ties, guaranteeing that we wouldn't get wet loading up. We

Contact us if you want to advertise in The Vashon Loop or share an idea for a story!

editor@vashonloop.com

fished the incoming tide line for the wily Silver salmon, the hardest-fighting fish in Puget Sound. We motored through the drift until one jumped, our signal to lower our lines.

Dad carefully baited our hooks with a small herring, shaping the bait to dart and swing from one side to the other, mimicking a wounded fish. "Fish on!" I yelled, and a giant Silver jumped three feet out of the water, trying to disengage my hook. I fought him for ten minutes before bringing the eight-pound Silver to the side of the boat where he swam into Dad's net.

If we saw a sea lion, fishing was over as he scared the fish away while looking for his dinner.

~ It's a New Year ~

Who doesn't want a clean and organized home?

20+ year Islander available to help with your projects

Text today (206) 473-1643



Monastery Blend Coffee
206-463-5918
vashonmonks.com
<https://store.vashonmonks.com/contact-us>

Headley Holistics, LLC

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



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

Here's why you and your pets should avoid Canola oil at all costs:

Canola (rapeseed) oil starts out toxic, but is then heavily processed, refined, and manipulated before it is bottled. The extraction process uses chemical solvents like hexane, chloroform, and methanol. This process makes it unhealthy, not only contaminating the oil, but also destroying and removing the naturally occurring polyphenols (which are healthy phytonutrients). Canola oil is extremely unstable and will easily turn rancid. Synthetic antioxidants (TBHQ, BHA, BHT) are added to increase its shelf life. These compounds have been linked to stomach and liver tumors, neurotoxicity, convulsions, and paralysis in animal models.

The Curation of an Opinion

Our skills at onboarding and offboarding information determine the quality of our opinions

By March Twisdale

Hundreds of books are written, lectures are given, and manuals are printed every year, educating businesses on "How to Onboard and Offboard Employees."

This is because bringing in new individuals, and shedding those who are problematic or no longer necessary, can make or break a company's culture and success in the marketplace.

People, as it turns out, do the same thing.

Every day, we bring in new information while shedding some of the old, creating our worldview in the process. Unfortunately, few give our "onboarding and offboarding" of mission-critical information adequate attention. Which is concerning, because our opinions drive our lives.

Two major stumbling blocks are our tendency to form unshakable first impressions and cognitive bias.

Researchers at Harvard found that "Humans are generally quick to form opinions, often based on limited information or initial impressions, due to cognitive biases and our natural tendency to make rapid judgments in social situations; this means people can form an opinion about something or someone very quickly, sometimes even within seconds."

In other words, a combination of preexisting beliefs (cognitive bias) and "first impressions" can contribute to seemingly unshakable and often flawed opinions. Keith M. Bellizzi, Professor of Human Development and Family Sciences at the University of Connecticut, explains it this way: "For many people, a challenge to their worldview feels like an attack on their personal identity and can cause them to harden their position."

This is where our skills and habits of onboarding and offboarding information come into play.

The human "story" is constantly happening, with new and old information coming into conflict on a consistent basis. This is not a new concept. This interplay between past known facts and newly discovered facts is foundational to the scientific method.

But, what works in theory can fail in practice, and frequently does when humans are involved. We are, after all, the fly in the ointment. The flaw in the system. The cause of the error. The scientific method would come close to perfection, if it were not for the humans messing it up.

As Dr. Bellizzi puts it, "Facts First is the tagline of a CNN branding campaign which contends that, 'once facts are established, opinions can be formed.' The problem is that, while it sounds logical, this appealing

assertion is a fallacy not supported by research." In fact (pun intended): "Cognitive psychology and neuroscience studies have found that the exact opposite is often true when it comes to politics: People form opinions based on emotions, such as fear, contempt and anger, rather than relying on facts. New facts often do not change people's minds."

Which brings us again to the all-important concepts of "onboarding and offboarding."

We have a responsibility to do our absolute best to form opinions and viewpoints that do more than make us feel good. They need to be defensible. We need to know why we have this or that opinion, and if we don't? That's a red flag.

I'm not saying we have an obligation to explain ourselves to others, but rather to ourselves. If we don't know why we believe something, then what business do we have believing it? How does it serve us? And, should we be advocating an opinion we are incapable of defending?

A huge percentage of people walk through life, being pushed this way and that, by forces and manipulative actors using their human instincts against them. The goal is to "not" be that person.

When it comes to the explosion of algorithms and the monetization of our personal information by so-called "free" social media platforms, people get it. We are the commodity. The same is true for political forces seeking to control Earth's resources by controlling people, via quickly

adopted opinions, which then drive their actions.

You can give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Or you can teach him to fish, and he eats for life. Similarly, you can buy a man's vote, and he votes your way once. Or you can sway his opinions, and he votes your way for life. The goal is to control minds.

This is where "onboarding and offboarding" become our super powers! Our ultimate armor against the worst and most sophisticated manipulators in all of human history. How do we do this? Continuous learning.

We need to be flexible and skilled at our management of information, easily and willingly exploring old and new ideas while employing careful analysis and skeptical evaluation. If we are successful, it will become obvious what information should be "offboarded" and which deserves to be "onboarded." And, we will find ourselves continually updating our opinions based upon the best information available.

Who thinks COVID-related information onboarded in 2020-2021 comes close to the quality, depth, caliber and accuracy of information available today? Who doesn't think we ought to be "offboarding" the best guesses of the past, to allow for the "onboarding" of newer, updated, and evidentially based information?

We must form our opinions intentionally and wisely, because what we think informs what we do, which becomes the world we co-create.

Upside Down Times

By Melanie Farmer

There will be two eclipses in March. An eclipse happens when three celestial bodies align, blocking each other. A lunar eclipse occurs when the Earth blocks sunlight from reaching the moon, while a solar eclipse happens when the moon blocks sunlight from reaching the Earth.

In Vedic astrology, Rahu represents the solar eclipse as the head of a snake, and Ketu symbolizes the lunar eclipse as the tail. Rahu swallows the sun, causing chaos and confusion due to the missing light of reason and sanity. Rahu is also an indicator of parasites and possession, as well as toxic stings and bites.

