

## In This Issue:

Knives, Orange Salad,  
Magic, Maybe My Life  
Isn't So Bad After All,  
and MORE!



Annie Cast,  
Page 19

Exploratory  
Week,  
Page 12



So Fine!  
Leroy Bell at  
Cafe Luna  
Page 18



# THE VASHON LOOP

Vol. 3 #1

TO INFORM AND AMUSE ~ TO PROVOKE THINKING AND ACTIVISM

January 4, 2006



Lynanne Raven is in the middle; her sister Beth Haselton on the left; and Lisa Cyra on the right. The photo was taken during the Tri-Island Trek Bike race.

## Vashon YMCA Where Fitness Dreams Come True

By Mary Kay Rauma

Turning fifty is a milestone in and of itself, but Lynanne Raven wanted her fiftieth to be a turning point. At this time last year, Lynanne was rendered inactive from a sports injury, feeling discouraged, and facing a fork in the road. "I saw very clearly that I had two options," she explains. "I could let my injury lead me into a sedentary life and deal with consequences of that or I could find an exercise program that worked around my injury."

Around the same time last year, another Islander, who will go by the name of "Sue" to protect her identity, was headed toward a breaking point. "I was on a number of prescription drugs to deal with high blood pressure, high cholesterol, anxiety, depression, and acid reflux," describes Sue. "I was very overweight and hadn't immersed myself in a nutrition and exercise program for about 16 years."

Both women decided to take control of their health and joined the Vashon YMCA. In less than a year, and each in their own way, Lynanne and Sue achieved their wildest dreams.

Lynanne's journey began when her brother-in-law, Henry Haselton, encouraged her to form a team of their extended Island family (four

*Continued on page 16*

## VoV On TV in 2006



## Public Access Channel 21 on Comcast

By Bill Wood

On **Saturday, January 14**, at 2 p.m., the long-awaited arrival of Vashon/Maury's own access TV channel (21) will be celebrated with VoV-TV's Opening Day Ceremonies at Courthouse Square. As is customary at events of this kind, the Community will show its appreciation to the many public and private entities involved by listening to their representative's speeches.

In this case there are four main groups to which gratitude is owed: first is Comcast Cable, Inc., which, in an earlier incarnation as TCI, promised the public access channel to the Island Community approximately fifteen years ago, when it was awarded the contract to

*Continued on page 13*

## Rotary Grant To Disaster Preparedness Group



Rotary President Joyce Olson presents a grant of \$8,350 to Vashon Disaster Preparedness Coalition President Rick Wallace and Coalition Founder Joe Ulatoski. Story on page 14.



Sarah Blakemore and David Baker

## Surviving Katrina

By M. L. Tuel

When Sarah Blakemore helped a friend move from New York to New Orleans four years ago, she did not know she would meet her true love the second night she was in town, but that's what happened.

David Baker was a page designer for the *New Orleans Time/Picayune*, and he and Sarah hit it off right away. They bought a house together in New Orleans in St. Bernard Parish. During a brief visit to Vashon, David and Sarah told, again, their Hurricane Katrina story.

"Our story is not the norm," Sarah said. "Many of David's co-workers lost their houses." "We were not plucked from rooftops," David said.

***I looked out and could see the water all over the city.  
That's the only time I cried.***

Sarah was staying at her apartment in Brooklyn, New York, when Katrina struck on August 29, 2005, but David was working in New Orleans, in the *Times/Picayune* building. They were connected by email and telephone.

David began, "There were about 200 people staying at the newspaper office. I was the only designer of a staff of 16 who stayed. We got an 'extra' out early on Sunday night. Then, Monday morning, the storm started to hit."

"We could look out the window and see trees starting to topple in the wind. The rain was falling in sheets. After a while it started to let up, and reporters went out through the city to find out what had happened."

*Continued on page 2*



# Get in The Loop

## VashonBePrepared.ORG

### Do you take prescription medicines?

Don't let your prescription run too low before you refill!

- ~ Keep two weeks' worth on hand if possible.
- ~ Keep a copy of your prescription handy.

### Are You Prepared?

Take the emergency preparedness test online at [www.vashonbeprepared.org](http://www.vashonbeprepared.org) to see if you and your family members are ready for what we all know is coming sooner or later, a major earthquake.

### Chorale Begins Spring Rehearsals

Vashon Island Chorale under the direction of David Kappy begins rehearsals again on **Tuesday, January 3, and every Tuesday thereafter**, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the band room at Vashon High School. The works to be prepared for the **April 2, 2006** concert are Gabriel Faure's *Requiem* and Morten Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna*. Dues for the session are \$30 plus music costs. New singers wishing to sign up should contact Jo Ann Bardeen at 567-5841 or email: [jbardeen@yahoo.com](mailto:jbardeen@yahoo.com).

### Ham Radio Classes Begin

Would you like to get your ham radio license for personal or emergency communications? Here's your chance! Weekly classes will begin on **January 11** at 7 p.m. in the smaller classroom of the VIFR Penny Farcy Training Building across Bank Road from the main fire station. Classes will meet each week until March 15.

The format will be self-study with weekly class session attendance optional. Each session will begin with a lecture followed by Q&A on any subject. The license exam will be given at the final class session. There is no charge for the course, but students will be required to have the study guide (\$20) and the exam fee is \$14. For more information, contact class instructor Ward Silver at (206) 463-9173 or via the Vashon-Maury Island Radio Club Web site, [www.w7vmi.org](http://www.w7vmi.org).

### Free Tree Planting Class

A free tree planting class will be held, rain or shine, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on **Sunday, January 22**. It's a great time of year for planting trees. It's fun for the whole family, and also an important stewardship activity. But to ensure that your trees thrive, careful site planning, proper planting technique, and good protection and follow-up care are needed. This free, hands-on workshop will give you the information that you need to make your planting project a success! Forest landowners, stewardship volunteers, and anyone who

### LWV hosts Hospital Dist. Meet the Candidates Night

The League of Women Voters is sponsoring an opportunity for the community to meet candidates running for the Vashon Island Public Hospital District Board of Directors. "Meet The Candidates Night" will be held on **January 10** at 7:00 p.m. at Courthouse Square. There are nine candidates running for five positions on the Board. The Commissioners would oversee the local community hospital district, if voters approve of the measure on the February 7th ballot. All the candidates plan to be at this forum. Come and ask questions and learn more about the candidates and the issues.

The Hospital District election will be held **February 7**. Absentee ballots will be mailed out to voters January 18, 2006.

### Chamber Meets in January

The next Chamber General Membership Meeting will be on **January 26th** at noon at Courthouse Square. Featured will be speakers will be from the Park District, School District and Hospital District to discuss upcoming elections. The 2006-2007 slate of officers and board members will be presented. Voting must be completed by the fourth Thursday in February. Ballots will be sent out to all voting members. Also Joyce Olson, CPA will give a presentation in what to take with you to have a stress-free appointment for your taxes. A light lunch will be provided. For questions contact Lee Ockinga at (206) 408-8057.

would like to learn more about planting trees are welcome. This event is sponsored by WSU Extension and is hosted by the Gruenewald/Matsuda family, who have owned their Vashon land (once a berry farm) since the 1930s and are now converting part of it from hayfield back to native forest.

To sign up and/or receive more information, call Amy Grotta at WSU Extension, 206-205-3132; or email [amy.grotta@metrokc.gov](mailto:amy.grotta@metrokc.gov); or visit <http://www.metrokc.gov/wsue-ce/forestry>.

Lymph (v.): to walk with a lisp.

### Surviving Katrina

*Continued from page 1*

"A couple of reporters went out on bicycles, and they actually saw one of the levees break."

"We worked on the paper late that night. It said, 'You're going to feel bad when you wake up.' We had seen water creeping up around the office."

"Early Tuesday I went out to move my car and get some provisions out of it. Water was lapping at the door of the *Times/Picayune*. I put on a pair of flip-flops and went out. Everyone looked at me like I was crazy."

### People don't realize how quickly the water came.

"My car was parked on an overpass right next to the office. As I walked in the water my feet kept brushing tree limbs in the water. There were rumors of snakes in the water, so that was scary. Sometimes the water was clear up to my neck. I saw this huge piece of Styrofoam, and I decided to catch a ride."

"I climbed on, and came to a toppled stop sign, so I pulled that out and used it for a paddle. Later I heard that big pieces of the Superdome's roof fell, and that is probably where that Styrofoam came from. It fell apart pretty soon."

"I made it to the overpass where my car was parked. When I got up on the overpass I looked out and could see the water all over the city. That's the only time I cried."

"No one knew how high the water was going to get, and the office building was beginning to feel like a trap."

"I decided not to get anything from my car. I got back to the office, and soon we heard that there might be a way to get out of the city. We were all loaded into delivery trucks, and there was a way out, and we went to Baton Rouge, and published the paper from there the next six weeks. For a few days we were only online."

"I quit about 16 times the day after the storm, but never got around to leaving."

David and Sarah's two dogs had been with a dog sitter before the storm hit, and in a serendipitous quirk of fate the sitter hitchhiked to Baton Rouge with the dogs and ended up three doors down the street from where David was staying. Sarah flew to Baton Rouge a week after the storm, and flew back to New York with the dogs. Their cat survived in their house and she is also at home in Brooklyn now.

Sarah goes on: "I was trying to deal with insurance, and I found out we had no flood insurance. I had asked for it, but somewhere between the mortgage company and the insurance company the request got lost. We're OK, though. I am thankful for how extremely lucky we were."

How lucky were they? Their house had only two or three feet of water, a virtual non-flood in St. Bernard's. Their house was livable.

Houses on their street were looted, but theirs wasn't, perhaps because David hung voodoo beads on the doorknob before he left, but they don't know.

Sarah said, "We decided to sell the house and relocate to New York, and the house was bought by a contractor who is housing his workers there now."

Before leaving New Orleans, David and Sarah drove around the city viewing the damage. "It was like looking at a black and white film," David said. "Everything was shades of gray up to the water line."

"People don't realize how quickly the water came," Sarah said. "They were marking houses to look for bodies, but they were also marking cars to be checked for bodies of people who were trying to get out but didn't make it."

It's been four months since Hurricane Katrina. Sarah and David feel tremendous gratitude for their own good fortune and tremendous sadness for their friends, colleagues, and the people of New Orleans who have lost so much. They're planning to take some time off to rest and recuperate. As comparatively unscathed as they feel they were by the floods, their lives were turned upside down, their jobs are gone, their house is sold, and they're starting over. Most people would consider that misfortune enough.

They'll be telling this story for the rest of their lives, though.

∞∞∞∞

### Adopt-A-Cat Day

Vashon Island Pet Protectors will host an Adopt-A-Cat Day on Saturday, **January 14th** from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and **Sunday, January 15th** from 12:30 to 3 p.m. at Pandora's Box. Please stop by or call VIPP at 206-389-1085.

### 2006 Pet Calendar

The Vashon Island Pet Protectors 2006 Pet Calendar is available for \$15 at the following locations: Fair Isle Animal Clinic, The Vashon Bookshop, Books by the Way, Pandora's Box & The Burton Store.

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# Troy and Marie Share Some Tips

Call us cockeyed optimists, but we feel like spring is almost here! Once the holidays are over, spring really is just around the corner. Although real estate is bought and sold all year round, a lot of people wait to put their house on the market until spring. If you are one of those people, here are some tips for making it look its best. For more ideas, or for a free evaluation of your home's market value, give us a call!



- Troy:** Marie, this subject is a good idea. You know the old saying that you only get one chance to make a first impression? That goes for houses as well as people. When a potential buyer walks into your house for the first time, you want the house to make a *good* first impression.
- Marie:** One of the first things people notice about a house is its smell. I read somewhere that our sense of smell is the one that evokes the strongest emotional response. When you are selling your house, you want that emotional response to be a positive one.
- Troy:** Exactly. For example, if you have pets, you might be used to their smell, but it could be a real turn-off to someone else – even to another pet owner.
- Marie:** A professional carpet and drape cleaning can help a lot, especially if you ask your carpet cleaner to use a product that is formulated to eliminate pet odors. There are also a lot of “over the counter” products on the market that help control odors. Your local pet supply store is a good place to look for products.
- Troy:** Once you get rid of the bad smells, replace them with good ones, like freshly baked chocolate chip cookies. Come to think of it, even though we're not selling, it would be nice if *our* house smelled like freshly baked chocolate chip cookies all the time.
- Marie:** Not to mention names, but one of us seems to have put on a few pounds over the holidays. I think we'll just light a scented candle. Citrus and vanilla are both scents that people tend to respond to favorably. I read somewhere that men like the smell of vanilla more than they like Chanel No.5.

