

**In This Issue:** spirituality any way you name it, school district challenges, the magic of plants, scary Scooby Doo and much, much, more...



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bird for  
Vashon  
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Listen to the  
words of the 13  
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Hillstomp  
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# THE LOOP

Vol. 4, #25

TO INFORM AND AMUSE -- TO PROVOKE THINKING AND ACTIVISM

December 14, 2007

## Free Toys for Tots at Senior Center

Santa will visit the Senior Center on Bank Road Dec. 14 5:30-8:30 p.m. and will give a free toy to every child from babyhood to 10 years old who comes to see him. Santa's helpers assure us the toys are top quality from the national Toys for Tots elves and will be gender appropriate. SC program chairman Carol Slaughter will assist Santa.



Santa with the Eustace grandchildren.  
Photo courtesy the Vashon Senior Center.

## Don't Miss the Nutcracker!

This year's Vashon Junior Civic Ballet's *Nutcracker* is truly great. Don't miss one of the three final shows of the season at Vashon High School Friday, December 14 at 7:30pm and Saturday, December 15 at 2:30pm and again at 7:30pm.



Kaitlyn Davies dances Clara in the Vashon Junior Civic Ballet's Nutcracker. Photo by Bill Chunn.



Burton Acres 2004. Photo copyright Ray Pfortner.

## Many Paths

By Ed Swan

*"Never place a period where God has placed a comma." -- Gracie Allen*

The United Church of Christ adopted this quote a few years back during a process of re-defining itself. They used the quote as part of a campaign to emphasize that God is still speaking and that God has more to say than just what is literally in the Bible.

This saying makes a good guide for the world and for Vashon. This issue of The Loop features a number of articles from many spiritual perspectives. Even here on Vashon, people come to know God or reach for spirituality following more paths than could possibly be contained in not just this issue but perhaps in many issues. At this time of year, many of these paths experience an intense emphasis of their key messages. This confluence of beliefs should tell us all that God and/or the search for spirituality cannot be dictated to or limited by any one person's, group's or book's vision. Not only does our understanding change with the knowledge humanity gains over time but also with the evaluation of what each path brings to the table. And as that change in understanding deepens and grows, this saying means we should expect difference in interpretation. In our contact

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## McMurray Club Competes in Robotics

by Donna Gagner

Vashon Island Robotics Team, comprised of ten youths ages 9 to 14, participated in a competition in Des Moines on Saturday December 1st. The club is a part of the McMurray Tech Club and is sponsored by the PTSA, mentored by parent Bruce Johns. The competition is a part of an international program called FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology). It aims at furthering science and technology through providing a format in which kids are challenged to problem solve and use team work skills to complete tasks using LEGO robotics. See [usfirst.org](http://usfirst.org) for details.

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A few of the Vashon Island Robotics Team members at the event, left to right: Kieran Kim-Murphy, Tate Gill, and Ethan Rumburg. Photo by Laura

## Wellness Web Directory Launched

By Laura Worth

VashonWellness.com is a new, web-based directory to find information about Vashon's many health and wellness professionals. For people who prefer a 24/7 web resource, VashonWellness.com makes this easier. E-mail

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"A Vashon sunset: a moment for reflection on our being." Photo by Robert Bornn.

# Get in *The Loop*

## Submissions to the Loop

Do you have an announcement or Public Service Announcement? Do you have something to say about a Vashon issue or topic affecting the Island? If so, please email questions or submissions to Ed Swan, editor of the *Loop*, at editor@vashonloop.com. Photos are welcome as jpeg or pdf attachments.

## Holiday Gift Idea from Friends of the Library

The Friends of the library have a new fund raiser: selling great T-shirts with the word "READ" on the front and the wonderful, colorful, Friends logo with ferry boat on the back. Sizes start from 6mos infant through adult XXL. Color for infant and toddlers are light green; for youth and adult, peacock blue. There are a few adult shirts in yellow left from last summer's shirts. They make great gifts or souvenirs of Vashon Island. Prices: Infant and toddler - \$8; Youth and adult - \$10; Adult XL & XXL - \$12.

We also still sell our beautiful linen book bags with the Friends ferry logo for \$12. And if you're in the Library and need a floppy disk or CD to save files while using the computers, they are \$1. All items are available at the front desk. All proceeds go to The Friends of the Library.

## Holden Vespers Offered

Holden Vespers is being sung at the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit for the Sunday evenings in Advent. The remaining days are December 16th and 23rd, 5:30 pm. All are welcome.

## The Vashon Loop

Writers: Kathy Abascal, Deborah Anderson, Rachel Bard, Sarah Blakemore, Marie Browne, MEarth, Eric Francis, Troy Kindred, Melissa McCann, Orca Annie, Kevin Pottinger, Rex Morris, Jonathan Shipley, Ed Swan, Mary Litchfield Tuel, Marj Watkins, Susan Wolf

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## Christmas Services at Vashon Lutheran Church

You are invited to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ with and at Vashon Lutheran Church. A Christmas service in German language ("Weihnachtsgottesdienst") will be offered on Sunday, December 23 at 4:00 PM. Candlelight services will be held on Christmas Eve ("Jesus, Born for Us"), December 24 at 5:00 PM and at 11:00 PM. We also invite you to join us for a meditative service of the word on Christmas Day, December 25 at 3:00 PM. For questions and more information please call (206) 463-2655.

## Democratic Club Holiday Party

Get your appetite ready for good food and witty conversation! Everyone is invited to the Vashon Democratic Club's annual holiday party on Saturday, December 15, at 6:00 in the Land Trust building. We'll be reminiscing about our successes over this year and discussing our challenges for the next. Bring your favorite holiday dish for this potluck party. Please help us accomplish our goal of a no-trash potluck by bringing your own, non-disposable dinnerware!

If you or your group would like to make a presentation at one of our meetings, or for general information, please contact Roger Fulton at 669-9459.



## Holiday Sale!

Help support your local Wildlife Rehabilitation and education facility by purchasing:

Hand Spun wool Yarn from our Sustainable agriculture programs. \$15-\$45

Hats/scarves/mittens/vests knitted by our volunteers. \$35- \$75

Hand woven bags \$35-\$50

Hand Made all Natural LAMB BAR Soaps \$5

ADOPT A SPECIAL ANIMAL and receive him/her bio and newsletters from Wolftown \$75

Give Wolftown Membership as a present! \$35

T Martino Line drawings are available at The Vashon Coffee Roasterie and Minglemint. \$40

Wolftown Calenders are available All Over Town! \$7

Hand done Sheep rugs. \$150

THANKS WOLFTOWN



Get Ready, Vashon!  
Those winter storms  
are on the way.

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*Neighbors Helping Neighbors*

## Vashon Library January 2008 Programs

**Opera Previews:** PAGLIACCI by Ruggiero Leoncavallo

Sunday, January 6, 2:00 pm  
Lecturer, Norm Hollingshead  
Pagliacci was Leoncavallo's first opera. When it was first performed, in 1892, it was an instant success and continues to be one of the most frequently performed of all operas.

Sponsored by Friends of Vashon Library. No registration required.

**KCLS Study Zone**

Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30 - 5:30pm (beginning January 7th)  
Volunteer Tutor, Chris Purpus  
Stop by the Vashon Library and find your Study Zone! Get help with your homework questions, learn new study skills, discover the resources in your library, ask questions and share what you know with others. The Study Zone is for students K-12 and it's free!

**Great Books Discussion Group**

Monday, January 7, 7:00pm  
The Great Books Discussion Group has been meeting at the Vashon Library for 30 years! The idea of small groups meeting to discuss great literature was started by the University of Chicago and groups now meet in hundreds of cities around the country. Our group meets the first Monday of each month; our discussions include all types of great literature, from ancient to modern times. Please join us for some very stimulating conversations.

**Toddler Story Time**

Tues., Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, 10:40am  
Ages 21 months to 3 years with an adult

A 20-minute program of stories and songs just right for toddlers. No registration required.

**Preschool Story Time**

Tues., Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29, 2pm  
Wed., Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30, 11:30am  
Ages 3-5

Join us for 30 minutes of stories, songs and fun!

No registration required.

**English Language Learners (ELL): Beginners.** Tues., Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29, 7:00pm

These free ELL classes for beginners will run through May. Participants will learn English grammar, reading, writing and conversation skills. Child care will be available.

Sponsored by King County Library System and the Harold and Marie Leech Fund.

**Lapsit Story Time**

Wed. Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30, 10:40am  
Newborn to 20 months with an adult

A 20-minute program of stories, songs, rhymes and bounces for babies and a caregiver.

No registration required.

**English Language Learners (ELL): Intermediate.** Thurs., Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31, 7:00pm

These free ELL classes for intermediate level students will run through May. Participants will

*Continued on page 8*



# HOME TEAM REALTY

## Attention Builders!

Over four acres of lightly wooded, level land, zoned R4 (4 houses per acre), with 3 water shares and on the sewer line. Easy access, private but close to the main highway. But wait, there's more: a doublewide manufactured home to live in or rent out while developing the property. **\$525,000**

MLS # 27206954



- ☛ 4.27 Acres
- ☛ Zoned R-4
- ☛ 3 Watershares
- ☛ On Sewer Line
- ☛ 3 Bedroom  
2 Bath



## Adorable Cottage in Beulah Park

Adorable, fully remodeled cottage with eco-sensitive finishes. Kitchen features recycled glass tile, beautiful cement counters, low voltage lighting, stainless appliances, Marmoleum floors. In the living room, Kempas hardwood floors make it cozy, the vaulted ceiling and skylight make it spacious and bright. Outside, catch a breeze, listen to the creek, and gaze at your pond from the large deck. One full sized bedroom and a small office make it perfect for downsizing or just starting out. **\$329,000**

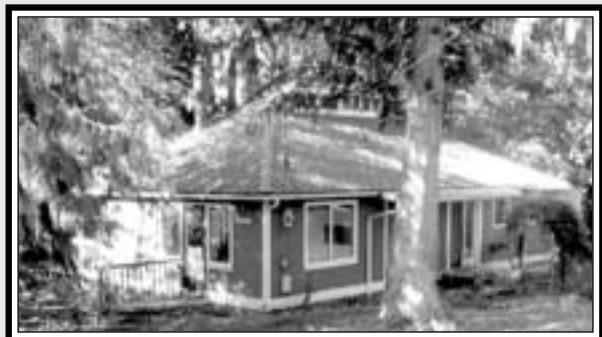
MLS # 27192127

- ☛ 1 bedroom
  - ☛ 1 Bath
  - ☛ Office space
  - ☛ Partial Basement
- 13533 SW 171st St



### Right Next Door

## On the Creek



This historic house was once the camp kitchen for Beulah Park Camp. Now, it's a spacious and unique house in charming Beulah Park. The 1/4 acre lot borders a breathtaking ravine; open your bedroom window and listen to the soothing sounds of the creek tumbling into Colvos Passage. It's like living in a treehouse - with a cantilevered foundation and metal roof! The interior needs fresh paint and flooring, but the house is rock-solid and ready for an owner who wants something special. **\$359,000**