To understand Rahu more fully before we go into astrology, it is important to learn how Rahu's head was severed from his body, so here is the story.

Vishnu, the protector of order, convinced the Devas and Asuras to churn the cosmic ocean, so to bring forth Amrita, the nectar of immortality. The Devas represent positive, right action in life. They act to uphold Dharma, which refers to ethical conduct, values, and thought. Dharma also translates as law that supports the Universe. Asuras on the other hand, are Adharmic, the opposite of Dharma. Adharmic action is immoral, creates suffering, is wrong, unjust and unbalanced.

The Devas and the Asuras worked together for a millennium to churn the ocean. As the ocean churned, it revealed treasures like the king of horses, celestial musicians, and Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and beauty. Poison also appeared, threatening everything, so Shiva drank it to save the world, turning him blue. Ayurveda, meaning life wisdom, emerged as the special medicine for this poison.

Once the Amrita was bottled, both the Devas and Asuras wanted it. The Devas refused to let the Asuras, followers of evil, have it, as their immortality would obviously perpetuate evil and wickedness. Therefore, a unique solution was devised.

Vishnu transformed into the enchanting goddess, Mohini. Distracted by her beauty, the Asuras forgot about the Amrita, allowing Vishnu to distribute the nectar to the Devas.

Rahu, an Asura known for his cunning, recognized Vishnu's disguise and disguised himself as a Deva to drink the Amrita. As Vishnu, in the form of Mohini, was pouring the Amrita for Rahu, Surya and Chandra, the Sun and Moon Devas, identified Rahu as an Asura in disguise. Vishnu's Chakra appeared and cut Rahu into two parts, resulting in Ketu as the tail.

According to mythology, Rahu managed to taste the Amrita, but only as an open mouth without a body, rendering the nectar wasted. This tale illustrates Rahu's insatiable greed. Rahu is depicted as a demon and symbolizes the concepts of hunger, emptiness, and deception, with his toxic void being all-consuming. Rahu and Ketu are also the "out-castes" within the caste system of India. As out-castes, they are not governed by societal rules or laws.


Rahu is associated with generating illusions, delusions, and panic. He governs parasites, viruses, diseases, and consequently, pandemics. Although not a benevolent figure, he is clever and adept at instilling fear to manipulate vulnerable minds.

Rahu and Ketu are adversaries of the Sun and the Moon because they reveal the deceptions of Rahu and Ketu.

In astrology, the Sun and the Moon are luminaries and planets of light and understanding. Technically, the Sun is a star, but it is referred to as a planet in astrological terms. Our Sun is the source of our planet's light, it is our life force, symbolizing the soul and the light of one's being. The light from the Sun reflects on the Moon, making the Moon a luminary by reflected light. Metaphorically, the Moon represents the illuminated mind, one that can absorb the genius of Sunlight.

The eclipses, as symbolized by Rahu and Ketu, block the light of the Sun and of the Moon, respectively.

Melanie Farmer
Archetypal Astrologist



ayurvedicastrologer@gmail.com
206.370.4394

March 13-14, 2025: Lunar eclipse begins in Leo and moves into Virgo

Ketu and Moon in Virgo

Sun-ruled Leo symbolizes leadership, representing governments and bones (structure). Mercury-ruled Virgo signifies health, focused on digestion and food purity. Ketu seeks enlightenment, living in an underworld, as a body without a head. The Moon represents the mother, mind, emotions, and security. The moon rules Cancer, which symbolizes our home, where we are supposed to be able to feel safe.

Mars has been retrograding in Cancer (12/29/2024-3/12/2025). Foreshadowing effects began as soon as November 16, 2024, post-election. Mercury governs communication, money, stock-market, currency, and goods transport, corresponding to the nervous system in the body. The Mercury-ruled Virgo stock market does not

Continued on Page 7

Lushootseed: Language from the Land, Part 2

By Jane Valencia

David Turnipseed is a language instructor with the Puyallup Tribal Language Program. In Part 1, David shared how Lushootseed, the language of the indigenous peoples of the Puget Sound region, had gone from nearly zero language speakers in 2014 to an estimated 500+ who speak it an hour or more a day. Enjoy Part 2 of this series.

From a beginning learner in 2018, David has contributed to the language's revitalization. "I've gotten to transcribe and translate some of those recordings, like those of my great Grandma Hattie Cross. We've done storytelling nights where we share our traditional narratives, all kinds of projects."

This revitalization has spread beyond the tribal communities, and even to Vashon.

David's children attend the Vashon Wilderness Program every week. Occasionally, he visits the program and shares basic phrases and aspects of the language with the kids and teachers. With any group new to the language, David likes to share words that are onomatopoeias - words that sound like the thing that they are.

"We have this phrase, ti txwəlsucid gwəł ti swatxwixwtxwəd, 'The Twulshootseed language comes from the land.' So I play a fun guessing game to get things started, I'll say a word like xwəłč."

xwəłč is the sound you hear as the waves wash onto the shores. It means saltwater or Puget Sound.

"Then I have the group try to guess what that word is in English. Both kids and adults love that, and they get super into it and enthusiastic trying to figure it out. So I did that with the Vashon Wilderness Program group, and I taught them some basic phrases and explained to them that anything that they can do to make our language visible, normal, and welcome is a great benefit to the people of the Puyallup tribe, and our efforts to speak our language. No First Language speakers are left, so all of us are learning our language as a second language.

David explains further. "We're all learning it right? There are some tribal members who, for a wide variety of reasons, haven't learned their language yet. They know how to say, 'Hello,' 'goodbye,' some basic phrases, but either they haven't been able to attend our classes, or they

haven't been able to use our website resources yet.

"But when everybody's speaking it, and when it's normal and comfortable and expected, and not this weird or strange or a unique thing, it makes it that much easier for anyone in the Puyallup tribe who's wanting to learn their language. If they're a new speaker of the language, it's making it that much more comfortable for them to have an opportunity to practice and use their language to communicate."

David then went on to answer some of my questions and others he is often asked.