*If you have suggestions for topics to cover in Tips For Homeowners, or if you want to receive your copy via email, please write marie@kwwashon.com. And if you need real estate services, please give us a call at (206) 463-LIST. We would love to work for you.*

- Troy:** I like the smell of a sizzling steak better than either of those, but I don't think they make steak-scented candles. And you don't look like you've gained any weight.
- Marie:** I guess subtlety will not work here. Never mind. Besides smells, home lighting is important to the appeal of a house. Obviously, all light bulbs should be working. A burned out bulb gives the impression of neglect. Also, bulbs should be the right wattage. For example, brighter bulbs are good for dark basements, but you don't want your bedroom so bright that it feels like you're in an interrogation room on *Law and Order*.
- Troy:** Also, a house on the market needs to be kept clean and free of clutter. This can be a real challenge for people. It's hard to keep your home looking like *Better Homes and Gardens* while you're living in it.
- Marie:** True. But that's one place where we can help. When we list a house, we arrange for cleaning and ongoing maintenance, to help take the load off our clients. We also help get the house ready for sale by working with our clients to decide how much “stuff” to pack away so that the house shows to its fullest advantage.
- Troy:** And besides helping with cleaning, we work with a home inspector to find all those minor little things that we all have a hard time getting around to fixing, like loose door knobs, cracked caulking, and dripping faucets. Even in well-maintained homes there are always a few repairs to make.
- Marie:** For more suggestions, our readers can visit our website, at [www.kwwashon.com](http://www.kwwashon.com). Click on Info Center, Seller Resources, then Ready to Sell.

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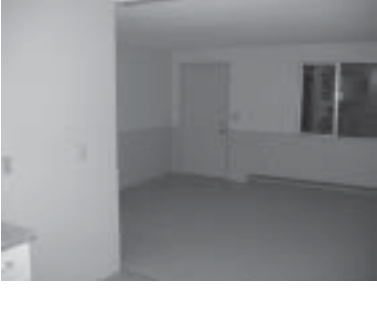
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# LoOp-Ed

## Hospital District Revisited

Reluctant as I am to give more ink to the issue of “shall we or shall we not have a Hospital District” (“There is no such thing as bad publicity.” – *The Junior Woodchuck Handbook*), I won’t ignore letters like the one on this page from Islander Cliff Lindgren.

OK. First of all, Hospital District supporters: Please answer your email. Please.

A Hospital District would be a good thing if it was set up to actually make sure that everyone on the island was able to get medical care and nursing home care, regardless of lack of money or insurance. That has not been the stated aim of the proponents of this Hospital District. The proposal was put together chiefly by people on the Boards of the Health Center and the Care Center, and the focus was on aiding those two institutions financially.

That focus seems to be changing somewhat, as people in the community ask questions like those that Mr. Lindgren has asked, but I have to ask if this is a sincere re-focusing of the District on all of the

Letters to the Editor:  
editor@vashonloop.com

Island’s medical and elder care needs, or a gesture to get people to vote for a measure that will end up helping only the Health Center and the Care Center.

Not that I can think of any precedents for people saying whatever they think will win them votes. Ahem.

I think now, as I have from the start, that if the community needs a Hospital District, it needs a Hospital District that addresses the needs of the whole community, caregivers and care receivers. I also think that it would be good if a Hospital District could work with the other taxing districts on the Island, with a, “How can we best serve the Island?” attitude rather than a, “I want first crack at the tax money” attitude.

Maybe the problem is that the Health Center and Care Center Board members got the idea for a Hospital District before anyone else, and forgot to include others in the discussion. Now that it’s out there, maybe we can discuss what the community really wants and needs. A Hospital District that will support health and elder care for all of us might be a winner. -- mlt

## Financial Planning 101, #14: Designing an Investment Portfolio

By Mark Goldman

In my last article I listed a number of important factors you might want to consider when designing an investment portfolio. In 1990, Harry M. Markowitz of CUNY, William F. Sharpe of Stanford University, and Merton H. Miller of University of Chicago all shared the Nobel Prize in Economics. While Miller’s work centered on corporate finance leveraging, Markowitz and Sharpe made use of each other’s work in advancing portfolio theory. Their actual analysis is highly technical. I couldn’t explain the mathematics if I wanted to. Nevertheless, their work, along with a few of their predecessors, revolutionized how financial practitioners think about managing assets.

In my first attempt at writing this article I reread some of Markowitz and Sharpe’s material and tried to explain their theories in such a way that the information would be both interesting and useful. Finally I gave up and decided to just tell you what I think you should do.

First of all, there’s no way I can tell you how to design an efficient investment portfolio in the number of words allotted, except to say this: almost all equity mutual funds measure their performance against the S&P 500 as a benchmark. Even though the managers of these funds are highly paid and spend their full time managing money, at the end of most years only about 20-30% ever beat the benchmark. In my opinion,

you don’t need to beat the S&P 500 to get good results; you only need to do about as well. If you just do that you will do better than most. And just because some managers beat the S&P 500, it doesn’t mean they knew what they were doing. Some people win when they go to Las Vegas. But that doesn’t mean you should give them your life savings to go back and try to do the same for you.

If you are investing in stocks, you can purchase an Exchange Traded Fund or Index Fund that mirrors the performance of the S&P 500 or one or more other broad based indicators. Modern portfolio theory suggests that in addition to stocks, you might want to own some bonds too. And these are also available as ETF’s or Index Funds. How do you know how much money you should put in stocks and how much in bonds? Well, you have several choices: you can see a financial advisor, do some on-line research, or call a good no-load mutual fund, like Vanguard or Fidelity, for example, and someone there will offer you a straightforward suggestion.

Why do I suggest a no-load mutual fund? With no-load funds you don’t pay a commission (avg. 4.5%) to buy them and the annual costs (expense ratios) are always lower. For example, the typical expense ratio of an ETF or Vanguard Fund is perhaps .20-.50%. The expense ratio of a typical load mutual fund is 1.0-1.5%.

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## Loop Letters

### Leptospirosis On Island

Editor, *The Loop*:

The veterinarians on the island have been seeing an unusual cluster of Leptospirosis in dogs on Vashon. The earliest signs are muscle aches followed by loss of appetite, vomiting and red inflamed eyes. Early treatment is extremely important.

Humans can get this disease from exposure to the urine of an infected animal or urine contaminated water. Most dog cases are not associated with human cases. The dogs on Vashon were infected by water contaminated with the urine of raccoons and rodents that were carriers of the bacteria.

Make sure you’re not feeding or attracting raccoons or rodents with compost piles, bird feeders, and cat food or garbage containers.

For more information contact your veterinarian, or Dr. Jane Koehler, our local health department veterinarian, at (206) 296-4880.

Sincerely,  
Nell Coffman, Don and Stacey Wolczko

Considering advisor’s fees, sometimes it all balances out.

If you go to any financial advisor they will charge you something for their services, either a commission or a fee. If you find someone who is highly ethical and knowledgeable, they are probably worth what you pay them. If not, it’s a bad deal. How do you tell the difference? Sometimes you can’t.

Having said all that, I believe that we are currently in the middle of a constitutional crisis. In a worst case scenario that could lead to a general economic collapse and possible world wide depression...making everything I’ve said above somewhat moot.

Mark A. Goldman is a financial planner here on Vashon Island. You can visit him on-line at [www.gpln.com](http://www.gpln.com) or call him at 463-2019 if you have comments or questions.

### Darsie Beck Says Happy New Year

Good last day of the year 2005 to all!

I just want to wish everyone a wonderful last day of this year and a very happy new year coming.

I hope you have given thought to what you want to see happen for yourself in the coming year and how what you have planned for yourself will affect the quality of the lives of those around you. This is what I keep thinking about and am trying to keep at the forefront of my thoughts and actions. What good thing can I do for myself that will affect the quality of the lives of those I love and of those I come in contact with? May creativity, love, kindness, beauty, expansiveness, peaceful abundance and receptivity be part of your new year and the years that follow.

Love, Darsie

*Editor’s note: Island artist and teacher Darsie Beck sent this letter to many of his students and friends, and it seemed too good not to share with The Loop’s readers, so with his permission, here it is. — mlt*

### Hospital District Questions

Editor, *The Loop*:

I have asked the questions below of the hospital district and have not received a reply. I think they are important questions for the Island and would like to see them addressed in a public forum. Hopefully *The Loop* will be following this major issue. I am concerned that a private business like Highline and Providence are promoting a public tax support program for themselves.

I sent this email in November and have not heard back:

*Subject: Hospital District questions*

1. How much money each year would the .75/1000 property tax raise and how much would the .50/1000 property tax raise?

2. How would it be divided between the two places?

3. Both of these two organizations are private businesses. Won’t this hospital district limit competition?

4. Would the funds be used for capital improvements or salaries for employees or both?

Cliff Lindgren

I smile because I don’t know what the hell is going on.





# The Knife Guy

By Rex Morris

I sold reconditioned kitchen knives and provided a sharpening service at the Saturday Market this year. In the process, I learned that there are some wonderful knives in Island kitchens. The ones that were brought to me were well made, worth sharpening and worth caring for properly.

In response to numerous questions I fielded, I thought I would provide some basic do's and don't's for selecting, using and caring for kitchen knives.

If you cook a lot, get good knives, knives that will last your lifetime and your children's lifetime. One of the knives I sold at the Christmas market was forged in 1878—the blade was still in great shape, although someone had replaced the handle, probably in the 1920s.

Of course, my first piece of advice is to keep knives sharp. The only thing more dangerous than a dull knife in the kitchen is a dull chef. A sharp knife is safer because it requires less force, slips less often and is less apt to go someplace unintended.

The main tool for keeping a knife sharp is a steel—essentially a metal rod on a handle, sometimes grooved and sometimes not. A steel will do nothing for a dull knife but is essential to maintain the edge of a sharp one. Its function is to straighten the microscopic edge on a knife, the edge that bends when it hits something hard. Professional chefs, who use their knives a lot more than you or I, send their knives out to be sharpened twice a year and steel them every time they use them.

The next tool for keeping a knife sharp is a cutting board. I use flexible plastic cutting sheets more than my wooden chopping blocks but I always use one or the other and I never cut on something hard like formica, marble, metal, ceramic or glass.

Do not let knives dull profoundly. Sharpen or have them sharpened regularly. If you let a knife get very dull, more steel will have to be removed to sharpen it.

Even 'stainless' steel knives should be washed, dried and stored as soon as practical—and carbon steel knives must be taken care of

immediately. Stainless steel is actually just stain resistant and is still affected by neglect. Never put a sharp piece of steel into the dishwasher. Extreme temperatures and the corrosive nature of the chemistry involved are not good for your edge or handles.

Storage is also important. Don't store a knife in a drawer where it will bang into other metal objects. That definitely bends the microscopic edge. A knife block is the best solution although care must be taken with them as well. Never put a dirty, wet or even a damp knife into a block. Not only does that promote corrosion, it is a breeding ground for bacteria.

Knife drawers or inserts with slots for each knife are acceptable options. So is the use of cardboard or plastic sleeves.

Never use a knife as a screwdriver, a hammer or a pry bar. It's dangerous and will damage the knife. I saw some exceptional knives ruined from such misuse.

Also, have an assortment of knives so that you won't be tempted to use a fine vegetable cleaver to chop through chicken bones, a boning knife for an ice pick or a twelve inch chef's knife to peel a potato. You don't have to have dozens of knives like I do, but an assortment is good.

First, find and use knives that feel right in your hand.

I think a chef's knife is important for anyone who cooks. The most popular ones are eight to twelve inches long and have a blade wider than the handle—to keep your knuckles off the cutting board. Some people are intimidated by a large knife but they are perfect for big or repetitive jobs where a lot of rocking back and forth on a cutting board is required. A well-made vegetable cleaver also works as a chef's knife.

A paring knife is much smaller—often with a blade that is only two inches long. This is for smaller jobs

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and more delicate cutting, and is commonly used in your hand and not even on a cutting board—as when coring apples.

A serrated knife is also handy—often called a “bread knife” or a “tomato knife”—useful when a sawing motion is required or with fruit that has easily bruised skin.

There are other knives but those are the ones I would start with. There are cleavers, butcher knives, carvers, slicers, filet knives, and boning knives—if you do a lot of any of those, have the knives necessary to the task.

If I was going to add one more knife to the list of three above, it would be a utility knife—something between a chef's and paring knife in size, with a narrower blade than a chef's knife. Something with a five or six inch blade will do most anything else in the kitchen not covered by one of the above.

Take care of your knives and they will take care of you.