13536 SW 171st St

MLS # 27191401

- ☛ 3 bedroom
- ☛ 2 Baths
- ☛ .30 Acre
- ☛ 1472 SQFT
- ☛ Paint and Carpet  
Fixer

## Great Buy - Fantastic Fixer

First time buyers and investors! A cosmetic fixer that's nice enough to live in as is. This house has good bones - cute cottage style, high ceilings, full unfinished basement, on sewer. It's on a large lot in a great neighborhood on the desirable Westside, close to the beach. Tremendous potential for increasing value through sweat equity. New flooring and fresh paint throughout make it move-in ready today! **\$259,000**

MLS # 27175260

- ☛ 1 bedroom
- ☛ 1 Baths
- ☛ .20 Acre
- ☛ Full Basement



17017 135th Lane SW

## Fresh & New

- ☛ 3 bedrooms
- ☛ 1.5 Baths
- ☛ 1 Car Garage

8804 SW 184th St.

MLS # 27143323

Everything is new! Adorable single level home with cozy stone fireplace is completely fresh and new inside. Maple cabinets, energy friendly Pella windows, quality flooring, gorgeous light fixtures, CAT5 cabling, new roof, all new appliances including a gas furnace and electric water heater. Ideal location and the property is beautiful. Majestic firs grace the front providing screened privacy, and the sunny back yard is dotted with fruit trees. Easy to move in, easy to live in, easy to maintain. **\$385,000.**



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# Questions on the Spiritual Journey

by Jan Van Pelt, interim pastor Vashon United Methodist Church

How am I using the gift of life? Where am I headed? What difference can I make in the world? Where is God in the midst of all the pain and tragedy in the world? These are questions I've pondered often through my adult life. There were years when I pushed the questions to the back of my mind, busy as I was with work and single parenthood. Oh, I journaled and read what I could that offered insight. I finally realized I was missing something essential — being part of a community that also grappled with these questions. And so I joined a faith community where the only entrance requirement was that I be on a faith journey. I was invited to come in just as I was, doubt and faith alike being welcomed.

Returning to church was going home after a long time away from the church of my childhood and the church of my earlier seminary years. I was entering a new part of my faith journey which would lead me into the richest part of my life.

To be on a faith journey with others, I have come to believe, is a vital component of living the Christian life. It is a journey back in time learning from the stories of those who went before us to discover how God's love sustained them through times both good and bad. It is a journey of studying how Jesus is the embodiment of God's love and learning the essential truths

of the Christian life. It is a journey of increasingly recognizing where God's love and hope is breaking through in our broken world and then joining our own lives in the work of healing, peace and justice making.

Each year in the church we relive the story of Jesus birth, his teachings, his death and resurrection. Each year as the stories are told, we are touched at different points in our own life-journeys. The deep questions keep working on us. Sometimes what comforts one year may end up disturbing us the next. A passage that's never registered before suddenly will ring true.

As the days grow shorter, and winter approaches, we come to the Advent season of the Christian calendar, a season of waiting and preparing for Christ's coming once again. And we rediscover that the sweet baby Jesus that we may have thought we were waiting for doesn't remain a baby, but grows up to teach and challenge and comfort and heal and liberate. And then when we are paying attention to the message he brings, we ask ourselves, how does this message of love and hope require us to respond in today's world? What is God's word to us in this place? How does it change and deepen us? And together we move forward on the journey of faith.

## The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

by Susan Wolf

"Uh-oh. There are two smiling young men in suits and short haircuts on my doorstep. Who are they? What do they want?"

They are missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — also known as Mormons. These young men (19-21 years of age) volunteer to spend two years teaching the gospel somewhere in the world (they don't get to choose where) at their own expense. That's right — at their own expense.

What they don't want to do is argue, prove anyone "wrong" or make a nuisance of themselves. They do want to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, answer questions, love and pray for people and allow people to make up their own minds about what is true and what to believe. This freedom of choice is a fundamental Church belief called "free agency."

What do they teach? They teach people how to pray, how to recognize the influence of the Holy Spirit, which testifies of truth, and

how to follow the Savior's example. Missionaries teach a series of six discussions which outline the gospel of Jesus Christ: where we came from, why we are here on earth and

where we go after this life. They teach from the scriptures: the King James Version of the Holy Bible and another testament of Jesus Christ, the Book of Mormon.

Missionaries teach where the Book of Mormon came from, how it was translated, how the Church of Jesus Christ and its lay priesthood was restored and through whom. This message is for both Jew and Gentile, men and women, and contains a special history of Native Americans. Perhaps the most

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Elder Hiatt, one of the two Vashon missionaries (left) and Elder Berrett (right), visiting from West Seattle. Photo by Susan Wolf.



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## Jewish Practice and Spirituality

by Daniel Asher and Andrew Schwarz

On a recent Saturday morning at Havurat Ee Shalom a group of us pondered the weekly Torah portion, as we do each week. This particular portion was the well-known story of Jacob's late night wrestling match.

As the episode draws to a close Jacob demands a blessing, and the mysterious being says that from now on, Jacob would be called Israel (in Hebrew: *Yisra'el*), meaning "one who has struggled or wrestled with God."

This name change is, in many ways, at the core of our Jewish practice. At times the descendants of Jacob have been known as Israelites. A famous 20th Century Rabbi took this to mean that we were all "God wrestlers." Our Jewish tradition is a blending of spiritual and intellectual questioning of texts and traditions as each of us "wrestles" with what they mean. We are encouraged to ask probing questions and to challenge ourselves and our teachers as regards conventional meanings.

Our tradition tells us that we are not passive players in the historical drama of our people, but rather we are active participants. We wrestle daily with ourselves and with what we think we know to be true. We struggle with the meaning of the text not only as a biblical exercise but as a process of discovering what, if anything the text means for those of us living on Vashon Island in the 21st Century.

Spirituality in our Jewish tradition is inextricably linked to study, community and tradition. There is no "instant karma" and, while we may all be moved by a sunset, we are provided with no guaranteed "magic moment" of spiritual enlightenment. The terms most mentioned in relation to Jewish spirituality are Kabbalah and its most well-know text, the Zohar. As if to underscore the complexity of this subject, the Rabbis tell us that one is not to embark upon its study until the age of 40. I glean several things from the "40 year old" rule (a threshold I have long since met). First, is that one must complete the study of all the other texts first. Second, a young person may lack the life experience to fully explore these spiritual issues. And, lastly, that spiritual exploration may hold

dangers especially for those without the firmest of foundations.

These days, that is all changing. Ancient texts that for millennia had been taught orally only to an esoteric few, are now available in paperback at your local bookstore. This has led to much misunderstanding of ancient Jewish traditions, but has also resulted in a renewed spiritual center to Jewish practice that was missing for many so-called baby boomers who came of age in the 1950's, 60's and 70's. These new materials provide a new/old metaphysical dimension to a heritage already richly steeped in spiritual practice and contemplation. It has led to a much wider practice of meditation techniques and other ancient modes of spiritual exploration.

At Havurat Ee Shalom, we seek to meet the spiritual, intellectual, and cultural needs of religious and secular Jews with a broad array of programs and practices. Our activities are open to anyone interested in the content of these programs or, for that matter, interested in working with us to create and expand that programming. We welcome home all those Jews who sought to meet their spiritual needs in other practices.

Even before we crack a book, as Jews we are already wrestling. Hopefully we don't wrestle just for the sake of it. We wrestle with the hope that, like Jacob, we may emerge changed, we pray, for the better. Able to be better Jews, better husbands and wives, better parents and children, better friends and neighbors.

## Many Paths

Continued from page 1

with different beliefs and cultures and even within one faith, we should be able to show the respect and maturity to continue the conversation and the relationship despite the differences. We should look into each others faces and see not an alien but a child of God.

# Is Zen religion or spirituality?

by Koshin Chris Cain, Abbot, Puget Sound Zen Center

The great scholar of religion Huston Smith calls religion “institutionalized spirituality.” If that’s true Zen acts like a religion. The Zen Center here on the island is an institution — in many ways it is similar to a church. It has a board of directors, a structured service, and various customs and procedures. We Zen practitioners rely on those structures. They create a space where we can cleanly do our work.

Institutions also mean people, and Zen relies on those people. It is hard work to sit still for any length of time, and other people help us make it a regular routine. Of course the people that populate an institution can be difficult. That is good too. It is said that monks in a monastery are stones in a bag, and as the bag is shaken, the stones polish each other smooth. Institutions are good for this kind of “mutual polishing.”

At the same time, Zen is anti-institutional. The object of Zen is to free oneself from a routinized, institutionalized mindset. When we do that we find things as they are, without our conditioned mindset in the way. That is true spirituality. The Zen institution supports spirituality.

The institution of religion can be a hindrance in our quest to find this kind of spirituality. We can learn to cling to institutions and forms rather than learning to be free. Zen is not only anti-institutional, it is anti-Zen. An old proverb goes, Zen is a finger pointing at the full moon. When you find the moon, you can drop the finger!

In order to find true spirituality, you have to leave Zen Buddhism, and all religion, behind.

Another famous Zen phrase: “When you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him!” Strong stuff for a gentle religion. In order to find true spirituality you have to kill the Buddha. Killing the Buddha means to forget all about the Buddha. In order to find true Buddhism, you have to completely give up Buddhism. And give up your husband, your dog, all of your friends, enemies, to-do lists, and everything else you care to think about. True spirituality comes from the act of giving up everything, all dreams, worries, and thoughts. And that’s the place where we find Buddha-nature, God-nature.

Now, if you come to the Zen Center, you’ll recognize a Buddha statue at the end of the hall. The Buddha’s experience inspires us to find our own Buddha nature. But to find it, your idea of the Buddha has to go. And after you’ve let go of that and every other idea you have, you can come back to the Buddha statue and everything else. Here’s another Zen phrase: “Before studying Zen, mountains are mountains. While studying Zen, mountains are not mountains. After studying Zen, mountains are again mountains.” To get to the middle step we have to lose our *idea* of mountains. Then we can come back to mountains, the Buddha, our friends, our institutions. But we view them differently. You might say from a spiritual point of view.

# The Canoes of Spirit

By Orca Annie Stateler & Odin Lonning

“Killer whales are the canoes of spirits, and if shamans are lucky, they get these spirit canoes.” A Sitka villager uttered these profound words a century ago to the ethnographer James Swanton. To us, killer whales are sacred. Life with orcas rejuvenates our bond with the Divine.

Reverence for animal relations and the natural world is our First Nations ancestral legacy. Nanih Waiya (Choctaw for “Creator”) endows all creatures with exceptional talents. Humans do not possess exclusive dominion over Mother Earth and her inhabitants.

Killer whales are celebrated in the culture and spirituality of Northwest Coast Natives, many of whom have Killer Whale clans. For 10,000 years or more, Coastal Native wisdom, stories, and art have shown a sophisticated understanding of orcas that Western thought is just beginning to grasp.

The Tlingit word for killer whale is Keet. The story “Natsiclané,” or “Creation of the Killer Whale,” portrays Keet as a noble, perfect creature – what humans should aspire to be like. The relationship between orcas and their food, salmon and seals, is hallowed. In Haida cosmology, killer whales are not mere human beings, but Ocean People. Killer Whale Chiefs of important reefs married Creek Women of adjacent streams containing vital salmon runs. The fish “children” left their father’s house and migrated to their mother’s house at the stream’s headwaters. The Haida word S’gana means both “killer whale” and “supernatural power.”