How might someone on Vashon learn Lushootseed?

The Puyallup Tribal Language website at PuyallupTribalLanguage.org is definitely the best place to start. On the site are videos, resources, audio. The Puyallup Tribal Language Program YouTube channel also offers learning resources, and shares songs and storytelling in the language, giving viewers a rich opportunity to hear the language and glimpse the cultural context.

I'm non-native. I'm is it okay for me to be learning and speaking the Lushootseed language?

The answer is, yes. We want everyone and anyone to be learning and speaking our language, because that's how we make it normal and visible, and that much easier to use our language to communicate and to revitalize our language.

What about sacred topics in your language?

Anything that's on our website is very purposefully and thoughtfully put there. So, if some sort of content is on our website, it's meant to be used by anyone and everyone. If there is sacred content that we don't want just anyone and everyone having access to, we don't put it on our website. We're very careful about that.

Should I teach the language?

Probably not. Your best bet is to take the time and effort to build relationships with speakers of the language who are from the community. It could be us folks at the Puyallup Tribal Language Program or someone from any of the Lushootseed-speaking communities who is a speaker of the language.

How can people on Vashon be helpful and supportive of language revitalization and the Puyallup tribal people?

Sometimes non-natives are very excited to share with me, as a Puyallup tribal member, all the things that they know about my



A map of the approximate historical extent of the Lushootseed language by PersusjCP - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0

tribe and about the tribes in this area. I think they're coming from a really good place, and are trying to show me that they're not ignorant or racist, and that they've put in the effort, and have learned some things about my people and my history.

What happens sometimes is, in their enthusiasm, they will either interrupt me when I'm trying to explain something to them, or not take the time to listen to something that I'm saying that might contradict some either outdated information that they have, or is just a different version of our history and what's going on. And what I have to tell people sometimes is, Hey, you have a wonderful opportunity right now to speak directly with a living, breathing member of this tribe that you've been reading about in books or on websites or seen in videos. So, let's be right here in this moment and build this connection and relationship, because I might have information that you can't get anywhere else.

We are an oral history society. A lot of things are not written down anywhere.

Continued on Page 8

Services for Vashon Children

Upside Down Times

Continued from Page 6

like chaos or erratic behavior in leadership or government. Specific events that may contribute to stock market volatility in March 2025 include tariffs, geopolitical tensions, potential Federal Reserve rate changes, payroll reporting, and the potential for a federal government shutdown.

March 29, 2025, Solar Eclipse in Pisces

Mercury, Venus, Neptune, Rahu, and Sun in Pisces

The March 2025 solar eclipse highlights market and financial volatility, religious extremism, food safety issues, and disease outbreaks as well as the continued outcasting of certain individuals and groups.

Historically, solar eclipses are known as "King Killers," leading to the practice of the "substitute-king ritual" in the first millennium BC, where a stand-in was executed to protect the actual king. In contrast, the United States operates as a republic rather than a monarchy. It is notable that the current U.S. president referred to himself as a king.

This article is not about DJT; however, the March 29, 2025 solar eclipse chart is not good for him. Calling himself a king was akin to waving a red flag at a raging bull.

In summary, Rahu eclipses in a sign and conjunction indicate the type of changes expected. The rate, volatility, disruption, or disorientation are already underway. The distribution of global power is shifting, and the gap between those in authority and the general population will widen.

There will be a clearer distinction between those with power and wealth and those without. The outcomes will become evident as the eclipses conclude.

Preparation and flexibility are the best way to work with the month of March 2025. Then we will see what April brings.



Aprendo español
by Anne Cotter Moses

El luchador se acerca al borde

SHAWN CARKONEN
Reading Tutor
206-718-7539
vashonreading@gmail.com

Phonics-based reading tutor specializing in K-2 students.

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

SUMMER CAMP

REGISTRATION Open Now!

Vashon Wilderness PROGRAM

Littlest Bird Farm

Continued from Front Page

community aspects of farming. Zoning, Oregon's all-important "urban growth boundary," water rights, and even what sorts of chemicals are used to maintain irrigation ditches. Kim's broad set of skills is married to a fierce spirit of serving the public interest.

This spirit of service showed up when her husband's Department of Justice job took their family to the Southwest for several years. Kim took a position at a Navajo chapter house. While teaching at the Navajo Head Start program, she became aware of how poorly the foods were chosen for the various nutrition programs. She drove a switch from an overemphasis on dairy to a much healthier diversity of options like rice, beans, maize, polenta, and squash.

Back in Oregon, she resumed her agricultural interests. Her life's great inflection point came out of nowhere; while on a preparatory ride for a bicycle trip across Canada, she had a catastrophic crash. By the time she was discovered and transported, she had been laying immobile from trauma for hours. Suffering from both physical and neurological injuries, she was trying to regain mobility even as she wrestled with mental tasks sometimes as simple as remembering her own name.

For a time, she lived with her family in the Tacoma area, and those long-established memories seemed to provide an anchor to Kim's healing path. A friend started sending her real estate listings, and for the first time she heard of the old Zarth farmstead on Vashon. She made an offer - and lost. But the sale fell through, and she was contacted

Island Resilience

again. Would she buy "as is," with no cleanup? She said "yes," and became the owner.

The place was a mess. Innumerable hulks of cars were buried in the wild overgrowth of blackberry. Many years ago, the east end of the Zarth estate had hosted demolition derbies. When a car lost so badly that it would never run again, it was pulled to the side and forgotten. One of Kim's early tasks was to arrange for all of this to be finally towed away to a wrecking yard.

The house itself was in poor condition. The name of her farm, "Littlest Bird," comes from the almost total lack of windows. Birds had entered and taken up residence throughout the house. Until the most basic repairs could be completed, Kim lived down the road at the local hostel.


And now she began to heal. On a given day, she'd set out to collect, say, bottle caps. She would work her way across her property, picking up just bottle caps. The next day, it might be glass. Her mind was tracing the shape of her new farmland even as her efforts added to its order and beauty. Out there in nature, her mind healed even as she did her work of the day.