Don't cut yourself.      ∞∞∞∞

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## Orthodox Christmas

Christmas, December 25 according to the Julian calendar, will be celebrated at the Monastery of our All-Merciful Saviour in Dockton this **Saturday, January 7** by the Gregorian calendar, beginning at 9:40 a.m. There will be a potluck following worship. Because Orthodox worshippers come from all over the Puget Sound region to observe Christmas, the monks are expecting a large crowd, and would appreciate it if those attending would bring a vegetarian contribution for the potluck.





# Spiritual Smart Aleck

by Mary Litchfield Tuel



## All Strung Out

In 1993 my cousins Nancy and Charlotte and their sons Jeff and Andy came up to celebrate Christmas with us. Our boys were 11 and 8 at the time, so their big teenage cousins were a bit like gods to them.

On Christmas day, when the Christmas presents were all open, my cousin Nancy passed out the last little gift wrapped boxes. The last box everyone got was a can of silly string, and the cousins ripped the wrapping off, shook the cans, and let fly, leaving each other and everyone else covered with silly string. Of course our

wondered if everyone was having silly string fights for Christmas, or if this was an early New Year's Eve item.

It's not for everyone. My husband is not wild about the mess it makes. You have to clean it up right away, and vacuum, because then it's easy, and if you don't get it then, it sets up like concrete. Throughout the following year you will find little bits of silly string on windowsills, lampshades, shelves, books, or behind the woodstove.

We had a fairly quiet Christmas this year, and it



boys opened their packages and started spraying their cousins, and each other.

There have been many times in my life when I've laughed hard, but few times I've laughed as hard as at that first silly string fight. There is nothing like having a room full of people plastering each other with silly string to set off the shrieks of laughter. Trust me.

After that year, the silly string fight became an annual tradition for us. You can pick it up around Halloween, when it's everywhere, and stash it away for Christmas. I found it for sale with Christmas items in December this year, and

revolved around our grand daughter, of course, the only bona fide chronological child in the family at present. We all sat around and enjoyed watching her open her presents. She's still young enough to be fascinated with each present, and not toss it aside to grab for the next one, so it was a leisurely process, right up until we got to the silly string.

This was the year she learned how to push the button on the silly string can. Oh yeah. She's a convert. Is there anything as precious as a child's laughter as she squirts chemical foam all over her doting family members? I don't think so.

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done with the innocent baby angel stage and into the, "I want what I want when I want it!" stage. As with all developing talents and skills, mistakes are made, boundaries are overstepped, and she spends a lot of time in the naughty corner protesting, not her innocence, but that she still wants what she wants. I sympathize, really I do. I want stuff, too, but I've learned not to throw a tantrum when I don't get it. I do the adult thing. I use a credit card.

We are savoring her use of the language these days. At some point the kitchen became the chicken, so now we go into the chicken to eat kitchen. She sometimes tells us she cannot screech something, instead of that she cannot reach it. As she heard us say, "Merry Christmas!" over and over, she came up with her own version: "Merry Squishmas!" She'll learn

the correct words in time, and we'll miss these words.

Last night I spotted one overlooked, still wrapped can of silly string on top of the video shelves in the living room. I'm saving it for the perfect moment. I'll know it when it comes. I'm guessing it will be during a visit from our sons.

Merry Squishmas, everyone, and watch your back. ☺☺☺

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# Don't Forget the Birds

By Ed Swan

## Vashon Loons



Common Loon Photo by Jim Rosso

Vashon and Maury Island regularly see three loon species from fall through spring and very rarely a fourth. The one found most often is the Common Loon that one sees in photographs so often and can hear in many recordings and movies or television programs. The rare species is the Yellow-billed Loon, very similar to the Common Loon. It is very slightly larger, has a yellow-bill and lacks the white notch in the neck plumage that the Common has. The last documented record for the islands was in the winter of 1982 but they are probably much more regular here than that. An albino Yellow-billed Loon has been seen for the last several winters in nearby Commencement Bay.

Red-throated Loons, North America's smallest loon, visit Vashon from October through mid-May. They appear in small numbers each year around Vashon and Maury Islands. A few may arrive still in their breeding plumage and some may have their breeding plumage before they leave in April and May. They are dark backed with grey necks and head and a bright red throat when the sun catches the red just right. Black and white stripes go vertically down the back of the head and neck. Mostly though, one would expect to see them in their non-breeding attire, dark backs, dark back of neck and crown and white neck and breast. Red-throated Loons are much

smaller than the Common Loon and are slightly longer and much shorter necked than the larger grebes with which it might be confused.

Red-throated Loons might be seen anywhere on saltwater during migration but in general they prefer shallower water. I have seen them at high tide to be within twenty feet of the road at Portage. Elsewhere, such as Dungeness Spit, I have seen them in the surf practically on the beach itself. Ellisport, Tramp Harbor, Portage and Quartermaster Harbor make the best places to look for them in the islands. They are generally found as singles or in small flocks.

Pacific Loons arrive a little bit earlier and stay a little bit later than Red-throated Loons. Pacific Loons tend to be uncommon rather than rare like the Red-throated Loon. They like deeper water and are probably seen most dependably in the entry way to Quartermaster Harbor. In migration, they are seen on saltwater all around the islands. In the San Juans they can be seen in flocks of up into the thousands but locally the flocks are generally small.



Pacific Loon Photo by Jim Rosso

Pacific Loons in winter appear black above, along the back of the neck and on the crown of the head. Face, neck, breast and underparts are white. In breeding plumage, the back of the head and neck become grey and the back of the body has cross stripes of white, much like a

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Common Loon. Immature birds may retain some of the grey along the top and back of the head and neck during their first winter.

Just to throw in some difficulty, a fifth loon species is possible, the Arctic Loon. Pacific Loons were considered to be a subspecies of the Arctic Loon up into the 1980's until they were considered separate species. The Arctic Loon looks like a Pacific but is slightly larger and has some white for a considerable length along the water line of its flanks. Arctics are a Eurasian species that only very rarely strays to North America. The first records for Washington State were seen over the last few years.

In local birding news, Red Phalaropes, a small pelagic bird in the shorebird family, visited Quartermaster Harbor. I got a phone call Christmas Eve day from a visitor named Walter (If you or you island hosts read this, Walter, thanks for the tip) that there were two Red Phalarope were swimming

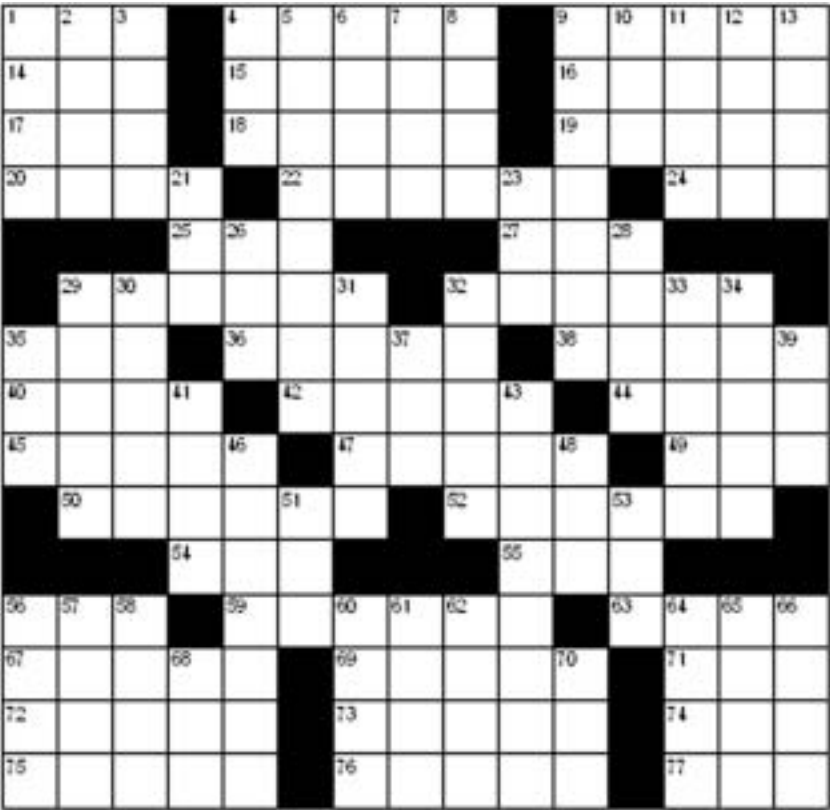
in Quartermaster Harbor between Burton and Shawnee. Sue Trevathan re-found them and we both observed them for a while. After Christmas another visitor to the island discovered one again in the same spot and Dan Willsie observed one perched on a log floating by his place on Vashon's northwest shore. Only three previous records existed, so these sightings doubled the number of Red Phalarope observations for the island. They usually stay on the outer coast or far offshore but large storms way out in the Pacific have driven thousands of these exhausted birds into inland areas from California to British Columbia. With all of these weather systems coming through, it's always a good idea to watch for unusual pelagic birds from the ferries.

If you have an interesting sighting to report or a question about local birds, call me at 463-7976 or email at edswan@centurytel.net

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Across		
1. Liable	29. Member of an American Indian people	52. Move unsteadily
4. Whining speech	32. Loved	54. Request
9. Spice	35. Fish	55. African antelope
14. Bill and...	36. A Bill	56. Abridged (abbr.)
15. Adult insect	38. Well-known	59. Prickly herb
16. Side note	40. Entreaty	63. Ogled
17. A bill	42. Sister's daughter	67. Type of cheese
18. Ross ____, philanthropist	44. ____bill	69. Plot
19. Islands	45. Dance	71. Bard's before
20. Stair	47. Architect Frank __ Wright	72. Listlessness
22. Bill of...	49. House pet	73. Shut
24. Digital audio tape	50. Cleft	74. Fib
25. Boxer Muhammad		75. Chief ancient Philistine god
27. Poisonous snake		76. Tighten
		77. Headed

Down			
1. Fifth book in the New Testament	12. Belief	35. Cycles per second	58. What you climb up
2. Poem creator	13. Bird's home	37. Snake like fish	60. Account (abbr.)
3. Tint	21. Wok	39. 10 grams (abbr. for dekagram)	61. Bill of...
4. Clip	23. Little bit	41. Syrian bishop	62. Black
5. ____ Indian	26. Limb	43. Monocle	64. Holler
6. Asian dress	28. Jab	46. Do without	65. Canal
7. Excited	29. Relating to the sun	48. Cozy room	66. Legal document
8. Very reluctant	30. Swelling	51. Stretch to make do	68. Duet
9. Ammunition chest	31. Tipped	53. Day of the wk.	70. Downwind
10. Ship initials	32. Cravat	56. Mature	
11. Temperate	33. Musical composition	57. __ fide	
	34. Decoration		



Solution on Page 17

## Bills, Bills, Bills



# Island Life

Text & photos by *Peter Ray*  
**Hip Check**

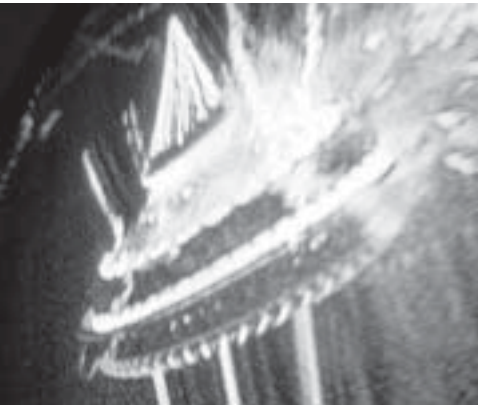
It has become one of those reflex reactions. I'll be, well, just about anywhere, and I'll see something a little bit unusual. The right hand will reach for the velcro flap on the pouch on my belt and before I know it I'm pointing the lens of this small, red camera object at whatever it was that had caught my eye. Somewhere



in there was perhaps a double take or a retraced set of steps or maybe even a hasty scramble to a place of better compositional perspective. I might push a set of buttons to change a mode or turn off the flash or zoom in for the close-up. Most of the time, though, I just tripped the shutter and viewed the results of what I'd just captured, and all pretty much instantaneously. Regardless of how our constant bombardment by new technologies seems to quickly numb us to their marvels, I can't help but think of magic every time an image is captured in this box.

This isn't to say that old school silver photography isn't just as mysterious. I had a photo instructor who insisted that if you questioned a scientist about the process of recording images on silver film, they could explain the physics of it, but not the reality of how it actually works. I never tested this possibility, mostly because I wanted to believe in the magic of the process more than its operative science. As for the leap to the digital age, I thought it would be more offensive. I was sure that there would be some kind of cosmic, karmic hell to pay for being wooed to the digital dark side. If there is, I haven't seen any evidence of it. Instead, I just continue to be amazed that I can point a camera the size of a pack of cards at pretty much anything, push a button, open a door on its side, plug in a short cord to a battery operated printer that is roughly two-thirds the size of my Webster's dictionary, and in less than two minutes have a four by six postcard print that just requires a stamp and an address to send it on its way. I don't care what anyone says to the contrary — this is magic.