In a recent encounter with J Pod at Point Robinson, we watched with pride and amusement as the S’gana pulled the humans along the shore like a magnet. Orca breath wafted



to our faces on the stiff wind. The pungent smell was memorable. Sharing the air, we truly became one with the killer whales.

In Tlingit art, the killer whale’s blow embodies spirit. The forceful spray of water vapor and air is not just physical, but considered a life form. Human-like creatures and spirit faces emanate from the blowhole and give shape to the whale’s exhaled breath.

Other mystical creatures often appear inside or around the killer whale’s body. These may represent



Southern Resident Tribute design, © 2007 Odin Lonning, Tlingit.

fluke prints of surfacing whales, water flowing off the whales’ backs, other entities, or even phosphorescence.

The Western paradigm seems lacking in words to describe the peak experience of interacting with orcas. In a time when cynical, mainstream culture seems more disconnected than ever from

## Sanctum

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*We shape our dwellings, and after-  
wards our dwellings shape us.*  
Winston Churchill

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nature, orcas still affect people in ways that transcend the mundane. Native people discovered early on that killer whales might surpass two-leggeds in intelligence. Orcas are perpetually teaching us, humbling us with fresh insights. Witnessing intimate moments in orca society has been a privilege. After many years of observation, we conclude there may be no social order more harmonious than that of killer whales. We are troubled that the fate of the higher-functioning species may well be in the hands of the less competent species.

One crucial measure of success in our work is how well we maintain the integrity of our spiritual union with killer whales. Our job is to pay careful attention to our teachers, the whales, and gather useful information about them in a non-invasive manner congruent with our Native values. With any luck, we can impart some Indigenous wisdom while we help to recover an endangered species.

We harbor no sense of entitlement that the universe owes us a living from the orcas’ suffering. The whales are not a tool for self-

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# Spiritual Smart Aleck

## Wag That Spirit

By Mary Litchfield Tuel

A dear friend once told me that God did not invent man; man invented God. That’s a popular concept among people of great intelligence, and my friend is a person of great intelligence. His great intelligence has gypped him out of the comfort, depth and yes, the reason, of faith.

The reason for faith is simple – when you have faith, you have a richer, fuller, and more joyful life. I know that not everyone wants that, but still, all you hopelessly rational people out there could get down off your tired old defensiveness and eat your share of the faith feast off the good china, if you would, without worrying about appearing to be weak, or whacko. No one is strong or sane all the time, especially people who go around trying to convince everyone that they are strong and sane.

Saying you don’t believe in God is one way of saying you believe you are God.

Saying you believe in God, but going on to say that you know who is going to heaven (you) or hell (not you), is another way of saying you believe you are God.

The basic mistake we all make is that we think we know more, or better than, God, even if we don’t believe in God. We’re so smart and we’re so full of good ideas and we know what’s right and what’s wrong. O what a marvelous creation is man! Or woman! We invented ourselves! Clever homo sapiens.

How do you explain God, or the divine, to people who don’t want to get it? I used to try to explain God to my kids by saying that the word “God” is like a little box that holds a teeny few atoms of what God is, and that box serves as a symbol to our human minds for all the things we do not know and cannot grasp. That unknowable, fathomless, ultimate reality or truth is God, or what we talk about as God so we don’t have to go around saying “the unknowable, fathomless, ultimate reality or truth that we are incapable of imagining, much less grasping.” It’s a short cut.

God speaks to our spirits. What’s a spirit, Mom? I tried to explain spirit to the kids by telling them that your spirit is a part of who you are. It’s a part of every human being, just like the blood in your veins, or the heart beating in your chest, or the need to breathe. It doesn’t matter what you think or how smart or stupid you are, you have a spirit, just like a dog has a tail. Just because you can’t see it doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist or you don’t wag it.

Me, I’m a Christian. I believe in God and the resurrected Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and that is my religion. This is what and where I

was called to be, but I had a spirit before I ever knew a thing about religion.

We human beings are animal creatures, with animal natures. We are naturally subject to animal passions, and we act out of fear, weariness, hunger, loneliness, horniness, anger, jealousy, etc. In our hearts we’re always in junior high – bitter, thrilled, perishing of loneliness, spiteful, manic, worried, desperate for love, desperate to be popular, plotting, planning, strutting, limping, aching, triumphing.

So when someone tells us to calm down and let go of all that, it sounds nuts. It is totally antithetical to our animal natures to be calm and let go of our attempts to control everything, fix everything, judge everything, and mete out punishment and reward. We strive to be God. We’re pretty lousy at the job.

However, human beings also have a wisdom tradition: let go of your animal cravings, stop reacting to everything, love yourself as you are with compassion and kindness, and love others as they are with compassion and kindness. Be kind. Be generous. Be patient. Study. Meditate. Own up to your own sins, but don’t get obsessed with beating yourself up over them – that’s an inverted self indulgence. Shut up and listen. Try to do better. Try to do good. Try to serve instead of trying to control. Do the best you can, and that is enough.

If we go against every screaming bit of our animal nature and let go of trying to be God in our own lives, a miraculous thing happens. Life starts to make sense. If you live as if the truth is true, life starts making sense.

So, how does your spirit wag, your one and only, deepest, most tender, part of you, where truth and light and reality meet, and you stand tall in the dignity of who you are? Don’t ignore your spirit, or lie to yourself that it doesn’t exist. That would be silly.

Now get out there and wag.

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## The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Continued from page 4

important message the missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ teach is that everyone on this earth is a son or daughter of a Heavenly Father that loves us and that we can live together as families forever. That is the power of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

Twelve million plus members of the Church worldwide believe in these principles, as do the approximately 250,000 members of the Church in Washington State. The missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints invite anyone interested in learning more to call them at 206-683-1525 to schedule an appointment, come for church services at 9330 SW 204th Street on Sundays at 9:00 a.m., or visit [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org).

I was 23 when I began studying with the missionaries of my Mom’s new church. Having been brought up in a variety of Christian churches throughout my childhood, I had a basic understanding of the Bible and the reality of Jesus Christ. I’m grateful for the friendship, teaching and serving that went on in the churches I attended – Presbyterian, Assembly of God, Unity, Nazarene, Catholic, and small community churches all over western Washington. It gave me a wonderful sense of the decent people everywhere who do their best to serve God.