A century-old barn, built from old-growth cedar, had held up well to its neglect. Kim cleaned it up, and it's now a beautiful, open space that has been used as a child play space as well as a venue for art showings. There are still posters and art boards, signs of all the decades of activities it hosted in the past, now joined by a new generation of events.

The farm is healed, and Kim is as well. She can be found at the farmer's market, selling products fresh off her farm. You can also ask her about on-site sales, especially items like meat, which can only be sold this way. If she isn't too busy, you might even request a tour.

What does she want from the community? In Kim style, nothing for herself. She hopes more people can learn to grow, whether it's a planter on a balcony or a patch of ground near your house. If you get stuck, she can probably tell you how to get it fixed.

Postscript: In reviewing this article, Kim's only complaint was that it didn't mention the many people who helped her. She noted in particular the Sherman family; John continues to provide invaluable help. The web version of this article includes her land acknowledgment.



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



Lushootseed:

Language from the Land, Part 2

Continued from Page 7

Another thing that comes up sometimes is people will learn a little bit about our language and our culture and our history and then they'll present themselves as experts on the topic. And I'm not an expert on the topic. All of my elders and all of the people who I consider very, very knowledgeable, would say very humbly, No way, I'm not an expert on this topic either. A lot of the true history of our people has simply been lost to the sands of time, because 90% of our population was wiped out by disease upon First Contact, way back in the 1700s.

And so what we know today is a very, very small amount of our rich history from all of our people and all of our ancestors. So I would just caution anyone who feels very confident talking about the indigenous peoples of these areas to take a step back, humble yourself and realize that we only know a small amount of the true history and true culture of our people.

That's not to say that our culture is not alive and well. It very much is. didi? čə? ʔa. We are still here, the Puyallup tribe and our culture and our language and our people. We are very much thriving. Like I mentioned earlier, we went from almost 0 people speaking the language to 500 plus, and the number keeps growing. So I don't want anybody to get the wrong idea that we're lost and gone completely. We're still here.

Are the First People of this Island, the s̓x̓wəbabš, the Swift Water People, part of the Puyallup tribe?

The Swift Water people were both Puyallup and s̓x̓wəbabš, Swift Water people. They were a subsection of the wider Puyallup community and people. Our traditional lands extend way, way out from where our current reservation is. Our home was all the way down to Gig Harbor, and across the water, and all of Vashon Island, and then following the Puyallup River all the way up to the mountain.

And it wasn't hard-defined with borders and boundaries, because all of our relatives nearby were cousins and friends and family. We were all intermarried between different tribes. I don't know how accurate this analogy is, but the same way that I'm both a resident of Pierce County and Tacoma, and I live in this particular neighborhood of Tacoma. It's kind of like that. You have the wider Puyallup territory, and the s̓x̓wəbabš; the Swift Water people were a particular subset of that.

I want to move beyond land acknowledgement. Besides learning some of the language myself, is there a concrete action I can take to support the Puyallup tribe and language revitalization?

We have a donate button on our website. Any money that you send to the Puyallup Tribal language Program goes directly to become physical tangible learning materials for people in our community, such as books, and into signs such as you have throughout Vashon. [The Swift Water Sign Project]




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

Anything else you'd like to share?

We also have a tab on our website under native American History month, with a lot of really helpful resources for talking and learning about the Puyallup tribe regarding our history - things like boarding schools, and why is language revitalization even needed in the first place. That specific section of the website was designed with teachers in public schools as the main audience, but anybody can benefit from the resources there.

*

As I thank David for his generosity of time, information, and reflection, he closes with:

"We have a particular set of values that guide us here at the Language Program, and it's 'be kind, be helpful, be sharing.' I'm just trying to live up to those values."

To David and the Puyallup Tribal Language Program, hawadubš čələp. Thank you folks!

For more information, and to begin learning Twulshootseed, please visit: <https://www.puyalluptriballanguage.org>

Video - David teaches how to say Swift Water People in Twulshootseed: On youtube, go to the Puyallup Tribal Language channel, find the playlist, Lushootseed Names/Place Names, and find the video there. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iwof31-4YxA>



Spring is around the corner!

SERVICE YOUR BIKES NOW TO AVOID THE SPRING RUSH!

206.999.1551 www.vashonbikes.com
OPEN WED-SAT 10-6PM



Eating in Step With the Spring

By Emilia Vogt

What do we know about the eating habits of our ancestors? And ... what makes our own seasonal, diverse diets so different from ancient meals? Many eating a primal diet will tell you that our ancestors' plates were heavy on meat and low on carbs ... and that, as a result, we have evolved to thrive on this type of nutritional regimen.

In the Paleolithic era, a period dating from about 2.5 million to 10,000 years ago, early humans were hunting and gathering rather than farming. Studies show that prehistoric people's eating habits were remarkably variable and were influenced by a number of factors, such as climate, location, and season. We evolved as hunter-gatherers, so we were hunting and gathering whatever foods were around in our local environment. There was a lot of variation in what hunter-gatherers ate depending on location and time of year.

It is a balance between nutrients from animals and those from plants. People that lived near the ocean and rivers ate a lot of fish and seafood. Populations that lived in forested areas generally ate plants and hunted. Sometimes berries and roots like tubers, which are starchy and carb-heavy, contributed to the diet in different ways, depending on what was seasonally available before agriculture.

Honey was probably important throughout history and prehistory.

The one thing that did not exist in the diets of our primal folks was heavily processed foods. In processed foods, we get the combinations of sugars, salt, and fats that never occur in nature. Processed foods seem to be a big driver of obesity. Over the last 30 years, we have seen a rapid acceleration of chronic diseases. This correlates with increasingly widespread destructive practices in the food system. Estimates indicate that up to 70% of

Health Matters

Western dietary calories today come from foods that weren't available to those living in the Paleolithic Era, although many of our genes are still stuck at the hunter-gather table.

Now onto ... Eating in Season.

The whole purpose of our food is to release energy within our body.

Eating nutrient-dense whole foods is significantly more important than following any particular diet.