As long as we are on the subject of mysteries, it should be said that if asked, I could not give you a good reason why having this capability is important to me. I suppose part of the reason is the toy factor — "Look at these shiny objects and just see what they can do..." There is also the "look at That!" factor that has been mentioned here before. By pointing a camera at something and pressing the shutter button, one is not only saying look at that, but also grabbing that instant and, in the digital world, sending a whole bunch of zeroes and ones scrambling to a fixed place in a certain order so that some small, electronic brain can, when asked, say "look at that" about that very same scene and instant at the click



of a computer mouse. It is the ease of a point and shoot camera combined with a plug and play printer that allows one to take all this very easily for granted.

When speaking of the universal "look at that" reflex, one also has to reference William Golding's book *The Inheritors* one more time. In it, his Neanderthal characters from those prehistoric times are able to share pictures with each other in a telepathic sense. The ability to transmit pictures through mental projection has been explored in any number of science fiction books, films and TV shows, but to think of it as a lost talent that the ancients once took for granted could also help to explain, perhaps, why we feel the need to share pictures with our fellow humans and to preserve memories in what has come to be known as a Kodak moment.

As far as postcards go, it used to be that when you visited somewhere you could get a printed picture of the given destination and send it to friends and relatives to share an image of where you've been. I have received any number of postcards with X's over hotel windows and a note on the other side stating that the X was where so and so had stayed. Now one can set the self-timer, jump into the scene and fire off a self-made postcard with personal evidence right on the front as to where it was you've been to. I could go into the whole other realm of magic involving attaching a small colored stamp to the corner of your postcard, writing some numbers

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and a name next to it, throwing it in a mail slot and having it show up days later in a mailbox miles away, but we have other fish to fry here, so to speak.

When I started this project I said it would last a year which should have ended with the last issue — sometimes I just don't think these things through. One year has been



enough. Sometimes, like this time, it was hard to come up with something new. The dark and the wet of late have not been conducive to the capture of imagery. I have, however, come up with three last images in this loosely defined series.

Along with these pictures comes a bit of a fiction. It involves a little boy who did not believe in magic. He was very practical, and any mention of anything that suggested a fantastic or metaphysical explanation for things was met by his skepticism and scorn. Then one day he was abducted by aliens and whisked off into space on an amazing flying saucer ship that was powered by magic and whimsy. The little boy would not have anything to do with the magical ship, and his negative attitude soon started to cause the ship and all its workings to shut down. Finally, the ship lost all its magical drive and crashed into a planet that happened to be near by.

The ship crashed into the surface of the planet sending bits and pieces flying everywhere. But instead of leaving the twisted wreckage, the last of the ship's magic went into turning all its scattered pieces into shapes and strings of colored lights. The little boy was not killed in the crash, but was turned into a statue that could only stand and see the fantastical scene that the last of the magic had created. But that was all he could do — stand and watch — until someone who believed in the magic might come along and free the boy from his solitary watch. The moral of the story, if that's what you might call it, is: magic can be a powerfully good thing, share it while you can. Peace out. ☺☺☺☺

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# We’ve Got a Lot of Kids

By Kevin Pottinger

My wife Maria did a magnificent job of Christmas at our house. She had been shopping under the radar for weeks: bags full of toys that could easily pass for groceries, brought in quietly under cover of the long December night.

She spent several days in the wrapping room. The kids were wondering why Mom was suddenly so secretive, so shift. Little kids are smart. If Mom is being evasive about her whereabouts and activities at Christmastime, she must be having an affair with Santa. And after all, they reasoned, who could blame her?

On Christmas morning, there were perhaps forty toys under the tree, in drifts three feet high in places. We had to rearrange the furniture to allow enough room to open them all.

When the kids started tearing into the presents, a wonderfully warm glow crept over me. So this is what Christmas is all about, I marveled. Excited kids, lots of crinkling wrapping paper, a round of hot chocolate before we got started, Mrs. Santa’s special attention to Mr. Santa last night. After almost fifty years, I thought I had discovered the meaning of Christmas.

But, sadly, no. The wonderful glow was a fleeting feeling of relief that the kids were at last quiet for a few minutes, for the first time in weeks. It was a beautiful, extraordinary quiet; a euphoric quiet, as short-lived as a five-dollar rock in a hot crack pipe, and the comedown was just as excruciating. Within minutes, multiple screaming fights broke out over the exclusive play rights to the Rescue Heroes Command Center, the Graco 8-in-1 Mini Stroller and a wadded-up ball of shiny gold wrapping paper.

From among the piles of wrapping, various toys honked, squeaked and buzzed begging for attention. The commander of a talking toy fighter jet muttered vaguely threatening demands to identify ourselves, the jet’s red wing lights glowing like gremlin

eyes, revving its engines menacingly, from its lair under an overstuffed chair. With its motion sensor, every time we walked by the chair it growled at us.

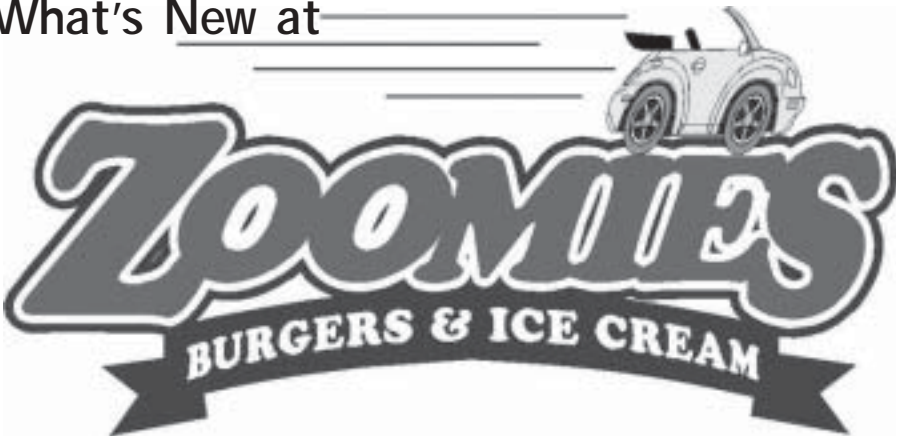
As the presents were unwrapped, our three-year-old daughter announced each toy to the family, exploding with a Texas cheerleader’s apoplectic enthusiasm for every toy. Our five-year-old boy opened his first present, “a Rescue Heroes Command Center!” his thrilled sister exulted, and thereafter he showed no interest in any of his other presents. Our eighteen-month-old twins weren’t interested in any toys whatever, except what interested their older siblings. I handed them half opened, gaily colored presents with bleating noises and flashing lights, urging them to finish the job, and the presents would fall to the floor after a passing glance, while they staggered over to attempt, yet again, to commandeer the Graco 8-in-1 Mini Stroller.

When all the toys were open, it looked like four hundred bucks worth of reservation firecrackers had been shot off in our living room. We lit a roaring fire and burned up the shredded bits of wrapping paper, packaging and ribbon, and I’m sure, several of the smaller toys that didn’t make their presence obvious.

Our kids got several toys from favorite family members that, once assembled, would take up most of the floor space in their bedrooms. If our kids had bedrooms, that is. In some adult’s minds, a Big Toy creates an equally large Big Fun, in a one-to-one, same-size relationship. Toy manufacturers know this. My view is that the Big Toys don’t justify their monopoly of airspace, and in fact, could be the exact same fun if they were an eighth their size. We haven’t yet put the Big Toys away; they sit like museum pieces in the living room, for lack of space anywhere else. And at this very minute our twins are having a blast throwing a soggy packet of Swiss Miss around.

What if you thought a thought, but the thought you thought wasn’t the thought that you thought you thought?

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# The Dorsal Spin: Dreaming of a Black and White New Year

by Orca Annie Stateler

We are experiencing a black and white drought. Southern Residents have been conspicuously absent from Island waters this holiday season. I can only speculate why: better fishing or more peace and quiet elsewhere.

Mark Sears last saw orcas on December 23. He left J Pod between Alki and Restoration Point on Bainbridge late in the afternoon. The whales were heading south. Did anyone on the east side of Vashon-Maury hear blows that night?

The Vashon Hydrophone Project (VHP) truly appreciates calls from Susan, Frank, and Cove neighbor Mark on December 16. You make a difference when you **report local whale sightings ASAP to 463-9041**.

J Pod was in rare form on the 16th as they traveled south in East Passage. The orcas foraged between the north end of Vashon and Tramp Harbor. As they approached Point Robinson, a few whales spyhopped or breached, others slapped tail flukes or pec flippers. With their oval eye patches above water, they undoubtedly saw their adoring audience on the beach.

I imagine those impish killer whales thinking, “Let’s make the humans squeal.” The first group, comprised of Granny (J2) and the families of Slick (J16) and Princess Angeline (J17), brushed past the point, porpoising. Princess Angeline’s daughter Polaris (J28) has a distinctive tear in the trailing edge of her dorsal fin, and it was visible without binoculars.

The two-leggeds expressed the requisite delight. One observer, a lifelong resident of Puget Sound, saw orcas for the first time, including Mike (J26), who shares his name. He was quite fortunate to have such a memorable first encounter with our endangered killer whales.

The second cluster of orcas, with Spieden (J8) and the families of



Blossom (J11) and Samish (J14), lagged several minutes behind. By then, a recreational boater was on the whales, and I believe his presence affected their behavior. This group swam farther offshore and shifted direction three times before passing the point.


Ruffles (J1) patrolled the perimeter to the east, but he rejoined his mum, Granny, in the first group when the whales assumed a resting formation farther south. In the afternoon, the same two groups of J’s continued to rest or travel slowly between Gold Beach and the VHP site in Colvos Pass.

At times, they made long soundings, especially in Dalco Pass when more recreational boaters converged on them. Resting whales are more vulnerable to disturbance. Boaters should be polite and stay a minimum of 200 yards away from resting orcas.

The sleepy orcas glided quietly over the hydrophone at 5:45 p.m., clicking faintly. Usually I watch the spectrogram when I am recording whales, but they swam so close to our bulkhead, I had to step outside. I could see fins in reflected light and fluke prints on the water’s surface. Their blows were loud, resonant, and impressive. What a gift.

‘Tis the season, dear readers, the only time of year I do a pledge break in the Dorsal Spin. Resist donor fatigue with a New Year’s resolution to help Puget Sound’s endangered orcas. Please “lend a fin” for the Vashon Hydrophone Project (VHP) with a check payable to ACS/Puget Sound Chapter, specifying VHP in the memo section. Mail to ACS/PS, Attn: Ann Stateler, P.O. Box 1202, Vashon, WA, 98070.

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I thank you for reading this column and supporting our work. Think fins and flukes for a black and white New Year. Contact Orca Annie at 463-9041 or Vashonorcas@aol.com. ◻◻◻◻



*Last spring, McMurray Teacher, Larry Dubois (pictured right with student Spencer Sinner on the left), guided students on a four-day kayaking trip around Vashon and Maury Islands. The group began and ended their trip at Jensen Point and learned kayak skills and safety, navigation and trip planning and natural and cultural history of the area during their adventure.*

## McMurray: Willingness to Change Saves Exploratory Week Tradition

By Mary Kay Rauma

Exploratory Week began 15 years ago when a McMurray teacher obtained a large grant to fund a program for curriculum-based experiences outside of the classroom environment. After two years, the grant ran out as did funds for staff time to organize the program so parents stepped in and took it over. As the years passed, the program changed. As volunteer parent, Terri Colello explains it, “The programs became more experiential and less curriculum-based, more expensive, and fundraising became an overwhelming burden.”

Last spring, Principal Allison gathered together a group of teachers, parents and students to form a steering committee and began to revisit the original intentions of the program. The end result is an Exploratory Week program that will be spearheaded by the teachers and administration of McMurray and executed in partnership with parents.

“Exploratory Week will be a curriculum-based program with clear learning objectives that is driven by a well-directed partnership between McMurray teachers, staff, and parents,” explains Allison. McMurray teachers will take the lead on developing programs that enhance

the curriculum they are teaching and will supervise the week excursions with their respective students.

Also new is an Exploratory Week Guidebook. “We have created a roadmap of how to run the program so there are consistent steps for each class to follow, clearly defined roles, curriculum guidelines, and timelines. This way, we aren’t reinventing the wheel year after year.” The steering committee has also established a cost limit for programs, a standard that will keep fundraising goals manageable.