In the 30+ years since my baptism into the LDS Church, I have

never regretted my decision nor questioned the brilliant answer God granted a simple, unworthy young woman who wanted to change and only prayed to know the truth. Leaders like the Dalai Lama, the Pope and Billy Graham give the world messages of compassion, service, love and righteousness. To have the gift of a present day living prophet, whose messages are similar, and to enjoy daily personal revelation nurtured by the teachings of the LDS Church, has broadened, strengthened and deepened my understanding of God’s love for me. There is information about God’s plan for His children and the role of our Native American and Jewish brothers and sisters which is unique to the Book of Mormon. My love for the Savior and work in the Church has brought about a great sense of peace and healing for me. This is what the world needs. It’s what I need. My prayer this Christmas season is that each one of my dear friends on Vashon will find the same blessing of peace for themselves.

~~~~~

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# Don't Forget the Birds

## A New Bird for the Vashon List

By Ed Swan



The recent winds and rain blew in a new bird for Vashon's list recently. Dan Willsie called me on December 3 to say that he had a good ten minute close look at a juvenile Black-legged Kittiwake. It preened itself on a log next to his front deck. Dan's waterfront location on the northwest corner of the Island turns up some fairly rare birds from time to time and several other firsts for Vashon's list.

Kittiwakes breed in the high arctic and travel south as pelagic and coastal birds in migration and winter. They rarely move down into the central Puget Sound, though

increased observers and offshore surveys since Jewett's time according to Wahl's. Birds of Washington in 2005, so Cantwell's sighting might not have been as far-fetched as Jewett apparently believed. Wahl et. al. consider kittiwakes to be rare in migration in inland waters.

Dan Willsie's precise description of his bird provides the first modern and definitive record for Vashon. Kittiwakes compare roughly in size to Mew Gulls, the common smaller winter gull around here. Like a Mew Gull they possess grey wings but their wing tips don't have any

white spots in the black feathers. In the juvenile plumage, the black of the wing tips continues along the leading edge of the wing and then angles back toward the tail so that the two wings together have a dark "M" pattern. Dan's bird had the diagnostic black collar around the sides and back of its neck that no



An adult Black-legged Kittiwake, photo by Jim Rosso.

several records exist for around Pt. Defiance in Pierce County. An early 20th Century inspector for the Biological Survey, George Cantwell, reported seeing kittiwakes at Burton on December 16, 1918 according to Jewett's 1953 Birds of Washington State. The record appears with comments before and after indicating the possibilities of mistaken sight identification, so the sighting might be considered hypothetical. Knowledge of the Black-legged Kittiwake's distribution grew considerably with

other local gull species have and is particular to juvenile as opposed to adult kittiwakes. An additional juvenile characteristic was that its bill was mottled yellow and black, indication of shifting from a juvenile black bill to an adult yellow bill. Its legs showed blackish (as adults they become very black), other gull species' legs appear pink to pinkish grey or yellow or yellow-green to grey. It also had a large black ear patch, similar to but larger than the possible Bonaparte's gull. A lot of people just give up on gulls as all



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Mark Wells Fri. Dec. 14, The Gold Ring Sat. Dec. 15, The Impromptu Trio Sat. Dec. 22, Riverbend Sun. Dec. 23 and Watermark Sat. Dec. 29.

looking the same but this gull will look distinctive to anyone who takes a longer look.

In other local bird news, all of the winter's birds have now shown up except the Ruddy Ducks that hang out around Portage. The

### Christmas Bird Count Sunday December 30

Want to help count Vashon-Maury birds at your own feeder or join a Master Birder covering Island hot spots? Call Sue Trevathan at 463-1484 or email at sue.trevathan@centurytel.net. Also, if you have owls calling at night let Ed Swan know for the owl count at edswan@centurytel.net.

kestrel that hunts the south end of the Wax Orchard airfield returned November 30. Gary Shugart found several rarer birds with a sighting of Ancient Murrelets off Pt. Robinson and a Parasitic Jaeger off Tahlequah November 20. This represents the latest record in November by several weeks of any jaeger in the Vashon database. They usually leave by late October.

Another surprise find gave the Audubon and Enjoyment of Birding Class field trip at Raab's Lagoon a thrill when they observed two Lesser Yellowlegs December 8. Lesser Yellowlegs visit Vashon rarely and even less so in late fall or winter. If you have a question about local birds or an interesting sighting or photo, call me at 463-7976 or email at edswan@centurytel.net. I'm also available as a guide to help find birds around Vashon.

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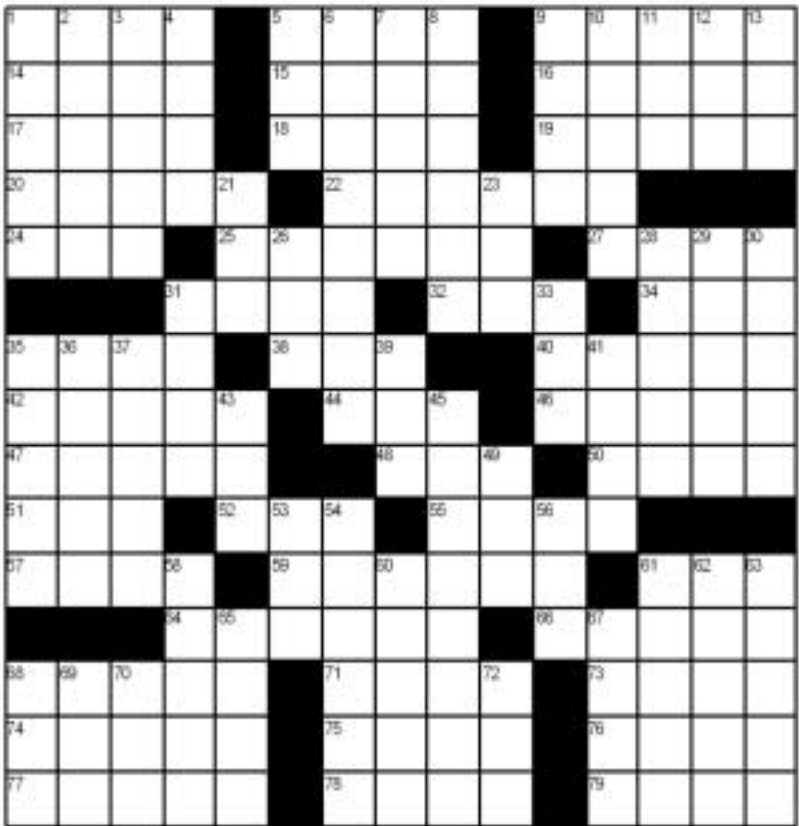
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| 9 Good Book         | 34 Flightless bird                  | 61 Winter sport                   |
| 14 Fencing sword    | 35 Defunct football league          | 64 Tailor-made                    |
| 15 Women's magazine | 38 Fortify                          | 66 Bird claw                      |
| 16 Take in          | 40 Terrorists tools                 | 68 Association (abbr.)            |
| 17 Bridge           | 42 Reigned                          | 71 Sully                          |
| 18 Lofty            | 44 Eat                              | 73 Feel concern                   |
| 19 Mont __          | 46 Shoot clay targets               | 74 Winder                         |
| 20 Ship's caulking  | 47 Stream                           | 75 U.S. Department of Agriculture |
| 22 Evening party    | 48 Workout place                    | 76 Rank                           |
| 24 Cunning          | 50 Comedian Griffith                | 77 Noodle                         |
| 25 Couch            | 51 Ripen                            | 78 Posttraumatic stress disorder  |
|                     | 52 Strike sharply                   | 79 Tiny insect                    |

|                             |                              |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| DOWN                        | 23 Official                  | 53 American Cancer Society (abbr.) |
| 1 Spanish coins             | 26 Time period               | 54 Erects (2 wds.)                 |
| 2 Shock                     | 28 Asian nation              | 56 Mountain Time                   |
| 3 Drippy                    | 29 Implant                   | 58 Rush                            |
| 4 Restaurant dinner listing | 30 Unskilled                 | 60 Give a lift                     |
| 5 Adjust                    | 31 Tub spread                | 61 Killed                          |
| 6 Stuccos                   | 33 Abdominal muscles (abbr.) | 62 Divided nation                  |
| 7 Dispense                  | 35 City                      | 63 Neutral                         |
| 8 Help                      | 36 Soar                      | 65 Ca. University                  |
| 9 Infant                    | 37 Ice sheets                | 67 Acting (abbr.)                  |
| 10 Loafed                   | 39 Hold up                   | 68 Viper                           |
| 11 Scarf                    | 41 All right                 | 69 Hotel                           |
| 12 Licensed practical nurse | 43 Danish krone (abbr.)      | 70 Distress call                   |
| 13 And so forth             | 45 Pharaohs' tombs           | 72 Sonny                           |
| 21 Chinese seasoning        | 49 Least amount              |                                    |



# Madame Toujours

Dear Madame Toujours,  
My husband and I have been having a terrible argument, and I hope you can help us resolve it. I should say that I have been married for several hundred years to a jolly, old elf who is good-natured, kindly, loves children and animals, and routinely hires minorities (mostly Elfish-Americans) to work in his very progressive factory.

The cause of our quarrel is that every year he works all night Christmas Eve and comes home too tired to celebrate the holiday. I have been very patient, but it has been three-hundred years since I have spent a Christmas with my family, and on that occasion, I went alone. Of course, he's good about the other holidays—Easter, Fourth of July, Reindeer Appreciation Day—but Christmas is special.

Claus says that if I want to see my family for Christmas, I should go without him. I don't see why he can't come home with me just this once. I realize his job is important, but surely he could leave it to one of the elves this year. Noggin is very responsible and knows the routine. Indeed, Claus is getting so old that Noggin and the reindeer do most of the real work anyway. Claus mostly sits in the sleigh drinking hot cocoa and eating cookies. It's just stubborn pride that makes him go at all.

What do you think, Madame Toujours?

Sincerely,  
I'll be home for Christmas . . . alone.

*Chere, Mme.* Christmas, Felicitation. I applaud you to be married for hundreds of years in these times when there is so much the divorce. Now, the trouble that you are having with your husband, it is the very common one, but I can help you.

Very many men, they are not comfortable with the families of their wives. There are many reasons for this. The customs of the wife's family, they are different. Perhaps the wife's family is liking to eat the oyster stew at Christmas dinner, and the husband, he is used to the venison pie. Or the wife's family is

liking to sing "O Silent Night," and the husband is liking better to sing "Frosty the Snowman." Perhaps he is uncomfortable because he looks at the mother-in-law and thinks, "This is what my wife will be looking like in two-hundred years. Bleah." Or perhaps he is just shy, and the family, it is boisterous and loud.

Sometimes the husband who is uncomfortable wishes to remain at home quietly with the television rather than go to the wife's family. In this case, the sensitive wife should give the husband time to become used to her family. Perhaps instead of the big family dinner with many gifts, it is better to have the quiet family breakfast and the Christmas stockings. Promise the husband that it will be a short breakfast. Perhaps the wife's family could provide for the husband the Christmas stocking with his name so that he will feel included.

But you are having the different problem which is more difficult. *M.* Claus, he is spending the holiday at his place of business. This is making me think that he is feeling hostile to your family. Do your parents like him? Do they criticize him that he is not successful enough, or that he is not coming from old money? Is he perhaps the Lutheran while you are the Episcopalian and your parents are wishing that you had married within your faith? Perhaps your family are magical beings and he is the Spirit of Christmas? The racially mixed marriages can be very difficult for the families.

You must speak frankly with your Claus. Tell him that you understand his feelings, that you do not wish for him to be uncomfortable and that you feel sure that whatever is the problem, it can be fixed. Speak to your family about your concerns. They should assure you that they will say nothing about his background or his income. Be firm. Say that if they are offensive to your husband, you will not celebrate Christmas with them again.

*Bon Chance, Mme.* Christmas, and remember, do not put the family before the husband.

## Vashon Library January 2008 Programs

*Continued from page 2*

learn English grammar, reading, writing and conversation skills. Child care will be available. Sponsored by King County Library System and the Harold and Marie Leech Fund.  
**Microsoft Word, Level 2**  
Sat., Jan. 12, 9 – 10:30am  
This is the intermediate level class for the MS Word program. Topics include: changing fonts, spacing, selecting and formatting text, paragraphs and margins, cut, copy and paste. Prerequisite: Word Level 1 or some basic knowledge of word processing. Registration is required and begins Friday, December 29th.

Call 463-2069 to register.  
**Friends of Vashon Library, Annual Meeting**  
Saturday, January 12, 10am  
Join the "Friend"-lied bunch of Islanders at the Vashon Library! Friends raise funds to support Library programs such as Opera Previews for adults, LateNight @ the Library for Teens, Walk on the Wild Side Science programs for school-aged kids, and Nancy Stewart Early Learning programs for pre-schoolers and their parents. Our annual meeting will include the election of new officers.

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## A New Board, a New Beginning and a Challenge

Terry N. Lindquist, Interim Superintendent and Diane Kehm, Special Projects Coordinator

It is my privilege to begin working with a new board of directors. With the excitement of change also comes the reality of challenge.

Through many years as a school district superintendent, I have come to believe that school boards are a wonderful microcosm of a community. Traditionally, board members, individually and collectively, reflect, in my opinion, the values of a community.

I believe this new board has responsibilities to focus first and foremost on student achievement, curricular and co-curricular. In that regard, I am hoping they will execute their responsibilities in the following broad ways:

### Setting a Vision

Using community and staff, set a vision for student learning and express their beliefs about student learning.

### Establish Goals

Create student achievement as the central core belief of the district. Define what improvement means to the district and community.