With Spring finally rolling around, we are faced with a variety of fresh foods. Veggies and fruits and meats to be keeping an eye out for are:

Artichokes, Asparagus, Arugula, Fiddleheads, Cauliflower, Broccoli, baby Lettuce, Peas, Radish, and perhaps Kohlrabi.

Apricots, Rhubarb, Limes, and Strawberries.

Mint, Parsley, Spring Onion, Chives, Garlic Scape, Basil, Ramps, and Leeks.

Cod, halibut, mussels, salmon, and oysters are on top of their game in March, though keep an eye out for crab - crab season begins April and lasts all through summer!

Cooking with in-season meats ensures that we are getting the freshest and most flavorful options available. It's a great way to support local farmers and enjoy the best of what each season has to offer. It could be turkey, venison, and rabbit season at this time of year; the meat that is available will be delicious. Contact a local rancher and ask questions - they'll be happy to tell you everything you need, including the odd recipe!

Consider lamb ... Spring is a great time for lamb. The meat is tender and flavorful, making it perfect for roasting or grilling. It pairs well with fresh herbs and citrus flavors, making it a versatile choice for a variety of dishes.

Another great option for spring is duck. The richer, slightly gamey flavor of duck pairs well with the lighter, brighter flavors of spring produce. Try roasting a whole duck with some seasonal vegetables for a delicious and hearty meal.

There are numerous views about what a human is built to consume. It seems there is evidence that humans can be healthy on a wide range of diets. We evolved to be adaptable and flexible. And, flexibility means diversity. Variety is the spice of life.

Life used to be more in sync within our environment.


When seeking modern dietary answers in our ancestors and evolution we don't want to apply an oversimplified idea. The food available and the dietary preference of our ancestors differed significantly based on their geographical locations and the periods they lived in. Like a hunter-gatherer, our diets should change according to what's naturally available throughout the year. Our bodies are much the same as our earliest ancestors as we have not fundamentally changed over the last 2.5 million years. In providing nutrient-dense in-season meals, primal diets support our resilience, giving us more energy too!

**Reduce stress
Find peace
Heal**

**Book a Reiki appointment
with Love Matters**

**Studio uptown for humans /
home visits for animals**

**Book at: lovematters.consulting
heather@lovematters.consulting**



PRECISION PSYCHIATRY

YOUR ON-ISLAND PSYCHIATRIC PROVIDER

DR. MARLI W. PAROBK DNP

SPECIALIZING IN MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSING & PRESCRIBING
FOR ALL AGES

PRACTICAL. INDIVIDUALIZED. COMPASSIONATE

IN-PERSON & TELEHEALTH

206-486-0014 www.PRECISIONPSYCH.NET



Dr. Cori Bodily-Goodmansen

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

**Individualized wellness care
using low-force techniques**





PANDORA'S
SINCE BOX 1983
QUALITY PET PRODUCTS


206-463-2200

**Yes, we are keeping on top of the
trending news regarding H5N1
bird flu appearing in certain raw
cat foods.**

We receive updates almost daily and are
happy to share what we know with you.

17321 Vashon Hwy SW
Hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-6:30
Saturday 9-5, Sunday 12-5
pandorasboxpetproducts.com
Instagram: [pandorasboxshopcat](https://www.instagram.com/pandorasboxshopcat)

**Dr. Leigh Siergiewicz,
Naturopathic Physician**



BETULA
NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

Practicing independently since 2018


~ Women, children, digestion,
hormones, autoimmunity, and more ~

253-330-8708 - text to schedule
Info@betulanaturopathic.com

Inside Tree of Life Wellness Center
at 17331 Vashon Highway



**People from a planet
without flowers would
think we must be mad
with joy the whole time
to have such things
about us.**



~ Iris Murdoch

MINGLEMENT

ORGANIC MARKET EST. 1972



Chutney with Ginger and Orange

By Chef Julia

This chutney is a vibrant blend of tart, sweet, and warm flavors that bring depth to any dish. The cranberries provide a tangy base, while fresh orange zest adds citrusy brightness, and ginger lends a subtle heat that enhances the chutney's complexity.

Its rich yet refreshing taste makes it an ideal accompaniment for appetizers and vegetarian dishes, elevating simple ingredients into something extraordinary. Whether spooned over creamy cheeses or paired with roasted vegetables, this chutney offers a perfect balance of acidity and sweetness that keeps each bite exciting.

For appetizers, it pairs beautifully with soft cheeses like Brie or goat cheese, spread over crostini, or served with buttery crackers for an elegant and flavorful bite. It also works wonderfully with warm, flaky pastries such as puff pastry tarts or baked brie en croûte.

On the vegetarian side, this chutney enhances roasted vegetables like sweet potatoes, acorn squash, or Brussels sprouts, adding a bright contrast to their natural caramelization. It can also be mixed into grain bowls with quinoa or farro for a touch of sweetness and zest. Whether served as a dip, topping, or mix-in, this cranberry chutney transforms simple dishes into something truly special.

Island Epicure – Sure 'Tis the Month to Think o' the Irish

By Marj Watkins

Feast yourself, friends, on the foods of dear old Ireland. A blessing 'tis, too, that they're mostly cheap, easy to make, and tasty they are with ... butter!

I believe in butter. Sure, it's got saturated fat in it, but never mind that. It's Omega 3 fat, an essential to provide skin for the cells of your brain and lot of other good things for your body. For the good Lord's sake, don't even think of substituting margarine. That stuff's full of wicked trans fats. You know that because it says hydrogenated fats right on the box. And it doesn't even taste good. My mother, God rest her soul, used to mix yellow food coloring with the white margarine as a thrift measure (nowadays the yellow food coloring comes already mixed in). It was awful! Stick with good-tasting, good-for-you butter.

Don't think you can't afford it. When I lived in a French village, my neighbors, though they could only afford to buy one stick at a time, bought real butter. And the grocer sold butter by the pound, or by the stick.

Cabbage and potatoes figured large in old-style Irish home cooking. Colcannon, which contains both, is a favorite of my second daughter, Jeannie. She takes after her Scot great-grandmother, Jane Ann Macbeath, who was descended from the Scoti who migrated from Ireland to Scotland centuries ago.