Past Exploratory Week offerings have included film production, kayaking, wilderness survival, cooking, biking, dancing, and culture. In the Culture Exploratory, students visited and studied cultural pockets in the Puget Sound region. The Film Exploratory lead McMurray students through a week of a full movie production: writing a script, casting, filming, editing the film and culminating the week with a screening of their work at the Vashon Theatre.

“My daughter learned a lot during her wilderness week on Orcas Island,” explains parent Connie Sorensen. “The week was a huge confidence builder. It took her out of her usual group of friends and exposed her to new people that she formed a bond with. It was an invaluable preparation for high school and life.” ◻◻◻◻

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**Parallel Worlds**

We have just lived through the year that was a decade. It was a 14-month year, from Nov. 2, 2004 through Dec. 31, 2005, but with enough changes and developments to fill the average decade.  
Among the better-known events, those 14 months encompassed a second stolen presidential election, the Asian tsunami disaster, a series of hurricanes devastating to the Southeastern US as well as Mexico, Central America and parts of South America, and an earthquake centered in the Kashmir area between India and Pakistan. It was another deadly year in Iraq and a time of mounting political chaos in both Congress and the Executive Branch.

There was good news, in a left-handed kind of way. In the midst of it all, the chief of staff to Vice President Dick Cheney got indicted for crimes relating to the outing of CIA agent Valerie Plame. And, when nobody was really looking, 2005 turned out to be the year that climate change went from an imagined, allegedly controversial possibility, to something that we — everyone — has to deal with.

Astrologically, 2005 was a transitional year between two significantly different energetic landscapes. The main developments included:

1. The ingress of Saturn to Leo in mid-July. In my articles about this change, I documented that Saturn in Leo (which lasts for about three years out of every 29) is associated with the phenomenon of dams and levees bursting (these can be easily found on PlanetWaves.net). Within weeks of Saturn changing signs, we were faced with one of the most famous, if not the most famous, levee breaks in US history.
2. Chiron changing signs from Capricorn to Aquarius. Chiron in Capricorn was the essence of the “post 9/11 world,” beginning within days of the Enron bankruptcy in late 2001. On the collective level, Capricorn is the sign of corporations, governments, laws and structures of all

kinds. And we have certainly had our fill of news from these entities.

Chiron in Aquarius shifts the awareness from institution to community. Here is a pretty good example from the last cycle: Half a century ago, within weeks of the prior transit from Cap to Aquarius, Alan Ginsberg organized the first garage poetry readings that became the Beat Generation. Then through the late 1950s, we saw the uprising of a national Civil Rights movement in the United States, and many examples of the dawning of collective consciousness — though at the time, it looked mainly like change and turmoil that was frightening to many.

3. Two other Centaur planets changed signs. For those who follow astrology, the Centaurs are today what Neptune, Uranus and Pluto were in previous decades: something new, interesting, provocative and as well, something we don't collectively understand so well in the astrology community. Those Centaurs are Pholus (small cause, big effect) moving into Sagittarius and Nessus (the buck stops here) moving into Aquarius, along with Chiron. They all dipped into their new signs early in the year, and took up residence in the autumn.

4. Mars retrograde in Taurus. The exact retrograde spanned three months from mid-October through mid-December. Mars was in Taurus for several months on either side. Like Saturn in Leo, this is a once-per-three-decade kind of event, and not surprisingly it's associated with all the kinds of things we've seen in the second half of 2005 — natural disasters, fluctuations in the price of oil, and politics of a stormy, fiery nature.

So what is next?

Well, remembering that 2005 was largely a setup for what is coming in 2006, here is the rundown:

**Chiron conjunct Nessus in Aquarius.** In 2006 we will experience the second of two exact passes of this aspect, and a third, which is a near miss. The first exact one was May 13, 2005. The second will be Jan. 10, 2006. The third (the near miss) is Oct. 10, 2006. This is an aspect that will be igniting the Aquarius energy of what you might call “awareness to the people,” setting a pattern that will last for many years. Aquarius is about communities, the culture, the Internet, group responsibilities and group agreements. It is about the politics of the tribe and where the individual fits in. We all bear these wounds involving fitting in, and now is the time to address them by name, and to go beyond them.

**The Parallel Worlds Alignment.** In the first week of February, around the time of

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the Pagan holiday Imbolc, there is an unusual alignment between the Sun, Venus, Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto. It involves aspects by longitude (what sign the planets are in, exact by degree) and by declination (their distance north or south of the celestial equator). Hence, there are both aspects and parallels among this group of planets; what some would call a superaspect, which is one form of a cosmic trigger. As with Chiron conjunct Nessus, there is strongly implied the choice of where to put our consciousness; the choice of what we want to be aware of.

**Pluto Crossing the Galactic Core.** Though this is not exact until the last week of 2006, there is an exceptionally close alignment between Pluto and the Galactic Core (in late Sagittarius) during the first week of spring. This comes simultaneously with a solar eclipse, as well as the progressions in the Presidential Inauguration chart going off (part two — part one was the last week of October). This group of events, clustered together, will be the stunning sequel of what brought us the Scooter Libby indictment, only I think it's reasonable to expect something a little more satisfying. Pluto on the Galactic Core will be humanity's biggest push in a long, long while in the direction of, well, being humanitarian.

The GC, as an astrological point, teaches giving up our judgments, seeing the big picture, and learning lesson one taught by the Core: as within, so without. Or, as A Course in Miracles would put it, God/Goddess is not outside yourself. Pluto crossing this point is one of the last vital thresholds of the Pluto in Sagittarius era, which takes us back to the early 1990s when the world started to move in the undeniable direction of Jihad, be it Christian or Muslim.

**Saturn opposite Neptune.** This is the aspect beginning in August, but which has been vibrating around since last summer (and which continues well into 2007) that you're most likely to read about when cruising the Internet or a commercial astrological publication. It is the meeting of Saturn in Leo opposite Neptune in Aquarius. Saturn in Leo (of “when the levee breaks” fame) opposite Neptune in Aquarius (“let's get fooled again and again and again and slowly, gradually wake up”) means:

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something comes to a head. It is a face-to-face meeting between two very different energies: the solid nature of Saturn in Leo and the watery, ideologically foggy nature of Neptune in Aquarius.

There is political as well as individual information in this aspect. Mass consciousness becomes aware of something particular. That something begins to respond to the pressure. It is compelling that the first pass of this three-part aspect occurs on the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina making landfall. There, we had one of many examples of land meets sea; of idea meets reality; of some overwhelming presence inundating something that would not move; and mainly of a very significant turning point in history.

Much more is written at the Parallel Worlds web page, accessible from PlanetWaves.net.

◻◻◻◻

**Frisbeetarianism (n.):**  
*The belief that, when you die, your Soul flies up onto the roof and gets stuck there.*



# LIVING WELL WITH PLANTS

**Text and drawings by Kathy Abascal (AHG)**



# Dieting with Herbs

The New Year has arrived, and it is suddenly time to implement our New Year's resolutions. Polls show that losing weight is the most common resolution, followed closely by quitting smoking and sticking to a budget.

I am often asked for herbs to help stimulate weight loss. We are a quick fix culture, and believe at our core that there is a magic cure for every ailment. There simply must be a pill or potion out there that will help melt away the pounds, just like there is a purple pill that will soothe heartburn while you continue eating pizza and other greasy foods. I have mixed feelings about recommending herbs for weight loss because the abuse of herbs in this arena is the source of serious problems for herbal medicine.

There is big money to be made by offering quick fix, magic potions. Americans spent some 30 billion dollars last year to help them lose weight. Weight loss formulas often combine high doses of caffeine with high doses of herbs that have a stimulant effect on the body. Historically, these herbs have never been used for weight loss and are not traditionally used in the doses prescribed. As might be expected, these stimulants prove too strong for some of the overweight people who believed that all they needed to become trim and slim was a little nudge to their metabolism. Reports of heart attacks are soon followed by newspaper stories on the dangers of herbal medicine generally, and proposed bans on herbs that are highly useful, if used properly.

The classic example is ephedra. Ephedra, in small doses, has been used for thousands of years to dry mucus membranes and relieve symptoms of allergies and asthma. One of its constituents, pseudoephedrine, is a common ingredient in over-the-counter cold medicines. Ephedra is highly effective when used properly but in high doses can overstimulate the

heart, especially when combined with caffeine. Ephedra and several other useful herbs were banned after gullible people misused the herb to stimulate weight loss, not one of its traditional uses.

Presently, the FDA is considering a ban on bitter orange supplements. In traditional Chinese medicine, the peel of the bitter orange is thought highly useful to stimulate appetite in frail, sick people and is also used in a variety of digestive disorders. It contains synephrine, a compound similar structurally to the stimulant ephedrine. Again, because people are taking high doses of the herb combined with caffeine, in a way contrary to its traditional use (to squelch rather than stimulate appetite), they are suffering adverse effects. I expect the news will soon be filled with stories about the dangers of herbal medicine because once again gullible people are ignoring tradition and common sense, hoping to lose weight effortlessly.

Another popular weight loss supplement is a South African herb, *Hoodia gordonii*. The San bushmen traditionally used this succulent to reduce food cravings in times of food scarcity. It appears that it may quiet the brain's response to a starvation condition. Of course, the San bushmen typically are physically fit, lean people who use *Hoodia* when there is no food around. Today it is being sold as a safe, effective remedy

for unfit, overweight people facing an abundance of tempting foods. Moreover, most of what is sold as Hoodia is not Hoodia at all. This plant is endangered, and would already have been wiped out if most of the supplements sold

actually contained the right plant. Instead, most people are taking a supplement that contains an unidentified plant for a non-traditional use.

Another heavily advertised dietary supplement, Cortislim, targets cortisol as the cause of obesity. Relacor also focuses on this stress hormone. "Cortisol causes belly fat. You need Relacor." Relacor blends some vitamins with some nervine and adaptogenic herbs. Nervines and adaptogens can help people deal with stress which may help them stick with a weight loss program. They will not, however, melt away belly fat. Relacor is quite expensive, and contains some herbs that unfortunately are often adulterated in commerce (such as skullcap and Chinese ginseng) but it otherwise seems to be a harmless formula. Cortislim provides some vitamins along with green tea extract and



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bitter orange extract. I would not recommend either one.

Losing weight is a struggle with an addiction to the wrong foods and a habit of not exercising enough. I do not think there is a safe herbal or a pharmaceutical pill that will make it easy to lose weight. Drinking lots of green tea will not magically boost your metabolism but it is a healthy beverage. A well chosen adaptogen will make you more motivated to stick with your diet plan, and a nervine can calm you enough that you do not grab a pastry out of anger or frustration. In the end, however, weight loss is about learning to eat reasonably, and finding fun ways to exercise. Personally, I am going to use flamenco and world step classes to boost my metabolism and reduce my stress levels, and quit eating sugar in any form.



Kathy Abascal is a professional member of the American Herbalists Guild and is certified by Michael Moore of the Southwest School of Botanical Medicine. She co-authored the book “Clinical Botanical Medicine.”

If you have questions about herbs, come by Minglement on Mondays or Wednesdays to meet Kathy. If you are interested in a private herbal consultation, you can pick up a brochure at Minglement that explains her services & how to schedule an appointment

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Book Review

by Rachel Bard

Words, Words, Words

*The Professor and the Madman*, by Simon Winchester. HarperCollins, 1999. Paperback, Harper Perennial, 2005.

Could it be a murder mystery with a moral?

It begins with the dastardly killing of an innocent man on a dark street in a sinister London slum. There's diligent detective work by eager sleuths. The murderer is judged incurably insane and is locked up. He finds redemption by joining forces with the detectives, and the Sleuth-in-Chief becomes his staunch friend.

But the analogy falls apart. The sleuths aren't looking for criminals. They're on the trail of word derivations and how they've been used over the centuries. And the central character in the gripping tale is neither the editor nor the murderer who becomes one of the word-sleuths. It's the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a set of 12 hefty tomes that were 70 years in the compiling.

Simon Winchester's subtitle signals that this is no dry literary history: "*A Tale of Murder, Insanity, and the Making of the Oxford English Dictionary*." No mean sleuth himself, he's dug deep to unearth the story of the creation of the *OED*.

The Professor is James Murray, a Scot with a voracious appetite for knowledge. Since his parents couldn't send him on to school after he turned 14, he taught himself: geology, geography, history, languages. Even as a youth he was eager to pass it on. He tried to teach the local cows to respond to commands in Latin.

In 1877 he was tapped as editor of an audacious project: A dictionary of all English words, with their nuances of meaning, their spelling and pronunciation, their etymology, and with illustrative quotations from English authors.

No one man, no team of men, could do the prodigious research this entailed. So Murray recruited volunteers to comb through the whole body of English published works since 1250 to find where words were first used. Murray and his staff pored over these hundreds of thousands of references and supplied for each word its etymology, definition and illustrative quotations.