### Develop Policy

Establish policy as a structure to support student achievement.

### Allocating Resources

Prioritize the budget and allocate resources that maximize student learning.

### Assure Accountability

Monitor district programs to ensure annual progress is being made and the public is informed about student progress.

However, in order to focus efforts on student achievement, the board will face a number of immediate system wide challenges. Among these larger issues, this board will face are:

**1. Developing** a facilities plan that maximizes available space, is sustainable and accounts for a declining student enrollment

**2. Creating** a budget and budget process that supports our recently adopted Strategic Plan

**3. Initiating** a communication system that is open, transparent, informative and builds trust

**4. Commits** to the importance of systematically funding staff training, curriculum and materials adoption and providing for a mechanism to assure our curriculum is aligned

**5. Explore** and implement ways to allow for joint use and governance of facilities by various taxing districts and island user groups

**6. Focus** on the recruitment and retention of outstanding staff at all levels, including the recognition of the impact of collective bargaining

*Continued on page 12*



# Garden T he World

By MEarth



## 13 Grandmothers

“WE, THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF THIRTEEN INDIGENOUS GRANDMOTHERS, represent a global alliance of prayer, education and healing for our Mother Earth, all Her inhabitants, all the children, and for the next seven generations to come. We are deeply concerned with the unprecedented destruction of our Mother Earth and the destruction of indigenous ways of life. We believe the teachings of our ancestors will light our way through an uncertain future. We look to further our vision through the realization of projects that protect our diverse cultures: lands, medicines, language and ceremonial ways of prayer and through projects that educate and nurture our children.”

With this statement, the Council of Grandmothers defined their intent to the world.

The council began in 2004, when a Cherokee woman named Jyoti called together indigenous grandmothers from around the world who shared her beliefs that the human race is at a crucial time

South Dakota. They have also journeyed together to the Amazon, in 2005. Everywhere they go, they speak to their core issues as delineated above and to their belief that the solutions to the difficulties of the 21st Century are in the ancient spiritual paths given to the world’s indigenous peoples and held by them for us since the beginning of time. They also share their long-held prophecies—remarkably similar, wouldn’t you know—that tell of a ‘purification time’ that all of them agree is the time now upon us.

Long-time readers of this column will recognize this message as it is one that has been put forth here since the founding of that erstwhile scurrilous rag, *The Ticket* and right on through the current incarnation. I’m not tooting my own horn here (well, I’m not ONLY tooting my own horn), but I am trying to reemphasize the point that we are here on Earth based on ancient agreements our back people made with the Creator of this world and, as we have, in a sense, broken our spiritual lease agreement in the profoundest way imaginable.

We now find ourselves in the direst of straits and the solution to the fatal situation we have created for ourselves is a return to traditional values that are so much older, vaster and more significant than what is



Photo by Marisol Villanueva, courtesy of the International Council of 13 Indigenous Grandmothers.

in its history. Remarkably, all these women shared the ancient prophecies of their peoples that uniformly attested to the fact that if we do not change our ways, there will be catastrophic consequences.

These women include a Cheyenne/Arapaho, an Alaskan native, a Mazatec from Mexico, a Mayan from Central America, two women from the Amazon, a Nepalese woman, two Oglala Lakotas, the oldest living member of the Takelma band of Rogue River Indians from Grants Pass, Oregon, a Tewa/Havasupai woman and an elder/healer from Gabon, Africa.

As Nina Utne wrote about them in a recent *Utne Reader* article called “Just Like Grandma Told You,” “In all the traditions these women represent, grandmothers were honored as the final authority on most tribal matters, including decisions of war.”

These women have met four times now—the original gathering in New York, then in New Mexico, Mexico, India and the Black Hills of

touted as ‘traditional values’ as the sun is to a wooden match.

Buckminster Fuller once said that the problem with Spaceship Earth was that it did not come with an instruction manual. I dispute that and would point out that every indigenous population we know of or ever even heard of, from the Australian Aborigines to Zuni Indians, was given a detailed instruction manual.

Unlike the bare bones, but perfectly viable, version given the Christian people in the form of the Ten Commandments, most instruction manuals gave people a list of responsibilities alongside the list of taboos. Usually these also included instructions as to how to honor our sacred home, this Earth, and our spiritual and ceremonial responsibilities to the world, our relations and to each other.

Even some of the greenest people I have met are certain that if we just leave the Earth alone, it will heal itself. This ignores the fact that we have responsibility in the matter.

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Our ceremonies have always been meant to help maintain balance in this world. We have lost many opportunities to do this and missed many appointments we had for that purpose. I believe that we will need to come together as a people in a spiritual and ceremonial way and lay our work and our prayers alongside that of the Grandmothers if we are ever to live in balance.

I noted with interest this week as the UN group that shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore (as he says, the man that used to be the next president of the United States), has announced that not only is global warming real, it is now inevitable. It is too late to stop it. Nothing we do will stop it, not even the strictest measures. They tell us that what we need to do now is get ready for the changes that are coming.

This may or may not be true, depending upon whether you believe in miracles or not. As someone who has witnessed a couple, I do not discount the miraculous—on the other hand, I don’t suggest we count on it. I do believe that anything enough people want can happen. I don’t think we have a quorum yet, however. As the Earth changes, we must stand ready to change as well. We must be prepared to accept and respond to the changes we have wrought in our homeland—that is our ultimate responsibility, the ability to respond.

The point is, there are pathways home on this Earth and each of us can find our own if we seek deeply enough within us and perceptibly enough in this world. The challenge is to find our path and to walk it in our lives. The Zen teachers tell us there are many paths to enlightenment. Find one and take it. It is work you are doing for all of us and for the Earth as well. That is the most important investment you can make in our future.

We each have spiritual work we must do in this world, paths we are supposed to walk. Once we find these paths, we can determine how the merge to form a Good Road for all of us to walk together.

Journey well, Love, ME

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Think of the Loop like public radio and TV (but without the scandal). We all have to support it to keep providing the great columns, comics, and alternative coverage that we know you appreciate.

Thanks for your help.

Marie Browne and Troy Kindred, Publishers

## PANDORA'S BOX

In the true spirit of the holiday season we would like to know who stole, (yes, with cutters) in the middle of the night our Halloween lights. Hard to imagine, since we are so well-lit (well we were then) and located in the open, one might think it odd that we would take our own lights down at 3 a.m. Value: \$60. Irritation level: priceless. Oh, we'd also like our welcome mat back. A positive note: Happy 70th Bday Momma

Cheryl's pick of the week: Taking a pool on how long the Christmas lights will last. The over/under is on the 24th.

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## LoOp Letters

### No Plastic Please

Dear editor:

I'm really behind the recent sustainability theme of recent Loop articles. However, Rita Schenck has chosen plastic over paper...those are fighting words to this retired, old Environmental Science Teacher.

I find flaws in her argument and would love to see a reprint of the paper vs. plastic discussion in a future issue, god forbid we grant approval for anything made out of plastic!! I think the USA (especially Vashon) should outlaw plastic bags. They do not decay and they litter

our oceans. Sea turtles eat them and die...They mistake them for jellyfish as do other fish. They are made from oil, a petroleum product!!! They are an example of a resource (oil) mis-use. The same for plastic bottles and plastic containers of all sorts: they do not break down (as do glass and wood) and fill up landfills and cannot be recycled in large part. Paper bags can be recycled and do not require placement in landfills. I do agree that the best idea is to bring your own bag to the grocery store.

Sincerely, Pat Ritzhaupt





## Time to Lend a Fin for the Whales

By Orca Annie Stateler

The orca baby mystery I wrote about last time will remain unresolved until researchers get another close look at J Pod. Lately, the Southern Residents have been elusive, so no researcher has had an opportunity to inspect J Pod since the orcas were in East Passage on November 23. Alas, we have been bereft of orcas in Colvos Pass since November 9, when the VHP made a spectacular recording of J Pod.

Please support the work of the Vashon Hydrophone Project (VHP): REPORT LOCAL WHALE SIGHTINGS ASAP TO 463-9041. Recent calls have been about porpoises, seals, and sea lions. Someone reported a young seal on the La Playa boat ramp to Wolftown and the VHP —perhaps this is our Christmas Seal, ha! Providing this seal is not sick or injured, hauling out on the boat ramp is normal. Respect our young friend by staying

(ACS/PS), Island donors, The Whale Museum, and NOAA Fisheries.

The VHP will be expanding when the weather permits. Odin and I needed time to regroup after an expensive, unexpected move in July. That set back VHP expansion plans for 2007. A short list of project needs for 2008: more heavy-duty cable for our Colvos Pass hydrophone (the cable is costly); a new computer; and high-speed Internet access to allow streaming so others can listen to whales on our hydrophone.

In 2007, Odin Lonning donated artwork that raised hundreds of dollars for Wolftown. Now on display at the Vashon Island Coffee Roasterie: Odin's "Bear Shaman" drum (see accompanying photo) and a Killer Whale ceremonial dance paddle. Sales benefit the VHP. Buying bags of the Roasterie's Orca Blend also helps the VHP. Virtually every dollar donated to the VHP has been matched with in-kind contributions.

"Lend a fin" for non-invasive, sustainable Vashon-Maury Island whale research 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.

ACS/PS is the only whale conservation group based in the Seattle area. Your donations fund Puget Sound research, education, and conservation efforts. Moreover, ACS/PS is the only local whale NGO that offers research grants to college



"Bear Shaman" drum © 2007, Odin Lonning, Tlingit.

100 yards away and allowing him/her to rest.

The high water during the destructive storm brought a few strange sights. A seal fetus drifted by our bulkhead. It was quite decomposed and the current was too swift for us to retrieve it. An observant caller at Luanna Beach reported a dead black and white, cow-like, dorsal-finless marine critter floating by – from her description, most likely Dall's porpoise remains.

Dear readers and VHP supporters, I only do this once a year and now is the time. If you enjoy reading about orcas and whale issues in this column, consider making a year-end, tax-deductible donation to the VHP. VHP sponsors include the American Cetacean Society's Puget Sound Chapter

students. Our chapter has awarded grants to study Southern Resident killer whales, harbor porpoises, gray whales, and river dolphins in India.

ACS/PS also sponsors a free monthly Speaker Series, featuring renowned whale scientists, conservationists, educators, authors, and artists. Visit our web site at [www.acspugetsound.org](http://www.acspugetsound.org) to learn more about our programs and view the VHP page to read about the history and mission of the project.

You can aid in orca recovery and help protect all cetaceans by contributing to the VHP and ACS/PS. We are grateful to Islanders who endorse our work and share our concern for the well-being of Puget Sound's endangered killer whales and other marine mammals. Contact Orca Annie at [Vashonorcas@aol.com](mailto:Vashonorcas@aol.com).



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## We've Got a Lot of Kids

### Scary, Scary Night

by Kevin Pottinger

Last night the kids were quietly watching a Scooby Doo video in the den, when we heard all four of them suddenly start screaming in unison, in terrified, high-pitched voices. I ran into the room, expecting to find a raccoon, snake, or a fat red-eyed rat staring them down.

They were rolling on the floor and climbing on the furniture, crying and trying to simultaneously cover both their eyes and ears. They were shouting gibberish hysterically, and pointing to the TV screen. They'd seen something utterly terrifying in the Scooby-Doo video.

Apparently one of the characters in the cartoon had been hypnotized, and under hypnosis the character was directed to place a set of big pointy vampire teeth in its mouth and growl like vampires do, whenever a little bell was rung. The first time the bell was rung, the character put in the pointy vampire teeth, and the kids broke into splinters.