Colcannon

- 4 servings
- ½ pound finely chopped cabbage
- 3 large or 4 not-so-large potatoes
- 4 or 5 green onions, chopped, green part included
- ¼ cup cream
- ½ cup milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 3-4 tbsp butter
- Minced parsley (optional)

Steam, boil, or microwave the potatoes until fork-tender. In my microwave, which is not very high-powered, this takes 6 minutes for one potato plus an additional minute or two for additional potatoes. Cool enough to handle. Peel and mash. Cook cabbage in a little water until just tender.

Wash the onions, chop them, and cook them in the milk for 5 minutes. Beat into the potatoes. Drain the cabbage and stir that in too. Put the butter into the mixture, and pat to pat on top of the colcannon.

Garnish with minced parsley. Serve hot, on Monday the 17th, St Pat's Day.

Good foods to serve with colcannon would be roast lamb or sauteed lamb shoulder chops, and extra butter for diners to put on each serving. Accompany with peas cooked with a little water, salt, and a pat of butter. Beverage: Guinness, of course.

Reprinted from The Vashon Loop, 2012 or 2016

Cranberry Chutney with Ginger and Orange

Ingredients:

- 2 large navel oranges
- 2 pounds fresh cranberries
- ½ cup water
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ cup light brown sugar
- ¼ cup minced, fresh ginger
- Salt and freshly ground pepper



Instructions:

1. Using a sharp knife, peel the oranges, removing all the bitter white pith. Working over a bowl, cut in between the membranes to release the sections. Squeeze the juice from the membranes into the bowl. Cut the orange sections into 1-inch pieces.
2. In a large saucepan, combine the cranberries and water with ¼ cup of orange juice from the bowl and bring to a simmer over medium heat.
3. Cover and cook over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until the cranberries have popped, about 10 minutes. Add the vinegar, both sugars, the ginger and orange pieces and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until thick, about 5 minutes.
4. Let cool slightly, then season with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Total time: 50 minutes
Servings: Makes 5½ cups

Freedom smelled like ozone and thunderstorms and gunpowder all at once, like snow and bonfires and cut grass, it tasted like seawater and oranges.



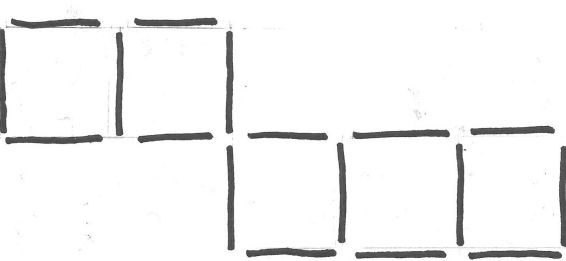
~ Tana French

Math Puzzle

By Anne Cotter Moses

Gather some toothpicks or popsicle sticks for this puzzle. Note: every stick must be part of a square. No two sticks may be placed on top of each other or side by side.

Move two sticks into a new position so That you end up with exactly four squares.



Go to Page 11 for Solution to Math Puzzle

Top-quality lawn, tree, and landscape care



Beautifying Vashon properties for 25 years.

Efficient, thorough, skilled, and trustworthy.

Contact Randall Snowden, 206-578-2614

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



Share it with us at editor@vashonloop.com



Fresh made, grab and go! Vegan, gluten-free meals Authentic Nepali cuisine

Almond flour cookies (vegan), locally roasted organic coffee, organic loose-leaf teas, bubble tea, gifts, and more!

17610 Vashon Hwy SW - 206-408-7330 www.anuranaskitchen.com

In the heart of town

Anuranashealthykitchen@gmail.com

Spotted After a Century, Maury the Sea Serpent of Vashon Island

Legends of Vashon

By Cynthia Sadurni

Every time I board a ferry, I always scan the horizon, enjoying the sea breeze and the salty, clean smell of the water. I never tire of the natural beauty that surrounds us. No matter how many times I sail the waters of Puget Sound, wonders abound. There is always the hope of spotting a pod of orcas, or maybe an absent-minded porpoise straying into the ship canal, or perhaps a whale, chasing breakfast.

One fine morning, on the crossing from Fauntleroy to Vashon, gazing across the waters at Mount Rainier and drawing close to our destination, I was doing just that, but this morning the only beasts around were a few seagulls and the occasional cormorant. Suddenly, I caught a glimmer on the waves and spotted something unexpected.

Could it be? Horse head, sinewy body, long and elegant neck ... Yes! There, basking in the sun, one of the mythical, most elusive denizens of the deep that dwell in our waters: A sea serpent! Finally, after a long period marked by absence there it was, breaching the surface and riding the waves with ease and grace. Here be dragons, my friends!

Or... it could just be a trick of the light and mist that transformed a bobbing piece of driftwood into a creature of legend. I don't know about you, but personally, I would much rather believe in magic.

If you are interested in knowing more about local legends concerning sea monsters, I invite you to look into sightings of Caddy or Cadborosauros, the sea serpent of Cadboro Bay, British Columbia, and Sisiutl, found in the oral traditions of the First Nations of the Pacific Northwest.



Island poetry in these pages

How about yours?



Submit your poems to The Vashon Loop!

Write to: vashonloop-poetry@janevalencia.com

Below:

Maury the Sea Monster - Illustration by Cynthia Sadurni



Laughing Llamas Chronicles

By Daniel Hooker

Q: What do you get when you cross a GPS with an alligator?

A: A navigator.

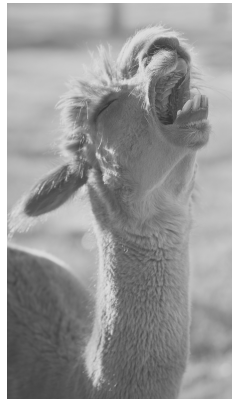
~

I have a contact lens problem.

I have no solution.

~

I want to tell you about this woman that I know who only eats plants.



I know you never heard of her-bavore.

~

I went to a silent auction the other day. I won a dog whistle, two agitated mimes dressed in blue, and a pair of new hearing aids.

Note: I know not everyone will get this joke, but some have!