After five years the first installment was published—A to Ant.

In 1884 enter the Madman. Dr. William Chester Minor, an erudite American, had been a surgeon in the Civil War and witnessed terrible things. Perhaps because of what we'd call post-traumatic stress

disorder he became deranged, believing enemies were lying in wait to persecute him. He moved to London. One night, convinced in his delusion that someone had broken into his room, he rushed out to the streets and shot the first man he saw. He confessed to the murder and was committed to Broadmoor Asylum for the Criminally Insane.

He was permitted to bring his vast book collection, a great comfort to him. But he was bored. When he came across a flyer from Murray asking for volunteer readers for the dictionary project, it seemed heaven-sent. The work was his therapy. "The routine of his quiet and cell bound intellectual stimulus," Winchester writes, "month upon month, year upon year, appears to have provided him with at least a measure of release from his paranoia."

Painstaking, accurate, prolific—he amazed Murray and his colleagues. He offered no personal information. They guessed from his address: "Dr. William Minor, Broadmoor, Crowthorne, Berkshire" that he was a retired physician with money and leisure for intellectual pursuits.

So began a twenty-year long-distance collaboration, with neither man knowing much about the other but with growing mutual respect.

Winchester gives two versions of how Murray and Minor finally met. The apocryphal one, with which the book opens, is the more charming—so much so that I wouldn't dream of giving it away by quoting it here.

Neither man was present when Oxford University Press finally brought out the *OED* in 1928. Murray had died in 1915, Minor in 1920. The work defined 414, 825 words (Samuel Johnson's dictionary, the previous standard, had 43,500) with 1,827,306 illustrative quotations, including tens of thousands contributed by Minor.

The New York Times hailed the *OED*'s making as "one of the great romances of English literature." The curmudgeonly H. L. Mencken, himself a philologist (he wrote *The American Language*) couldn't keep the admiration out of his satirical account. He hoped the folks at Oxford would celebrate "with military exercises, boxing matches between the dons, orations in Latin, Greek, English and the Oxford dialect, yelling matches between the different Colleges and a series of medieval drinking bouts."

Oxford put out a second, 20-volume edition in 1989 that's constantly updated. You may consult it on-line through the library. But try to track down the 1928 edition. I've located copies at the Burien branch of KCLS and at the University of Washington's Suzzallo Library. James Murray, Editor, is prominently credited. Dr. William Chester Minor is buried in the long list of contributors. After reading this book you'll agree with Winchester: finding his name is an intensely touching moment. ∞∞∞∞

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**VoV on TV**  
*Continued from page 1*

wire the Island by King County. King County is the second group whose involvement, embodied in Rep. Dow Constantine's office, was absolutely crucial. Third is the Voice of Vashon, Island Community Radio, the Island's only radio station, which has been broadcasting on the Internet since 2000, and which will be Channel 21's sole content provider in the early going. And, finally, Vashon College, in the person of Tom Bangasser, became the fourth and deciding element by providing rent-free space at Courthouse Square to house the equipment that will turn the Voice of Vashon's radio signal, still generated in their studios on Sunrise Ridge, into the audio stream on Channel 21, TV.

Throughout, VoV's Vice President, Dan Schueler, has been the project's principal point man and

ball carrier, with critical assistance from the County's Chris Jaramillo, VoV Board Member, Sylvia Cates, and Islander Marc Pease, without whose early activism and advocacy VoV-TV might never have happened at all.

Every effort will be made to encourage these folks to speak, as well as Ron Sims and Dow Constantine, from the County; Alden Alo from Comcast; Susan McCabe from VoV, Tom Bangasser of Vashon College, and Jim English from the Community Council, without whose blessing VoV-TV could not have come to fruition. Jeff Hoyt, popularly believed to be the Voice of Vashon, will emcee.

Refreshments will be served and there will be a booth, manned by VoV volunteers, where children can make station ID's for the Voice of Vashon and VoV-TV and adults can memorialize their own contributions to the event.





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## Island Epicure

by Marj Watkins

### Citrus Fruit Blessings

For Christmas my Texas brother always sends me a box of giant, sweet, ruby red Texas grapefruit. As I write, at the end of December, we’re enjoying the last of them. Along with the super-grapefruit came an interesting history of citrus fruits and a couple of recipes.

I was not surprised to learn that lemon, limes, oranges, and grapefruit, as well as dozens of other kinds of citrus fruits go back a long ways, but probably not as far back as the Garden of Eden. I used to think oranges originated in Spain since early peoples there had an orange goddess, and the Greeks’ “golden apples” were thought to actually be oranges sought by heroes who voyaged to the Iberian Peninsula.

I was wrong about oranges being native to Spain. The flyer in my Christmas present says that the Middle East, Africa, and Spain received the blessings of delicious, refreshing citrus fruits along with the Arabian expansion into Mediterranean lands, Spain, and Northern Africa some time after the Roman Empire fell. The Arabs may have got their orange seeds from Chinese explorers. Eight hundred years ago, Chinese scholars wrote of many, many citrus varieties growing in Southeast Asia.

In Korea we sampled a thorn-tree born orange so acidic it nearly melted my teeth. In China, we got one so bitter none of our group—son Steve, husband John, and I—could eat it.

It seems the first really sweet, totally edible orange developed in Portugal around 1646. The seeds Indians scattered in Florida from oranges given them by Spanish explorers probably produced sour fruit. Columbus is

said to have brought the first oranges with him to Haiti on his second voyage to the New World, a couple of centuries before sweet oranges were invented.

Enjoy a healthy, colorful orange salad with winter meals, knowing this sun-filled fruit gives you plenty of Vitamin C and flavinoids to help combat or ward off winter colds.

The recipe serves six. If you haven’t got six people, use 1 orange for each diner and proportionately less of the other ingredients, or offer the dressing separately so that leftover salad can be held in the refrigerator, well covered in plastic, for another meal. Keeps for two days if the greens are dry.

#### South Texas Orange Salad

Makes six servings

6 oranges

Zest of 1 orange

2 Tablespoons powdered sugar or Splenda®

¼ cup olive oil

3 Tablespoons lemon juice

pinch salt

½ teaspoon ground cumin

Salad greens

1 cup dried cranberries

½ cup toasted pecans or slivered almonds

Grate zest of 1 orange and reserve. Mix sugar, oil, lemon juice, salt, and cumin plus the orange zest in the bottom of a large bowl. Add greens and cranberries. Toss well and divide among six salad plates. Dice or slice oranges and top the greens with them. Sprinkle each salad with pecans or slivered almonds.

○○○○

Flatulence (n.): emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.

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## Disaster Preparedness: Good News, But Still Challenged

Vashon’s preparations for a potential disaster took a step forward this week when the Vashon Disaster Preparedness Coalition received a check for \$8,350 from Vashon Rotary. The presentation took place in the radio communications room of the Vashon Emergency Operations Center, one of the facilities that will be improved through the grant. Funds will go to purchase four satellite phones to ensure that the Island’s emergency responders and disaster assistance volunteers will be able to communicate with mainland agencies even if normal telephone and cellphone connections go down, as they might during a major earthquake, volcanic eruption or significant weather event. Funds will also go for several portable generators to supply emergency power at disaster response and relief locations such as emergency kitchens and shelters, critical supplies locations such as the pharmacy, as well as mass casualty or rescue sites.

This grant does not replace any of the money lost through County Executive Sims’ veto a couple of weeks ago. “Those grants were for different things. We are still working on restoring the County (Sims) money,” said May Gerstle.

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## Madame T ajours

Dear Madame Toujours,

After ten years of marriage, my husband Conrad has lost interest in me. He’s never interested in romance anymore. He just comes home from work, plops down in front of the TV, and that’s the last I see of him unless I want to sit and watch professional wrestling all night. If I insist on turning off the TV, he spends the evening reading professional wrestling magazines.

I’ve tried talking about the issue in a straightforward and loving way emphasizing the fact that I love him and want to spend more time being close to him, and he always agrees that we should spend more quality time together, then he gets up and leaves the room and doesn’t come back until I am asleep. I’m sure there’s no one else, and he acts like he loves me. He’s never had a “performance problem.” He just isn’t interested in me anymore.

I’m starting to wonder if I should just stop bothering him and start, well, outsourcing. It’s not like Conrad would miss it. He might even be grateful to have the pressure off. What do you think?

Sincerely,

Woman in her Sexual Prime

Chere Mme. Prime,

Quelle damage. Clearly, M. Conrad, he is falling into the unfortunate habits of the alpha male gorilla. This is the little-known fact that the alpha male gorilla, he is having almost never the sex at all. Naturally, the female gorillas, they are being very annoyed by this, but

they are not having the books about the *psychologie populaire*, so there is nothing they can be doing about it.

You are mistakenly supposing that the sex, it is something the male person does with you. Therefore, if M. Conrad, he is not wishing to do the sex with you, then all of the perfectly good sex, it is going to waste, and you should be free to do the sex with the needy person who is making the good use for it.

However, the male persons such as M. Conrad are never being interested in doing the sex; they are interested in owning the sex. M. Conrad feels that the sex with you, it is the valuable commodity which is belonging to him. When M. Conrad was young and the sex with you was new, he was being obliged to take it out and use it very frequently to prevent anybody else from getting it. However, now that everybody knows he is the owner of the sex, he is grateful that he is no longer having to work so hard and can concentrate all the attention on lying about eating the grubs and the bananas.


Bon Chance, Mme. Prime, but unfortunately, the moment you are slipping into the underbrush with the young male who is not having any sex of his own, M. Conrad, he is suddenly furious that you have stolen the sex from him and given it to somebody else. This is not being very sensible, but it is nevertheless true.

○○○○

I don’t suffer from insanity; I enjoy every minute of it.



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# Positively Speaking

By Deborah Anderson

## Goody Two Shoes Loses Her Virginity

It's 3:50 a.m. The sound of the cat bringing up a hairball woke me from a dead sleep twenty minutes ago. My sudden rush towards him to change his location apparently made him change his mind. I am left with non-regurgitating cat and total wakefulness. (The cats have definitely gotten too much column space in these missives over the course of the last year.)

As I followed him out to the kitchen, I noticed the log in the woodstove was still burning strongly enough I could throw another one in and maybe keep the heater from kicking on during the remainder of this blustery night. It's glowing and warm now.

So here I sit in my idyllic little cottage in the wood in the quiet of the night, the pendulum clock marking the passing of the seconds, the wind outside reminding me we are not ever very far from the water's edge on this Island.

I cherish the peace of it. Someone over town wanted to point out my abode is actually a gentrified single wide. They don't understand rural living. It's a cottage.

There are two ongoing problems I can't solve at this hour of the morning. Over the course of this next month, both issues will resolve themselves for the better. It's a certainty. I'm left with a long list of things for which I am grateful.

My kids have beat the odds of single parent kids and are living a great present with a terrific future. I'm entering one of the most satisfying chapters (pardon the pun) of my life, and I recently discovered it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. Because of all of this, in the year 2006, I'm going to be able to reverse a whole lot of damage that was done when I went through life with duct tape and a hammer as I searched for authenticity in mid-life. (Hey...Erik Erikson told me I had to. Don't blame me. I was just looking for my true hairstyle and my own voice).

It wasn't always so. There have been too many nights in the last ten years when I was awake with tormenting dilemmas, having either been roused by anxiety or maybe never having gotten to sleep in the first place. For a long time, I was up to my neck in people who were making bad choices because they

couldn't handle their inner pain. They were affecting my credit rating. I set some limits and they went away. It didn't help my credit rating.

I spent the necessary time sorting it out, picking up the pieces and starting over. I found I had more friends who loved me than I knew I did.

The one point of focus for me was to never take the easy way no matter how hard or 'round the barn the path of integrity seemed to be. I tried to live as honestly as I could. Again and again, it cost me jobs. I discovered people who hung on to their jobs kept their mouth shut a lot. But, I'm glad for it. My children mocked me for being a goody two shoes, although my son later thanked me that I didn't drown my sorrows in drink or men.

Actually I AM a goody two shoes preppy who was born with a penny in her loafer. I went through the sixties without ever trying pot. I didn't protest Vietnam because I thought everyone was just trying to get out of Spring quarter finals and would end up in Wall Street anyway. Now, I don't believe in sex outside of marriage. But worst of all I came off as arrogant. One person actually told me about ten years ago my standards were too high. I did tire of losing jobs and looking like a flake, but I had my integrity.

During this time when my morals resembled the fifties housewife with the apron and the pearls, there was one friend I was, secretly, deeply jealous of. She had it all, the house the kids, the husband who had turned everything around to support his family and bought her wonderful gifts and took her wonderful places. I longed for what she had. I felt like such a loser; a goody two shoes loser. Why had she gotten everything with virtually no sacrifice? It wasn't fair.