Bambi: everything's going great until the scene where Bambi's Mom gets blasted into little deer bits by the hunters. The Wizard of Oz: the Lollipop Guild is cute, and all's jolly until the Wicked Witch of the West and the Winged Monkeys show up. The best kid's movies inexplicably include at least one scene that scares the crap out of little kids.

My wife Maria and I offered our shell-shocked children the idea that every time they thought of the scary vampire, the thought would get a little bit less scary. That quickly escalated into a competition, where each child said they had thought of the Scooby Doo vampire several times already, and they were now much less scared than their brothers and sisters, the babies.

Today, three-year old Gracie ran crying down the hall, her little sausage legs pumping furiously. Each step she took attenuated her wails so that she sounded a lot like a dancing Apache on those field recordings from the thirties. She buried her sticky face in my sweater and said that there was something really scary in the bedroom. It turned out to be a dining room chair, placed on its side in the middle of our bed.

Our older kids used to scare the younger ones by sneaking up behind them and growling like a mountain lion. The twins would shriek and sprint for the safety of their Mom's lap, while the older kids chuckled under their breath. A week later, they were all doing it to each other, growling at one another like touchy pumas in estrus until their faces were red and covered with spit. Now they growl at each other most of the day. Their buddies do, too.

One of our older kids (who cannot actually be named because he's now able to read, but more importantly, so can his friends), is still afraid of the long shadows created by lamplight shining through cold, bare windows on dark winter nights.

Our three-year old boy Alec has always been terrified of dogs. Cats, lizards, armadillos, large squawking flightless birds, no problem. A fat old dog might saunter over to Alec, like dogs do, looking to grab a couple of surreptitious sniffs and a few friendly pets. Once Alec sees the dog, he'll grab my pants like a firefighter on a swaying ladder and use my legs as a human shield.

Alec and I don't always see eye to eye. He's three feet tall, of course. Probably the other reason is that Alec can't understand why I don't run terrified for a tree whenever I spot a dog. He probably figures that I'm not only blind, but represent some sort of evolutionary dead end, completely unprepared for survival in today's world with dogs and stuff like that in it.

I remember being seven years old, and terrified to climb into my bed even with every light glaring in my bedroom. I had just learned of devils in Sunday School, and I feared that a devil could get me somewhere between the door to my bedroom and my bed. I sprinted to bed, thinking that I could evade capture by sheer speed. Once I was safely in bed, I would pray to God to be delivered from devils, and to go to heaven.

There has only been one time as an adult when I was as scared as I was then, and the first thing that came into my mind was to pray that same prayer.

Maybe it worked. □□□□

**Island Birding Guide  
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The Magic of Plants

By Kathy Abascal

Plants are much more than a collection of medicinal chemicals that we can use when we are sick and out of balance. Plants created the environment that allowed us to come into existence. They transform energy from the sun into matter that we cannot exist without. They breathe out oxygen that we inhale and cannot exist without. The truth is that plants can live without us but we cannot live without them.

Unfortunately, we often forget their importance both for our physical, mental, and emotional well being. Modern man treats them, and the exquisite micro environments they create, as expendable. We rip out alders – like my neighbor is doing now – for a bit more lawn to mow without a second thought about what we are actually doing. We replace our “weed trees” with whatever suits us more at that moment. I have watched neighborhood produce stands be replaced with drugstores.



Our grocery stores contain more chemicals than produce. And most people are now leery of plants in general. Sure, we buy roses, lilies and carnations grown in far away countries using massive amounts of toxic chemicals but seldom see wild flowers. We buy pills and drugs, usually patentable copy cats of plant chemicals but worry that a cup of herbal tea may harm us.

In the process, we have lost most of our connection to the spiritual, energetic part of plants. There was a time when the world was quiet. People had time to watch plants and the heavens. And most of our herbal knowledge is at its core based on conversations that people once had with plants. Although ethno botanists proclaim that herbal

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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 has written two books on medicinal plants: *Clinical Botanical Medicine* and *Herbs & Influenza – how herbs used in the 1918 flu pandemic can be effective today*.

She is now available for health consultations at the **Full Circle Wellness Center**. These consultations will help you choose herbs and supplements as well as make dietary changes that will support your health. An evaluation of how these changes might affect prescription medicines you may be taking is included in the consultation. She teaches ongoing Conscious Eating for Health & Weight Loss classes at the Roasterie and will be adding classes on perimenopause, nervines, and basic herbalism later this fall. For more information, contact Kathy at 463-9211 or at [anemopsis@yahoo.com](mailto:anemopsis@yahoo.com).

knowledge was pieced together by trial-and-error, most indigenous healers swear that they learned the qualities of plants by talking with them. Interestingly, we now know that plants do communicate, at least with each other. As my neighbor hacks down another tree, the tree releases chemicals that tell nearby plants that they are in danger and need to amp up their immune responses. If we were not so inundated with input from TV, music, noise, cars, books, and such we might also sense the messages they float through the air.

I seldom talk about the energetic, spiritual side of herbalism. Instead, I usually talk about medicinal plants in modern, medical terminology. My teacher did the same thing. Both of us have a deep relationship with plants that goes beyond using “this plant for that problem” but believe that this awareness needs to develop spontaneously in the herbalist and the patient. It needs to be experienced. However, as we watch plants shift energy in the people we help, we are aware of our spiritual connection with plants. And it is an awesome connection.

I remember standing with a group in the Amazon rainforest where the local healer was showing us a Sangre de Drago tree. He looked around for someone to try its sap on. My legs were covered with itchy chigger bites and I needed help but at the same time did not want people looking at my ugly bites so I was hiding at the back. The healer whacked the tree with his machete, collected its blood-red sap, and found me. The sap stopped the itching. So, how did he know that sap from this but not other trees stopped itching? How did he know that I had itchy bites? And why does that tree make a sap that soothes insect bites?

I have a friend who is a phenomenal herbalist who specializes in treating cancer. He talks and breathes science. In fact, he is so deep into modern medicine that I often find it difficult to

Loopy sez: Deadline for the next edition of *The Loop* is **Friday, Dec. 28**

understand what he is talking about. Yet, he also uses flower essences in his practice. Flower essences are purely energetic remedies based on the intuitive knowledge of a man named Edward Bach. They are made by placing carefully picked flowers in a crystal bowl filled with spring water. The bowl is then left in the sun near the parent plant for a few hours to transfer the plant energy to the water. Flower essences are used in the belief that disease is merely an expression of an inner disharmony, an inner need for healing that plants can satisfy. At this level of thinking, a disease is a lesson and an opportunity for

A New Board, a New Beginning and a Challenge

*Continued from page 8*

**7. Come to an agreement** with staff and community members on the skills, attributes, experiences and challenges facing a new superintendent

**McMurray Robotics Team**

*Continued from page 1*

As a part of this competition the kids were also asked to do an energy audit of a building and recommend alternative energy sources and changes that could be made to improve the energy use of the building. The old high school building was chosen. Experts were consulted and the team presented this information at the competition. This club plans to be a part of the McMurray Science Fair April 19, 2008 to demonstrate what they accomplished this year. Plans are in place for this club to continue next year. If you would like more information on this club or are interested in being a mentor please contact Donna Gagner 463-4225.

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spiritual growth; more of a blessing than a curse. For my friend, this highly non-scientific approach is as important in cancer treatment as concepts like apoptosis or angiogenesis.

I think all herbal remedies contain this type of healing energy. But, as I mentioned, I do not much care to talk about the spiritual aspect of my work with plants. However, it is what brings the joy to my practice. Ultimately, learning and feeling the energy and magic of plants is what keeps me going, not only as an herbalist but as a person.

**8. Complete** the review of board policies

Work as a team and enjoy both the board work and responsibilities

While the above is not an exhaustive list, it outlines some of the important responsibilities facing our school district. However the responsibilities listed are not just the province of the school board. To create and sustain a strong school district the board needs staff and community support.

Community and staff can help by being involved in school district operations, attending board meetings, offering counsel and advice, supporting school activities, volunteering and guiding the board to reflect community values in the execution of it’s duties.

We are on a journey to go from “good to great”, however this venture is a partnership. Please help; by staying interested and involved. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the Vashon Island School district.



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



**Aries (March 20-April 19)** You will need to take extra care to get along with housemates and family members through this winter. It would be prudent to not make any new commitments to living partners; this is simply not the time. As for the ones you currently have, your domestic relationships will only be as good as your conflict resolution abilities. Commit yourself to reducing unnecessary drama. Take the lead and ask people what they are feeling. The sooner you defuse tensions, the less power they will hold over you. The ones that go unspoken, and are not raised to awareness, promise to be the ones that do the most damage. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Taurus (April 19-May 20)** You have gained sufficient perspective to see yourself as a significant other sees you, but you still may not trust this view. Indeed, you may be feeling a wide variety of doubts, but in truth they are all self-doubts that you can work through if you choose to. It would help at every turn to know what you want. Most of your issues will come back to questions relating to your most elementary goals, which need to make a transition from ideals or dreams to practical steps toward something that will feel simple or basic, not grand or ambitious. It is taking a series of these steps that will get you closer to your next destination, and indeed get you there at all. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Gemini (May 20-June 21)** You are someone who, in truth, needs to be firmly rooted to a place. But what you may be feeling lately is that the ground above any roots you may have is moving. This may be disorienting, and you may have some moments of genuine uncertainty about where you need to be, and why you need to be there. Your real grounding in the coming year will happen in the agreements that you make. You must ensure that you see both sides of anything you are negotiating. Note its potential impact both positive and negative on any of the parties involved in the discussion; and do some analysis not only of who is the stronger party and who is the weaker one, but of why you think this is so. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Cancer (June 21-July 22)** You seem to be going in the direction of the past, or looking deep within yourself for your safety and confidence. It should come as no surprise that, having committed to that endeavor, people close to you are responding with a measure of genuine reassurance. This may serve as a hint that how you feel you are projecting yourself is not really how it's happening. In other words, even if you are in a moment of deep reflection, that may be expressing itself as confidence because true introspection is a sign of strength and maturity. Insecurity has an odd way

of becoming a source of strength, once we acknowledge it. People who love you will do whatever they can, as soon as you are willing to work with them. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Leo (July 22-Aug. 23)** You have reason for fear, and you have reason for deep reassurance. The question is, which one do you believe? Perhaps it would help to start with an inventory of what you have feared in the past, and how little that has meant. Then consider what you have depended on as a source of strength, and how much it has meant. I would say that potential sources of strength are worth more than potential things to worry about; they have a greater chance of coming true, and they mean a lot more. In a little while you will finally see both of them for who and what they really are. And that is good news. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22)** You seem to need a strong partner, urgently. You need someone who has solid opinions, defined views, and who holds you to your word. I wonder, why in the past when such people came into your life did you not take them up on their offer? If you can answer that question now, you will be able to avoid passing up an opportunity for companionship that comes your way this month. What you will need to do, however, is create a vision for relationship — starting with personal willingness — to integrate the human need for security and the human need for freedom and independence. You are able to conceive of this idea; the discussion will start with you, and you will become the safe haven where both sides of the equation can be balanced. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23)** Many movements of the planets suggest that now is the time for you to consider improving your living arrangements. If you have not been playing roulette with the housing bubble, you may soon be in a good position to purchase something or at least get a much better rental. The thing is this: it will be far better to be proactive than to be compelled into anything by outer circumstances. In other words, you want to be making all of your own decisions, and leaving nothing to chance. When you start to drift, decide. When you start to hope, decide. When you feel desire — decide. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)** Your friends care about you, and they will take care of you. You need to expect the same thing of close partners or lovers. Your friends feel more solid to you, and you to them; where love is concerned, you seem to be in a moment where your equilibrium is off kilter. Such is an