~

The other day, an old Islander told me that the majority of the car accidents on Island were caused by deer!

I said only an Island as liberal as Vashon would let deer drive. So be aware of the deer on-Island. They might have you in their headlights.

~

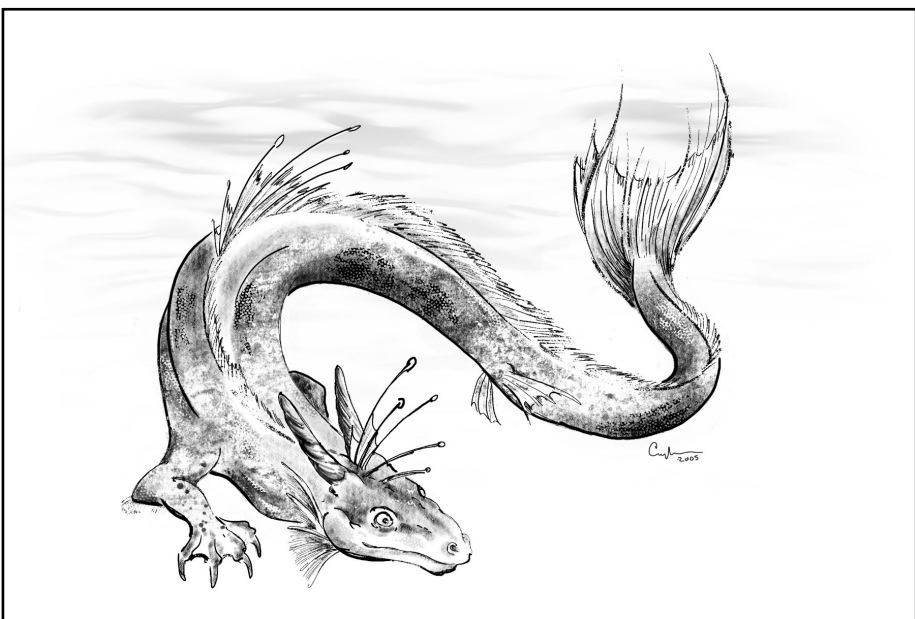
I went to the Bank yesterday on my crutches. The teller said I had an outstanding balance.

I said, "Thank you. I studied several martial arts when I was young."

~

Someone said that I should do stand-up comedy.

I said, "At my age, I'd rather do sit-down. At least then when my jokes die, I won't be far from the floor."



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!

Vashon! The DSHS Van will be here

Wednesday, March 19
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

At the Food Bank
(10030 SW 210th Street)

Math Puzzle Solution

(See Page 10 for Puzzle)

By Anne Cotter Moses

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
at Vashon Library (inside at the back)

Wednesdays, 12:30–3:00 pm
March 19th
April 16th
May 21st

You can also renew or sign up for the **PSE Discount Program**
Se habla español

Call or email Miguel Urquiza
206-477-6965
or 206-491-3761
miguel.urquiza@kingcounty.gov

You can also apply for food stamps and the ORCA Lift reduced fare program

Come Chant!

Benedictine Morning Prayer
6:30-7:00 am
Burton Community Church
Every Monday, Wednesday, Friday
and
Evening Prayer
6:00-6:30 pm
St. John Vianney Catholic Church
1st, 3rd, and 5th Wednesdays
First Fridays

Can't stop drinking and want help?

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Online Meetings: SeattleAA.org
AA Phone: 206-587-2838
Local Vashon Contact: 206-849-1980



Aries (March 20-April 19)

We have arrived at the big moment when Mars, the planet of Aries (and sometimes called Ares) stations direct. It's been retrograde since Dec. 6, and this whole event has delivered quite a lot of energy, disturbance and potential. The deep theme for you is whether you feel safe in the world, and what it is that helps you feel confident and protected. Ultimately, this is a spiritual question, by which I mean that it's between you and your inner teacher; between you and existence. Ultimately, no matter how materially well-off a person is, they can feel like they don't have enough, or like their walls are not thick or high enough to ward off danger. Most people are dragging around a lot of their parents' and grandparents' fears; and a lot of fear from childhood. There is a skill to acknowledging this and letting it go. It takes learning and work; it does not happen on its own—and is worth focusing on.

Taurus (April 19-May 20)

For all of March and through April 12, your home planet Venus will be moving in retrograde motion. And the exciting news is that it's doing so in the angle of your chart that conceals a vast blind spot that you have about yourself. It's as if you contain this fenced-off territory within your awareness and your memory and it's just not so easy to get inside. You're being taken on a tour of all of the unusual places that make you a little queasy—and that also reveal your greatest assets. The thing about Taurus is your ability to put on an impeccable front. Your living room might appear ready for *Elegant Homes* magazine, yet there is stuff piled under the couch. This retrograde phase is your opportunity to empty and sort out all that stuff. Do it slowly; start now, as Venus enters shadow phase and contacts all the planets that it will rub against two more times.

Gemini (May 20-June 21)

As the world gets more complicated, it's not becoming any easier to know what you want, or what you want to do. It's no easier to define success, or to know it when you feel it. This has probably been an especially foggy matter for as far back as you remember, though I'm talking about the time that Neptune got involved with this topic in 2011. You are now at a crucial juncture: the air is about to clear; your view will soon be much less obscure. And you may find that a diversity of forces have guided you in the right direction even though you may feel like you've been blown ever further off course. Certain external or structural restrictions have helped you regain some focus and make better decisions. Mars turning to direct motion also describes a situation where you must know your principles and stick to them.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The action is now in your fellow water sign Pisces, though it is steadily moving in the direction of Aries. Now is the time to explore the ideas and possibilities that lead to action. The next year-plus will be one of the highest-initiative times in your life—no matter what else is going on in the world. So it would be advisable to build on a solid foundation. And that foundation is the vision that you have for your existence. By vision I mean what you can visualize, and even feel; this implies the use of your imagination and not just your cerebral mind. Now is the time to let yourself play with the



Planet Waves

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



possibilities, and more significantly, to notice which you prefer. When planets—large and small, slow and fast—take up residence in Aries, you will want to take action. The question is what action you take, and on what basis. Now is the time to orient yourself on your choices being powered by what you prefer. Something is calling you—and calling in a bold way. You will know what it is because you like it.

Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)

There are certain realizations about yourself that you've delayed or put off, which it's now time to make friends with. The honesty called for most is the only one that matters, which is what you acknowledge to yourself. You don't do this overnight; one element of truth and awakening will lead to another. You might say this is about a process of reconciliation, with yourself and others. I use this word in both senses: that of to restore union or friendship and to bring together; and to work out discordant facts and to make actions and conditions consistent in one another's minds. But this must start with you coming out of denial about any situation you've left in "time will tell" mode. Time is now telling; the end of a long era of your life is arriving. Even if you don't make friends with certain truths about your life, the time has come to admit that they exist. Then, once you have taken that information on board, you have the duty to act on your personal truth.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)

Particularly where your relationships are concerned, you enter a new phase of your life between now and late April. It looks a little like a fog lifts, which in turn reveals a hidden barrier you were banging into for the past couple of years. But at least you found that boundary, which is the divider between you and someone in your life. While this block has been annoying, it's much better than it not being there. At least you can figure out where you stand with someone; and that, in turn, will provide you with more confidence to show up for your relationships in a consistent way. Any sense of being riled up is a scrim that conceals a deeper truth within you. It's also probably a hint that an angry inner child within you wants attention—and expects partners to be as enormous as your parents were to you at one time. If you are sincere, you will find out who you are in ways that you have never imagined.

Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)

Do you feel the ground of your being rumbling? How are the people around you expressing themselves? We are now entering the rare, concentrated astrology of The Awakening. While this is happening in your relationship house (Aries, the 7th place of Libra), it's about you and not about them. Yes, it may surely seem to be about all those people you know and may be surrounded by. But look deeper. They are the expression of an underlying environment, and that is what's changing. Most of this is invisible to normal perception, yet at the same time is the product of your self-awareness. You can trust this, and keep moving yourself in the direction of your inner focus. Whatever may seem to be happening, that's where the action is...

and where the energy is moving. You now have the perfect excuse to place your emphasis on what you want to create. You may find that you become aware of others who are in a position to support you, to collaborate or help you focus your intentions. Even then—focus on your creative source.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

Venus begins retrograde motion on the 1st, and you may be wondering what an intimate partner or close collaborator is thinking. This is your opportunity to provide unconditional support for someone's inner experience. If you cannot see into it, then being present for them may feel like an act of faith. Trust, at least, that someone who is inwardly focused is involved in their personal work of the soul. You might say this is an exercise in not taking things personally. Yet it's also a mirror, a hint that you're seeing a reflection of yourself that reminds you to turn your attention toward your deepest being. You have questions about who you are. You owe yourself the experience of asking them, and sitting with the mystery until your awareness produces a sincere response. As part of this whole experience, you may make a beautiful discovery about the true nature of any relationship that I seem to be describing: a discovery that can only happen when you sincerely respect yourself and someone close to you as distinct individuals.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)

While yours is regarded as the most visionary and philosophical sign of the lot, you certainly do struggle to keep an open mind. You might not see it that way; you probably just feel no special need to question your perceptions. Yet that is the essence of creativity: to have a gentle and free hand with the brush, to see the light reflecting differently on every surface, and to see the measure of truth even in positions you strongly disagree with. At least set aside the concept of perfection, and replace it with more useful ideas such as sincerity and discipline. You are still in a phase of existence where you're being invited to expand, explore and experiment. For all your potential, you tend to limit yourself with conservative ideas, adhering to tradition and rules you think you must follow. You must respect the unknown and unfamiliar within you.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)

Throughout March and half of April, Venus will be retrograde in the innermost region of your worldly life: Aries. There has been a long setup here, and some of the themes are likely to have emerged already, even if you have not given them a name. What I suspect you are in the process of learning is how closely your family constellation describes your relationships, both currently and historically. Nostalgia plays a crucial role in how you organize and experience your feelings. If you connected with yourself for a moment, your known world—that house of cards would rock and shake. I propose that's exactly what you want and what you need. Most of your energy is trapped inside you, seeking a means of expression. You back off from the risks that would provide you with the most abundant opportunities to live boldly

and experience the kinds of fulfillment that are so elusive on our planet right now.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)

When all is done, and all is said, and when all is either accomplished or left unfinished, you and you alone are the sole authority of your life. Notice how many cultural games and interpersonal games are associated with surrendering your power to some external structure. "Just tell me what to do" has long been one of humanity's favorite songs, and this usually does not end well. Only you know what you really need, and only you know who you really are. That alone is the basis on which you are called to make your choices, which implies that nobody can do this for you. Yet the implication is that you are responsible for the results of the decision you make consciously. There would be nobody else to blame—and that is what we are taught to always have ready. You are too old for this charade, in any of its countless forms. There are benefits to staying asleep and drifting through life, though if you knew what they were, you might not want them. The past five years you've been through a long and seemingly endless maturing process. It's time to claim the benefits.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

The other day I randomly opened the book *Working Days: The Journal of The Grapes of Wrath* to the entry where John Steinbeck was about to finish the novel. He was a Pisces, of course, and that tells us a lot about him and astrology. Steinbeck was up to the closing scenes and sick to his stomach, which he knew was a matter of being on edge. "I only hope it's good," he scribbled in pencil. "It simply has to be. Well, there it is, all of it in my mind. And I hesitate to get to it. Maybe I'm afraid I can't do it. But then I was afraid I couldn't do any of it. And just day by day I did. So that is the best way to finish it. Forget that it is the finish and just set down the day by day work." We might use this as a parable of the last stages of both Saturn and Neptune in your birth sign. It's also a parable of moving through the fraught world we're now living in, where I think it's more important to do what you must do rather than what you want to do. Yours is the sign not of karma—the accumulated results of actions—but rather of dharma—your understanding of your existence which drives your sense of commitment and necessity from an inner place.



**One always has to pull
junk, rubber, detritus, and
nonsense out of one's
mind – all day every day,
just to break even.**

~Celia Farber