Recently I found out it was all only appearances. Stunningly, I realized that I, who had a deficit cash flow repeatedly, one date in the last ten years because I was putting my kids first (and knew I'd pick a loser anyway), about a hundred extra pounds, starting over from the bottom up was the one who had everything. In that one instance of hearing the news that all was lost for her, I hated my intergrity, I DID

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feel arrogant, and I would have done anything to make her pain go away.

I know my friend is up right now too. She isn't feeling the contentment and peace I'm experiencing. Her thoughts are not drifting towards the lovely possibilities of the New Year. This will be a year she simply endures.

It's been humbling for me. I've stopped looking at people who make easy, bad choices as somehow making my life harder. I've realized we're all just a hair's breadth away from making a bad choice. I had a particularly Graced ability to handle hardship without taking a dive. God had empowered me with the ability to endure without having to numb the pain. God taught me how to cry in the middle of the night and live through feeling like I would split in half without choosing to ease the pain. It was nothing I did. It was a gift. "There but for the Grace of God, go I". One of my kids asked me when she was little, "Mommy, who was the first person to ever have a bad time?" Without missing a beat I told her, "Her name was Eve dear, and it's been all down hill since then."

If, as this new year begins, you are making a decision to make better choices, I affirm you. Be kind to yourself, love yourself and make the most of what you have been given. If you are in the middle of knowing that this year, you will be making some bad choices and feel powerless to choose otherwise, know that I finally understand. I want to encourage you to honor yourself as the unique gift you are to the world.

I'm going back to bed now to wait for the sun to rise.

In the beginning of this New Year, I wish the deep peace of the running wave to you. May this year bring all the love and joy and a keeping of yourself that you can be blessed with. In times of hardship or contentment try to do the best job of living you can, and know that God carries your picture in his wallet. I just learned that even if you make a bad choice, He keeps that picture right where it is.

Be Blessed and Happy New Year.

# Heart Goals

By Laura Worth, MSW

## Setting Goals That Inspire

Don't assume it represents a flaw in your character if you have failed to act on certain goals you set for the past year. Many times we set goals that are not very inspiring and then berate ourselves when we stop working toward them.

If you are having trouble taking action toward a goal, I suggest that you first detach yourself from it and examine the underlying reasons that it may be important to you.

I call these underlying reasons "heart goals."

For example, if you dream of writing an award-winning book, ask yourself "Why does that matter to me?" The answer can be a clue to your heart goals. Unfortunately, many of us will never experience the satisfaction that comes from addressing these deeper heart goals. This may simply be because the focus is instead on a long term result that is vague and lifeless.

Do you love words and enjoy expressing yourself? Start a written journal. If you crave fame from publishing, could your work be self-published right now?

Heart goals can get us going in the right direction right now. Once we're in action, if we remain curious and pay attention to opportunities we can define long term goals to be more clearly in line with heart goals that will motivate us to action.

Bring your goals to life today! And don't play small.

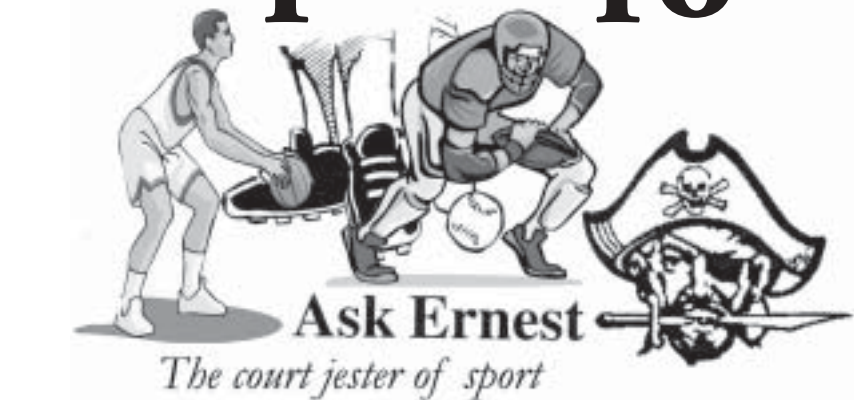
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Esplanade (v.): to attempt an explanation while drunk.



# Loop ~ Sports



Where the Wild Things Are! (Was Max really a king or was he just tripping?)  
VHS Wrestlers ponder this question, thus succumbing to mediocrity and conventional thinking processes.

**Rick's Rankings Get Richer**  
They're back. He's done with his research; Hunting and Life are both relevant in irrelevance. That's what Rick says, anyway. But, more importantly, he's got a new set of rankings. Rankings to bring in the new year. Richer Rankings — more intense, insightful and delightful. Check 'em out!

Richer Rankings! (Done by Rick Wheeler, writer of Rick's Rankings)1. Carl Blumgren. He showed up to Bob's on time. And only ate one oat cake.2. Terry Hershey. T. wrote about Carl and Dan at Bob's. Next time maybe he'll stop in. 3. (tie) Eric Blingham. He's getting married! And his proposal only lasted 3 hours 26 minutes!3. (tie) Daniel Puz. She's getting married! She listened for 3 hours 26 minutes! Then said yes!5. Lana Turner. She's back like the lion in Chronicles of Narnia.6. Liza Hoggins. For believing in anything, and then believing again.7. The Up Doggz. Champs again! 3 times, chill rhymes.8. Me. I'm back in the top 10. I can't help it.  
9. Shastasha. She's a top 10, too, but not ahead of her man because that's me, Rick. 10. Mike Holmgren. God Bless those Hawks, even if God may not care. I said may not...11. Brent Barnes. He orchestrated a world class beating on Sedro Wooley. And he loves the football!12. Andy Knutsen. Brilliant JV match announcing. Voice like honey, rhymes like ice. Hey Ernest, Give me some updates on the VHS Boys Basketball and the Boys and Girls Wrestling Teams. I'll try to fit them into my next freestyle at Bumpershoot next year. (Meanwhile, go to one of the games and when you're there, MAKE THE MOST NOISE THAT YOU'VE MADE IN YOUR ENTIIIIIRREEEE LIFE!) — Gift of Gab Okay, here's some brief news. Ernest VHS Boys Basketball They remain undefeated with big wins over Seattle Christian, Meridian,


South Whidbey and Cedarcrest. They are currently in Phoenix, Arizona at a tournament.

Girls Basketball Currently in Orlando, Florida, playing ball and getting used to the time zone. Boys and Girls Wrestling Wrestlers are undefeated entering the new year. Sylvie Shiosaki placed 2nd at the Moses Lake Girls Invitational. Tri-State Results: (55 team tournament in Idaho): Individual Record in Parenthesis. Freight Train Gateman 1st Place, dominated every opponent. Alex Steamboat (1-2) Alex Gateman (1-2) Wil' Flower Volker (3-2) Big Bill Olsen (2-2) Micah Jordan Sohl (3-2) Duncan Mayshark (3-2) Wes Work (1-2). 00000

## YMCA Fitness

*Continued from page 1*

families in all) for the YMCA Cardio Challenge. The Cardio Challenge is an annual Vashon YMCA-sponsored community event that spans from the first of December through the end of February and encourages all, including non-YMCA members, to log cardio time that is then converted into miles and applied toward a collective distance goal. Last year's goal was to gather enough miles to equal the equator. Participants of the Cardio Challenge call-in team totals every week and Lynanne became her team's leader, tracking individual miles. "I'm not a competitive person, but when I started to hear what other people in my family were doing I began to hear this inner voice say 'If they can do that, I can do that too.'"  
Lynanne found activities that she could do with her sports injury and the injury healed as she became stronger. "I discovered the weight training classes at the Vashon YMCA and worked on the stationary bike and elliptical machine." After the Cardio Challenge ended, Lynanne's sisters asked her to meet the ultimate



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challenge. "My sister, Beth Haslelton, asked me to participate in the Danskin triathlon and my other sister, Lisa Cyra, invited me to join both her and Beth on the American Lung Association Trek Tri-Island bike race." Lynanne went on to train for and complete both successfully.  
"I still can't believe that I did it," exclaims Lynanne. "It has been incredibly empowering and has propelled me into a completely different lifestyle. I feel healthier, happier, and I get great pleasure from setting fitness goals and working towards them."  
Sue had already made big nutritional strides by the time she joined the YMCA last year. She tried to exercise at home on her own

program, but found that she was inconsistent. The YMCA provided the structure, fitness options, environment, and supportive community that she was looking for. She started on the elliptical trainer, then moved to running on the treadmill, and, eventually, added-in weights after her cardio work out.  
The turning point, however, was when Sue discovered step aerobics. "I think we all have a fitness activity that is a good fit and I found mine in step aerobics," she explains. "I loved the fact that I had a group of people that missed me when I wasn't there. I liked the pace of the class, the instructor, and the music. I really looked forward to exercising which is something I never thought I'd do."  
Sue visits the Vashon YMCA five days a week. She has lost several pant sizes since joining, but what she is most proud and astonished of is the fact that she is no longer on any medication—something she was told was impossible. "The exercise has turned my health around and really helped with my depression." Sue gets her blood work checked on a regular basis and is aware that some day she may need to go back on some of her medicine, but she remains hopeful.  
She is certain of one thing. She will continue to go to the Vashon YMCA where she connects with familiar faces and reaps the rewards of a good workout. 00000

**Anyone can participate in the Cardio Challenge and it is not too late to participate! Just call 206-463-0551 or drop by the Vashon YMCA at the corner of Vashon Highway and S.W. Gorsuch Road.**

**If you would like to join The Vashon YMCA, there is a 50% off the joining fee for the month of January. Financial assistance is available.**

**The Vashon YMCA is open Monday through Thursday from 5 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Friday 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sunday 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**



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Loopy Laffs

Procrastinate Now!

A university creative writing class was asked to write a concise essay containing the following elements: 1. Religion 2. Royalty 3. Sex 4. Mystery. The prize-winning essay read: "For Heavens Sakes," said the Queen, "I'm pregnant. I wonder who did it?"

I walked into Zoomie's and asked for a hot fudge sunday with extra hot fudge. "Hot fudge only comes in one temperature," said the girl behind the counter.

OneLiners

(more or less)

Love is insanity with a collaborator.  
He's a psychoceramic, a cracked pot.  
Patience is an investment that never fails.  
Earth is the insane asylum for the universe.  
Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go.  
I hated to graduate from High School. It was the happiest ten years of my life.  
I had a muscle twitching yesterday—that's the most exercise I've had in years.  
My husband and I divorced over religious differences. He thought he was God and I didn't.  
I went for a walk last night and my kids asked me how long I'd be gone. I said, "The whole time."

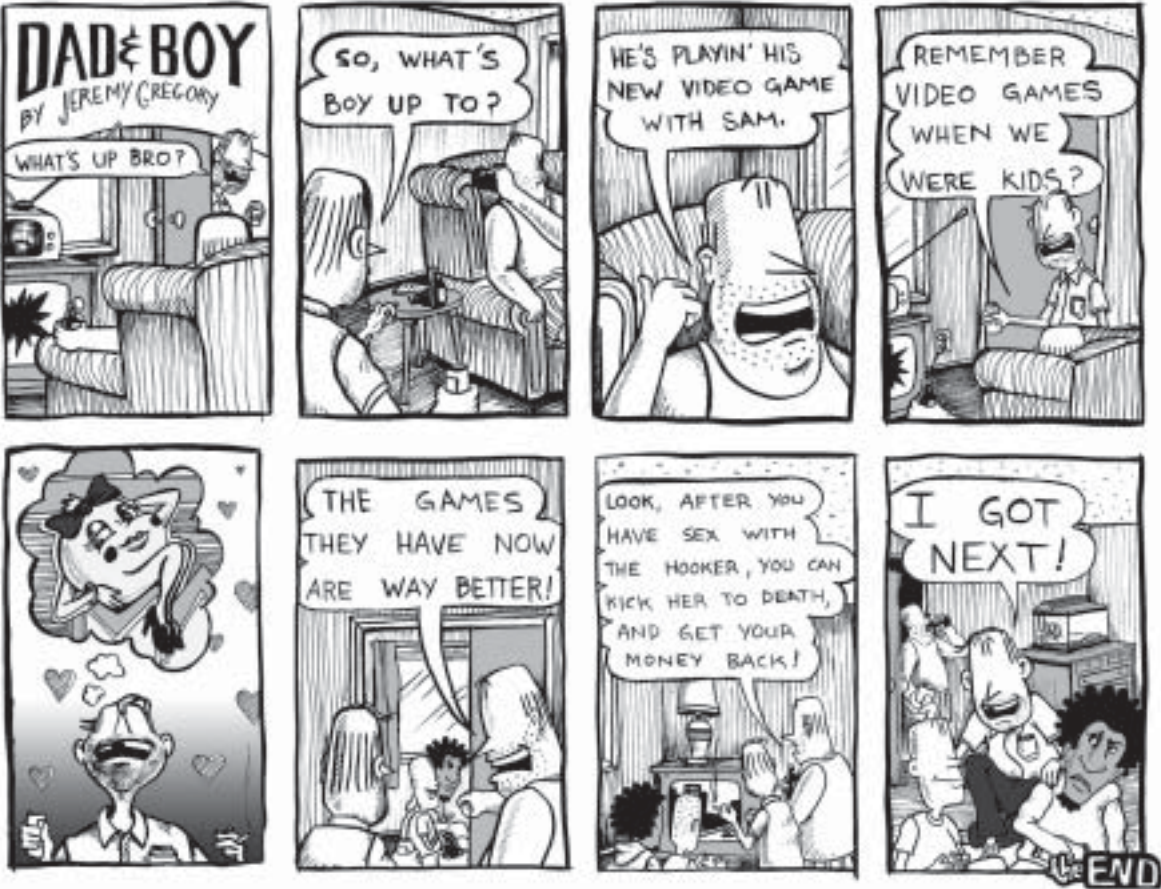
An elerly Island woman called 911 dispatch to report a fire in Luana Beach. The dispatcher, unfamiliar with the Island, asked, "How do we get there?" "Don't you still have those little red trucks?" asked the elder caller.