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opportunity to deepen your communication, and to guide someone to speaking a truth they may not know, and which you may only suspect. The time has arrived for you — and all of us — to put truth above security in our relationships. When we do so, we will live in warm, dry places, not card houses in the rain. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22)** Your sometimes-rocky home life or personal life is being stabilized by your commitment and your ability to focus on a goal. You may not have thought that you could make something previously so unstable seem simple by focusing your intentions, but that turns out to be a big part of the picture. It also is helping a lot that you know what your ideas are, and are committed to experiencing those ideas with every cell in your body. That is magnetic; and it is providing an organizing principle for your life and the people in it. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20)** You are the source of security for many around you. You are the rock they stand on. What happens when you have your doubts? Well, it's not always easy being the source of security for others, and there are times — this being one — that the people around you need to be supportive of the changes that you are embracing so bravely. You are doing your part; you are willing; you have come to understand that the people around you really are free. It will take them some time to appreciate that gift, but for now, if

you want them to appreciate you in the way that you need, you may have to speak up. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19)** You are coming to terms with the fact that a partner or loved one does not know what he or she wants. That is a temporary state, but how temporary we cannot be sure. You may want to investigate the ways in which they perpetuate their not knowing; and what function the confusion serves. You also need to look at the way you are influencing their indecision or state of confusion. You may not be able to change them or even influence their direction, but your self-awareness will be helpful because, at the least, you will be able to make up your own mind when you need to. And that, you must be willing to do. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)** Planets are moving into the house in your solar chart associated with public recognition and reward for your work. These are things that, for a Pisces, are usually slow in coming. Capricorn rules this house, and Cap is not a sign known for getting fast action. But I would call your attention to that literary masterpiece called The Tortoise and the Hare. You have done a good job of slow and steady for quite a long time. Now that the pace of your life is picking up rapidly, make sure you maintain that policy. Your experiences are concentrating and so are the results of your actions. Keep your focus. Eric Francis has more of your astrology for you at PlanetWaves.net.

# Island Epicure



## Quick Meals for December Days

By Marj Watkins

Your freezer and your oven are your best kitchen friends these drizzly, cold, busy December days. (Note the ying-yang thing there—cooperation of opposites cold and hot.) One of the best attributes of frozen veggies, for instance, is that they’re pre-cut and ready to cook, usually more rapidly than fresh vegetables. Processed at the peak of ripeness, rushed from field to factory, they also may retain every bit as much of their nutritional value as the ones from the produce section, and more than canned vegetables do.

Besides the nasty weather and Christmas shopping challenges, too many of us are also struggling against colds, coughs, and a general feeling of malaise. Time and energy for cooking ebb as December’s hours of daylight shorten.

It’s time to get out the soup kettle, and to heat the oven. First, the soup, every item in it magic against ills, and chills, and booster of spirits.

### SUCCOTASH SOUP

3 to 4 servings

Prep: 5 minutes. Total cooking time: 15 minutes after liquids first boil.

- 1 (10-ounce) can Campbell’s condensed chicken broth
- 1 can water
- 1 ounce Thai rice noodles or other gluten free pasta
- ½ cup frozen baby lima beans
- 1 skinny carrot, thinly sliced, chopped small, or grated
- Herbs:
  - 1 Tablespoon dried onion flakes
  - ½ cup frozen corn kernels
  - ¼ teaspoon powdered ginger or black pepper
  - ½ teaspoon dried, crumbled oregano
  - ½ teaspoon dried crumbled marjoram, basil, or tarragon or some of each

Bring broth and water to boiling. Break noodles into 2-inch lengths. Prepare carrot.

Add noodles, limas and carrot to soup pot. Bring back to boiling Cook covered on medium heat for 10 minutes. Add remaining ingredients. Cook 5 minutes more.

This soup is as good for breakfast as for lunch. It clears our sinuses and supplies needed hydration. It’s easy to digest. The broken noodles are easier to eat than long ones.

Be sure to include the blob of chicken fat in the can. It contains cysteine, an anti-viral protein. And it’s mostly unsaturated.

Oregano fights cold germs. According to Elizabethan herbalist Culpeper, it benefits the lungs, increases appetite and soothes and strengthens the stomach, and remedies coughs. Besides it improves the flavor of soups and stews, and of baked chicken.

The ancient Greeks applied warm poultices of the leaves to relieve painful swellings. The wild oregano we picked in the mountains of Crete winters over, as does the *Oreganum vulgare*, still blossoming in a pot on my patio as I write in late November.

Dyers once gathered the flowers for a dye to turn wool purple and linen reddish brown. Alas, it color did not endure long.

An easy oven meal: Baked sweet potatoes, Greek Chicken with Oregano, Buttered Peas, Lettuce and Tomato Salad. First start the couple of sweet potatoes baking. The ones we’ve been getting easily serve two people each. Put them on an oven-proof plate or metal pie pan. Next put in the chicken. Make the salad while they cook. About 5 minutes before serving, melt a tablespoon of butter in a small skillet, add 2 to 2/12 cups of frozen peas and a splash of hot water. Cover and cook covered just until peas lose their raw taste, no more than 2 minutes after they boil.

GREEK CHICKEN WITH OREGANO  
Preheat oven to 400 degrees  
Prep: 5 minutes  
Cooking: 45 minutes

- 4 chicken thighs, skin on
- Salt and pepper
- Dried, crumbled oregano

Arrange chicken in a 6x10-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and oregano. Slip it into the oven and reduce temperature to 375 degrees. Bake chicken 25 minutes.

Cover with foil. Bake 20 minutes more, or until fork-tender.

Drizzle the juice from the chicken baking over the cut-open sweet potatoes.

Bon appetite!

## The Canoes of Spirit

*Continued from page 5*

promotion or any political agenda. We take offense when we see behavior that dishonors and imperils what we hold sacred. To be an authentic voice for killer whales, we run the risk that people will sometimes feel threatened or angered by our words.

Let us not forget, killer whales have made all the sacrifices in an unbalanced relationship with modern humans. To our endangered orcas, the canoes of spirit, we pledge to restore balance by doing what we can to prevent their extinction and leave their home intact, if not substantially improved, for generations to come.

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## Spirituality and Your Soul

by Ainslie MacLeod

In my book, *The Instruction*, I ask readers to imagine two alien races living on two distinctly different planets. The first, the warlike Zrogs, are surrounded by noise and chaos. Isolated from each other, they care for nothing but their own immediate interests.

The other, the Lanusians, are peaceful, concerned about their environment, and committed to ensuring a better world for their offspring.

The question I ask is, “Which of these two races is living the more spiritual existence?” Is it more spiritual to continually wage war, or to coexist with others in a state of peace and harmony? Is it more spiritual to look out only for number one, or to share what you have with those less fortunate than yourself?

The answer, to most of us, is clear. And that’s because we all instinctively know what it means to be spiritual. It’s why we generally tend to agree that concepts like truth, equality, understanding, and compassion are higher values.

Yet look at the world we live in. We humans seem to have a lot more in common with the Zrogs than the Lanusians. Take peace for example. In the last century, armed conflicts, genocide and various pogroms killed over 200 million of us. This century is shaping up to be equally destructive.

And what about equality? It sounds good on paper: “All men are created equal.” But how much real equality is there in the world? America’s corporate bosses now make over 500 times the salary of the average worker. That’s nothing, though, when you consider that half the world lives on less than two dollars a day.

Even more sobering is the fact that in the time it takes those three billion people to earn their two dollars, 30,000 children under five will die from the effects of poverty.

So, let me ask you this: Which side are you on? Are you a Zrog or a Lanusian? Are you in favor of self-interest, greed, aggression, and other

Zrog values? Or do you support freedom, peace, equality, and those spiritual ideals represented by the Lanusians? Assuming you identify more with the Lanusians, let me ask you another question: “What are you, as a spiritual person, going to do about it?”

The point is that spirituality is not some nebulous, airy-fairy concept. It has down-to-earth, real world implications. True spirituality does not involve detaching yourself from the world and telling everyone how enlightened you are. It means acting from a place of love.

Spiritual acts are those things you do that help individuals or groups of people less fortunate than yourself. When you do something that improves another’s life in some way, you’re acting from a place of love.

Whether you volunteer at a soup kitchen, take to the streets to protest a war, or travel to a third world country to inoculate children, you’re helping other human beings, and that’s a spiritual act.

Thanks to the reciprocal nature of spiritual acts, when you give out love, you receive love back. That’s why behaving selflessly can feel so good. In fact, it can help to give an otherwise unfulfilling life a profound sense of purpose.

You don’t have to be a Lanusian to behave in a spiritual way. As I said, you already know what it means to be spiritual. You just have to remember that spirituality is an active rather than a passive pursuit.

Spiritual acts allow you to use your spirituality to become involved. They offer you the opportunity to make the world a better place for this and subsequent generations and, at the same time, give your own life greater meaning.

*Ainslie MacLeod is a psychic and author of The Instruction: Living the Life Your Soul Intended. You can contact him at [www.soul-world.com](http://www.soul-world.com)*



# Positively Speaking

## Don't Waste Your Time in Church!

by Deborah H. Anderson

"You're the Best Buddhist...And It's All About Jesus!!" That's what she said! And then she clapped her hands for Joy. And I smiled that my love for Jesus should shine through so clearly despite me.

It is my custom and tradition to be open with people about my faith. Whoever they may be I'm, to the best of my ability, pretty honest about the core of my life. That doesn't mean I'm swallowed up in a need to press doctrine. I love the old quote: "Preach the Gospel; when necessary use words"

In this column, I don't believe I've pulled many punches about to Whom I belong. But once a year, during the month of December, I let on directly about why I celebrate Christmas; two Christmases actually, at our house. My son converted to Russian Orthodoxy and lives his faith on the old calendar. So we celebrate Western Christmas on the 25th December, which we call the fun Christmas and then we celebrate Orthodox Christmas on the 7th January which we call the Holy Christmas. If you've ever been to a Protestant or Roman Catholic Service side by side with an Orthodox service you would know why we named them thusly. All the smells and bells and Slavonic we can't understand and hours and hours of standing makes one feel that what one is celebrating and worshipping is extraordinarily special and Holy and Sacred in the deepest most ancient of meanings and certainly revealing what this world is as defined by God.