A juggler, driving to his next performance, is stopped by a traffic cop. "What are these matches and lighter fluid doing in your car?" asks the officer. "I'm a juggler and I juggle flaming torches in my act." "Oh yeah?" says the doubtful cop. "Let's see you do it." The juggler gets out and starts juggling the blazing torches masterfully. A couple driving by slows down to watch. "Wow," says the driver to his wife. "I'm glad I quit drinking. Look at the test they're giving now!"

I was behind a woman at the Post Office buying stamps for her Christmas cards. "What denomination?" asked the clerk. "Oh, good heavens! Have we come to this?" said the woman. "Just give me 50 Methodist and 50 Catholic."



Princess, having had sufficient experience with princes, seeks frog.





# LoopArts

## Jess Grant at Cafe Luna

Performing Songwriter Jess Grant will appear at Cafe Luna on **Saturday, January 21** starting at 7:30 p.m.

Jess Grant writes songs to amuse and provoke. His acoustic CD, *The Washington Waltz* (2003), was critically well-received — according to *Victory Review*, “Grant presents one outrageous or innovative idea after another, projecting a self-effacing honesty...” He was heard on NPR’s *Car Talk* in 2004 and appeared at the NW Folklife Festival in 2005. With influences like Utah Phillips, Steve Earle and Sheryl Crow, Grant fuses lyrical intensity, diverse pop styles and working-class ethics into a radical folk hybrid. When not playing his own material, Jess can

be heard rocking out as the leader of Jett City, the world’s only tribute band to Joan Jett.



Jess Grant Photo by Suzanne Juergensen

## Blue Heron Art Classes Bring Light to Winter Days

Winter has arrived in all its drippy, chilly glory. So while waiting around for spring, why not take an art class? There’s a whole new schedule of Vashon Allied Arts classes open for children and adults with registration already in progress. Call Blue Heron Art Center for scholarship applications, complete schedule and more information, 463-5131.

Whether you want to try Irish Stepdancing, theater classes, pottery or watercolor painting, there’s something for nearly age and interest. And nearly every class is taught by Island artists. Call today or pick up an Island View for the VAA Winter class schedule.

## Somatic Movement Classes

Experience your body-mind through movement! Somatic Movement classes blend explorations of our living anatomy in motion and evolutionary movement patterns with dance improvisation skills, leading to joyful experiences in integrated and expressive moving. No prior dance experience is necessary.

**Dancing InsideOut:** somatic movement for kids ages 6-12. Classes meet weekly, beginning Monday, January 23rd through March 27th. Kids ages 6-9 years meet from 3:45 to 4:30 p.m.; kids ages 10-12 years meet from 4:45 to 5:30 p.m. Cost for the entire 10-class series is \$100.

**Dancing the Body-Mind:** somatic movement for adults. Classes will meet every other week from January 19th through March 30th on Thursday eves from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. Cost for the entire 6-class series is \$90.

All classes will meet at the Havurat building on West Side Highway. Somatic Movement classes are facilitated by Stacey Hinden, dancer, somatic movement educator, Registered Movement Therapist and Certified Practitioner of Body-Mind Centering® with over 20 years experience.

For more information and registration call Stacey at 227-5534 or email: stacey\_b@comcast.net



## Artist Reception at Café Luna This Friday

Photographer David Orton’s work will be on display at Café Luna in January, and you can meet Orton at a reception for him on Friday, January 6, during the First Friday Gallery Cruise.

Orton says, “I am in love with mountains, desert, ocean, and everything in between. I am particularly in love with people. and while primarily an environmental photographer find myself drawn to photograph and write about us all.”

Photos by David Orton  
Left: Cactus Flower; Right, Headlight.



Leroy Bell and His Only Friends

## LeRoy Bell Plays Vashon!

By Janice Randall

Vashon Allied Arts’ winter music performance season will be launched in style when Leroy Bell and His Only Friends light up a dark January night with their acoustic soul sound, **Saturday, January 14**, 7 p.m., at Vashon High School Theater.

LeRoy Martez Bell, known for his stellar songwriting skills, has written tunes for the likes of Elton John, Rita Marley, The Temptations, Lou Rawls and others. Now Tacoma resident Bell is finally bringing his own straightforward, passionate lyrics about life and love to the stage himself, and receiving rave reviews.

The combination of Bell’s songwriting skills, sultry voice, powerful guitar work and hot back up band has brought this Northwest talent into the limelight as a performer as well as a songwriter for other musicians.

Bell’s music may be heard on more than 100 radio stations including KMTT (Seattle), KFOG (San Francisco), and WXPB (Philadelphia). He’s sold over 10,000 copies of his first CD, *Spending Time*, and has sold out Seattle’s Triple Door more times than any other solo performer. His CD is played in Starbucks

worldwide. Bell’s song, “Dream of Peace” was featured on 2005 CD, *Christmas in the Northwest-8*, and was declared “the dark horse hit of the season” by one critic. Bell will release a new full length CD, *Two Sides to Every Story*, spring, 2006.

According to the Silver Platters, Bell has “The easy charm of Jack Johnson and the relaxed soulful delivery of Bill Withers.” Bell’s back up band, consisting of Rick Novito, Terry Morgan, Phil Peterson and Stan White, provides quality accompaniment of guitar, bass, cello and percussion without distraction from Bell’s passionate performance.

Just off a recent tour with B.B. King, Bell and his band will open for the O’Jay’s in March at the Paramount. Bell has also opened for Keb Mo, Taj Mahal, LeAnn Rimes, The Temptations, Leon Russell, Mavis Staples, Al Green and other musical legends.

Tickets are available now at Blue Heron Art Center, Heron’s Nest and Vashon Island Music, \$12 VAA members, seniors, students and \$15 general admission. Skip the ferry fare and the expensive downtown parking and support live music right here on Vashon. Call 463-2230 to reserve tickets by phone.

## Café Luna in January

**Fri. 1/6, 6:00 to 9:30 p.m., Artist Reception. Environmental photographic images by Douglas Orton.**  
**Sat. 1/7, 7:30 to 10 p.m., Ken Jacobsen. Eclectic Classical Guitar Music.**  
**Thurs. 1/12, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Open mic. Everyone welcome.**  
**Fri. 1/13, 7:30 to 10 p.m., To Be Announced**  
**Sat. 1/14, 7:30 to 10 p.m., Cesar Medel. Classical Acoustic Guitar.**  
**Fri. 1/20, 7:30 to 10 p.m., Short & Sweet. Contemporary Folk Music.**  
**Sat. 1/21, 7:30 to 10 p.m., Jess Grant. Songs to Provoke & Amuse.**  
**Thurs. 1/26, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Vashon Progressive Alliance. Progressive Night.**  
**Fri. 1/27, 7:30 to 10 p.m., Sean Bendickson. Original Acoustic Driven Folk Rock.**  
**Sat. 1/28, 7:30 to 10 p.m., Westside Highway. Acoustic, Eclectic Pop-Rock Mix.**

His subjects range from the micro to the macro. Come on out and talk with him about photography, traumatic brain injury, and other interesting topics.

Orton and his family make their home in Redondo Beach, Washington.





# Two Wall Gallery: New Name, New Curators

By Nadine Meeker

We are excited to announce that the Wallflower Gallery is now being curated by Vashon artists, Nadine and Ben Meeker. With this change in aesthetic philosophy comes a change in name. The Wallflower will now be called the Two Wall Gallery, because that is the fundamental nature of the space.

January's exhibit will be a preview of the 2006 gallery calendar. The Artists' Reception is **Friday, January 6**, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., during the First Friday Gallery Cruise. Artists included in the show are Jenn Reidel, Nan Leiter, Terri Roth, Paula Hendricks, John and Dorothy McCuistion, Mike Thorniley, and curators Nadine and Ben Meeker.

Each exhibiting artist will have two pieces of work and a brief aesthetic statement. Visitors will get to experience everything from large scale color photography to atmospheric paintings, political sculptures to art quilts, watercolor prints to inventive black and white photos.

The Two Wall Gallery will focus on accessibility of artists to their audience. Most of the artists showing are local so you may already know them. The artwork will thematically range from the elegant and formal to challenging and evocative, so that visitors will have access to a variety contemporary aesthetics. The artists will get to talk with their audience at the festive, delicious First Friday Gallery Cruise.

Finally, because these are mostly emerging or under-shown artists and the gallery is not a business but an exhibition space, much of the artworks are financially accessible to most of the visitors.

Artists interested in showing at the Two Wall Gallery should contact Ben and Nadine Meeker at meekarts@centurytel.net or (206) 463-1930.

## Coming to *The Loop*:



# Blackberry Bear and the Huckleberry Hollow Tales


## Narnia

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## King Kong

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## Pride and Prejudice




January 6 - 12

## The Family Stone

January 13 - 19

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# Annie:

## The Making of a Musical

By M. L. Tuel

## The Cast

By the time you read this, *Annie* will have begun rehearsals. After callbacks on December 18, Director Libbie Anthony had to go through the process of casting the show.

"I had a lot of input from Kathy Bonner (Choreographer) and Marita Ericksen (Vocal Director). I had about 48 sleepless hours."

"I could have cast two complete shows with all the talent that showed up. I had that many good people, and so many adorable darling little orphans. I tried to keep it to 15 orphans, but ended up with twenty."

"It isn't just a matter of one person's talent. It's thinking about how if you cast this person, the show will go this way, and if you cast the other person, the show will go that way. And you have to think about how the show is going to look physically."

"At some point you have to say, 'This is what we're going to do, and that's it.'"

When Libbie reached that point, this production of *Annie* had a cast of 38, including the speaking parts plus, "a cast of thousands of Vashon Theater favorites and newcomers, plus a surprise visit from Eleanor


# Vashon Bookshop

*"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend.  
Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."*

-- Groucho Marx

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Roosevelt (whom Anthony met once when she was a child), and lots of French maids."

There are several families with multiple members in the cast. A quick scan of the cast shows the Woolens, the Currys, the Gilmours, and the Hennesseys are all making this a family experience.

Here is the *Annie* Cast: Jordan Woolen as Rooster; Jeff Woolen as Daddy Warbucks; Susan Wolf as Mrs. Greer the housekeeper; Madeleine Wolczko as July, an orphan; Anna Rose Warren as Duffy, an orphan; Vasa Vasilike as Lily; Gretchen Neffenger, Gretchen as Miss Hannigan; Kathy Myer, as Mrs. Pugh the Cook; Peter Kreitner as President Roosevelt (will he nail this one like he nailed Nixon? We hope?); Lauri Hennessey as Grace, Mr. Warbuck's Assistant; Emma Hennessey as Pepper, an orphan; Megan Hackett as Annie, an orphan; Michelle Gilmour as Tessie, an orphan; Jim Gilmour, as Drake, the butler; Annie Crotty as Molly, an orphan; Kate Atwell as Kate, an orphan; and that cast of thousands of Vashon Theater favorites and newcomers.

Rehearsals start with learning the songs, so the cast belongs to Vocal Director Marita Ericksen for the next couple of weeks.



The girls of the El Paso, Texas, Salvation Army Home ca. 1921

**Next issue:**  
**Marita Ericksen talks about Vocal Directing.**

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Negligent (adj.): describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown.



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