So let me say his name outright. Jesus. I belong to Jesus. He is my best friend; The Holy Spirit is my constant companion and my perpetual provider of everything I need. He holds me accountable to making everyday the most transformed day I can experience and has offered me Grace and Mercy beyond measure. He is the best brother any sister could ever want.

To some who read that, shudders will go up and down their spine. The sensation of fingernails on a blackboard will run through their body. Trust me I was once where you are. I understand. Like all good friends, getting to know Jesus was a process. When I first started to know him I thought his name was 'Killer of Joy and Fun and all things that are 'Yes' in Life" Then when we were good friends, I found out he was the key to all good things and blessings and Fun and Joy and the only 'Yes' there is for me.

To others who read it, they will think I have not gone far enough. "Tell them about the forgiveness of sin. Hit them harder with the Truth. Lead them to repentance." Well, I would except that is an individual process. Since I was never a drug addict and pretty much gave up binge drinking after one party at Delta Sigma Phi in Berkeley (even though I killed at a Monopoly game that night leading one to believe that the answer

to poverty is more consumption of Sloe Gin Fizz), and I didn't believe in sex outside of marriage and held the line as best I could, (in the sixties no less!) I had to spend a lot of time talking with God before I could hear what my sin was.

It was here on the Island actually. I finally got up the nerve to ask God, "Show me my sin. What is it?" All around me people were living the list of the seven deadlies with gusto and had a lot of money and earthly success and I was leading a pretty trim life and couldn't seem to stand out of the line of fire. The only thing to do was examine my sin. There must be something I was doing wrong.

Know what I heard? "You're Anybody's" It was 'cut me to the quick' truth. I was. I never stood up for myself. I put my needs last. I hid my faith. I did whatever anybody asked me to. I decided at that moment I was not going to be Anybody's anymore. I was going to openly belong to God. And then I won the lottery and my kids were perfect and Prince Charming came.

Not really. Then life got harder. That's why a lot of people don't like the Jesus thing. It doesn't have an easy cause and effect. With other faiths, there are more concrete results. With Christianity it's very messy and two steps forward three steps back. It's very real.

That's why people invented churches I think. They wanted to make life with Jesus neat and tidy. A Christian club. Only that didn't work either. Then we just ended up with church politics, and oh so many people have turned down Jesus because of something that happened in the church.

This Christmas, if you belong to a church, make Christmas about Jesus and what his birth means in your life. When you are standing around in the coffee hour, tell each other what God did in your life that week that was a blessing. Make more conversations happen about Jesus than the earthly definition. . Don't waste your time in church. Make it count for something eternal.

And for those who say, "They calls themselves a Christian?!!" Don't waste your time criticizing, pick up a Bible and read what Jesus said, "I come that you might have Life and have it to the full" What he said, lived out, will change your life.

For those of you who celebrate other holidays than Christianity, I say the same thing. Make it about Faith; make it about what God has done for you. Make it count for something eternal. And ultimately it will be about Hope. For without Hope, we are lost.

May the Light of Eternity burn brightly in your Spirit this Season outshining any mortal gift or meal or money, that you might know Hope. Don't waste it. Make it count.

Love,  
Deborah

oooo

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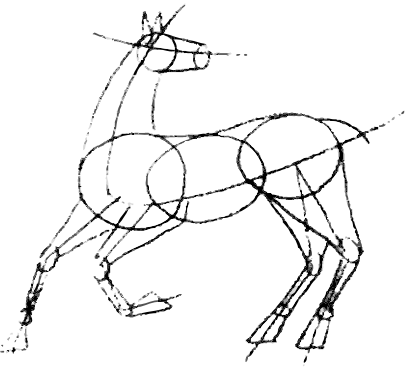
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who rode a crooked horse

## Wellness Web Directory Launched

Continued from page 1

correspondence with practitioners is a click away and the site also offers active links to provider web sites.

Visitors to VashonWellness.com can find descriptions, photos, and contact information. Categories include Acupuncture to Yoga and providers include Alliantcare to Zheutlin. The services include medical and dental care, mental health and well being, coaching, alternative health care, body work and fitness, stress management resources, nutrition services, midwifery, and skin care and more. In addition there are resources for "community care," such as elder care, youth services, Vashon Community Wellness Program, DAWN, and other community services.

The site encourages gift certificates in keeping with a growing movement to give "experiences" and reduce waste from gift-wrapping.

The site's developer, Laura Worth, explained that in addition to its primary focus as a web directory of services, VashonWellness.com also includes educational links to authoritative information about the variety of practices represented on the site. Questions about various health and wellness arts are also answered in an FAQ. As professional and public participation broadens, Worth

expects the educational pages to offer more interaction between the public and professionals through a wellness blog and an e-newsletter.

Worth commented, "Building the site has been a rewarding eye-opener to the Island's rich resources in the helping arts. Because we are web-based, we can continuously add to the listings beyond our initial charter members. Coupled with the educational FAQ and links pages, this site expands the Vashon public's opportunities for informed choice. We welcome community suggestions about how to grow the site." Contact Laura Worth at 463-9283 or visit [www.vashonwellness.com](http://www.vashonwellness.com).

Vashon Sportsman's Club  
New Years Eve  
Dance

Dec 31st 9pm

With Loose Change

\$25 PER COUPLE  
\$13 SINGLE  
HORS D'OEUVRES  
BALLOON DROP & CHAMPAGNE  
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206-463-9287  
For Ticket Information



It snowed, then it rained, washing Ernest's creativity into the over-flowing ditches and the white-capped, brown tinted Puget Sound waters. This is what remains for you sports freaks:

VHS Winter Sports Summaries:

Girls Basketball: The Girls beat Fife in a hotly contested home match. Then they lost 53-39 to the Sultan Turks in Sultan.

Boys Basketball: The Boys rocked the Island last week, beating a competitive Fife team by 12, then knocking off Sultan 73-56. Four players finished in double figures.

Guys Wrestling: Vashon Grapplers opened up the season



Rockbusters: 9 and Over Representing!

with loss to the Puyallup Vikings 48-35. Highlights were pins by Lopez, Steamboat, Mish, and Protzeller.



Like father, like son: Tommy and Kevin Delargy.

Wrestlers took home 5th place at the Todd Beamer Takedown Tournament. Losing to Tahoma, beating Emerald Ridge, losing to Kentridge, then beating Todd Beamer.



Tuff Enough? Chase Wickman and Local Madman put on their game faces.

## Vashon Seals Swim to Bremerton



Thirteen of the younger swimmers from the Seals Swim Team do the club cheer before the morning session begins at Grand Fall Pentathlon on Dec. 1st at Olympic Aquatic Center in Bremerton. Pictured clockwise starting with Coach MacLeod on right are: Sophie Gagnaire, Kyra MacLeod, Diego Gray, Javid Nguyen, David Nguyen, Kendall Danzer, Anna Lueck, Kai Li Sheer, Madeline Cowen, Emily Arneson, Zoe Sackman, Anna Ripley and Lauren Houston. This was the finest exhibition of team spirit, support, and individual achievements in club history. Everyone had fun and accomplished something to be proud of. The older Seals swam in the afternoon session and even those recuperating from previous illnesses churned out some huge time improvements. Photo and caption by Gary Gray.



# Get fit and healthy in 2008!

We have lots of day and evening classes for all abilities and schedules. Come check it out!

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- \*Yoga - three instructors, different styles
- \*Cardio fitness - Step aerobics, water walking, and more
- \*Total Toning and Stretching - strengthen and stretch your entire body

The Vashon Athletic Club features a full size pool, sports courts, cardio machines, weight equipment, and more!

Hours Mon to Fri 5:00 AM to 10:00 PM  
Sat 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Sunday 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

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50% off all initiation fees through Jan 6

Whats New At



Zoomies welcomes Peggy Linker former owner of the WOK IN TAKE OUT

As new manager Peggy will be introducing a few new menu items in addition to serving up all your favorites!



All Day  
Everyday Spaghetti Special  
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spaghetti, salad, garlic bread

New Thai offerings from  
Wok In Take Out  
Bun salad & Tom Kha soup  
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## Not Just a Great Burger



# Loopy Laffs

From the The Other 10 Commandments:  
Thou shall not worry, for worry is the most unproductive of all human activities.

## One Liners

The only road to success is always under construction.  
Anything preying on my mind would starve to death.  
The universe is a figment of its own imagination.  
As long as I can remember, I've had amnesia.  
Anything is possible, unless it's not.  
We have no choice but to believe in free will.  
We must believe in free will. We have no choice.  
All the crows seemed to know my name, thought Caw.  
The only road to success is always under construction.  
All right, all right...move along, there's nothing more to read.

I took a job on one of the Island farms, but problems kept cropping up.

A college professor asked his class a question. If Philadelphia is 100 miles from New York and Chicago is 1000 miles from Philadelphia and Los Angeles is 2000 miles from Chicago, how old am I. One student in the back of the class raised his hand and when called upon said "Professor your 44..  
The Professor said "you're absolutely correct, but tell me how did you arrive at the answer so quickly?"  
The student said. "You see professor I have a brother, he's 22 and he's half nuts."

Kids Letters to God:  
Dear God,  
I think about You sometimes even when I'm not praying.  
Elliot

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Solution to puzzle on page 7

You can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead.

Surely I deserve some kind of recognition for all the bad things I haven't done.

Cowboy Wisdom:  
Raisin' your voice don't tighten up your argument.

Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people. —W.C. Fields

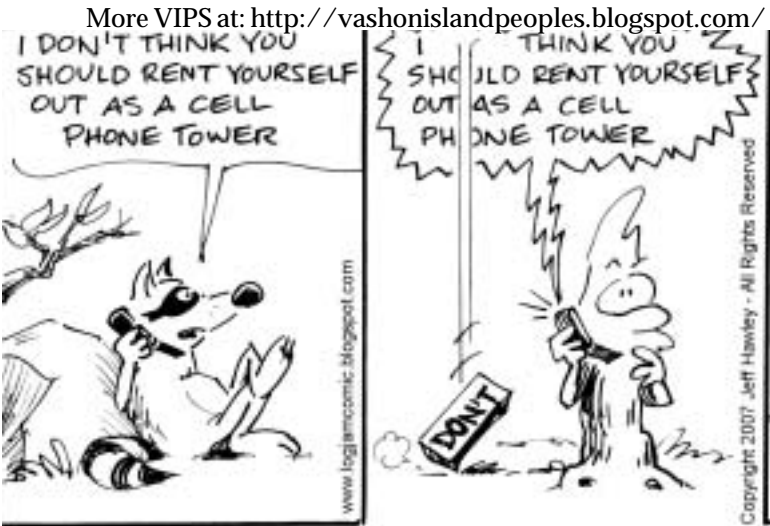
If the front of your car says DODGE, do you really need a horn?

A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"  
"I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied.  
"Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered. The daughter bowed her head and said,  
"Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

## OFFSHORE



## LOGJAM





Loop Arts

## Red Ranger Came Calling Plays Through Christmas



The Red Ranger (Adam Westerman) and his Aunt Vy (Gaye Detzer) finding common ground (photo below), while the Head Elf (Rich Wiley) warns old Saunder Clos (Ken Zick) to be careful (at left). The musical rendition of Red Ranger Came Calling, a Guaranteed True Christmas Story will run two more weekends, Dec. 14-16 and Dec. 21-23 at the Blue Heron Art Center. Tickets are going fast for this family-friendly show. Call 463.5131 to reserve by phone. The Buck Tweed Two Speed Crime Stopper Star Hopper bicycle raffle winner will be announced at the Dec. 16 show. Photos by Janice Randall.



## “Hillstomp” comes to Bishop’s Pub

by Pete Welch

These duos blew the lid off the Casbah Tent at Earthfair a little over a year ago and are now going to make a rare second visit to Vashon on Saturday, December 22nd. Hillstomp is quite a unique pair of young musicians. Henry Kammerer plays the guitar in a self-taught style using his forefinger to place his slide while he uses a plastic pick on the forefinger of his strumming hand. Drummer John Johnson sits behind a collection of five-gallon food drums attached to a bass drum and snares, pounding out the hypnotic beat with plastic sticks. Yes, it is unorthodox, but it works.

They’ve come a long way in just the short time they’ve been performing. It wasn’t too long ago that they ran sets of completely covered tunes, but with the self-release of their debut recording,

blues. Their particular brand of North Mississippi trance blues differs drastically from the 12-bar style that your uncle listens to. This music is different, it’s raw and irresistible. Even as a duo their sound completely fills a room, making some wonder why so many other bands have so many people standing around.

Whether playing original compositions, traditionals, or blues classics, Hillstomp has managed to craft a distinctive sound that has quickly brought them to the top of Portland’s roots, blues and alternative music circles.

Making a rare stop on their never-ending U.S. and European tours, we are fortunate to bring Hillstomp out to Vashon Island for one of those unique don’t-miss performances that people will be

talking about for a very long time. Opening for Hillstomp, will be Patrick Bennion’s band, Old Dockton. Their sound is simple....rootsy with earth-driven tunes and highlighted with strong vocals by Patrick. This band has evolved into a very

popular local draw....so get there early!

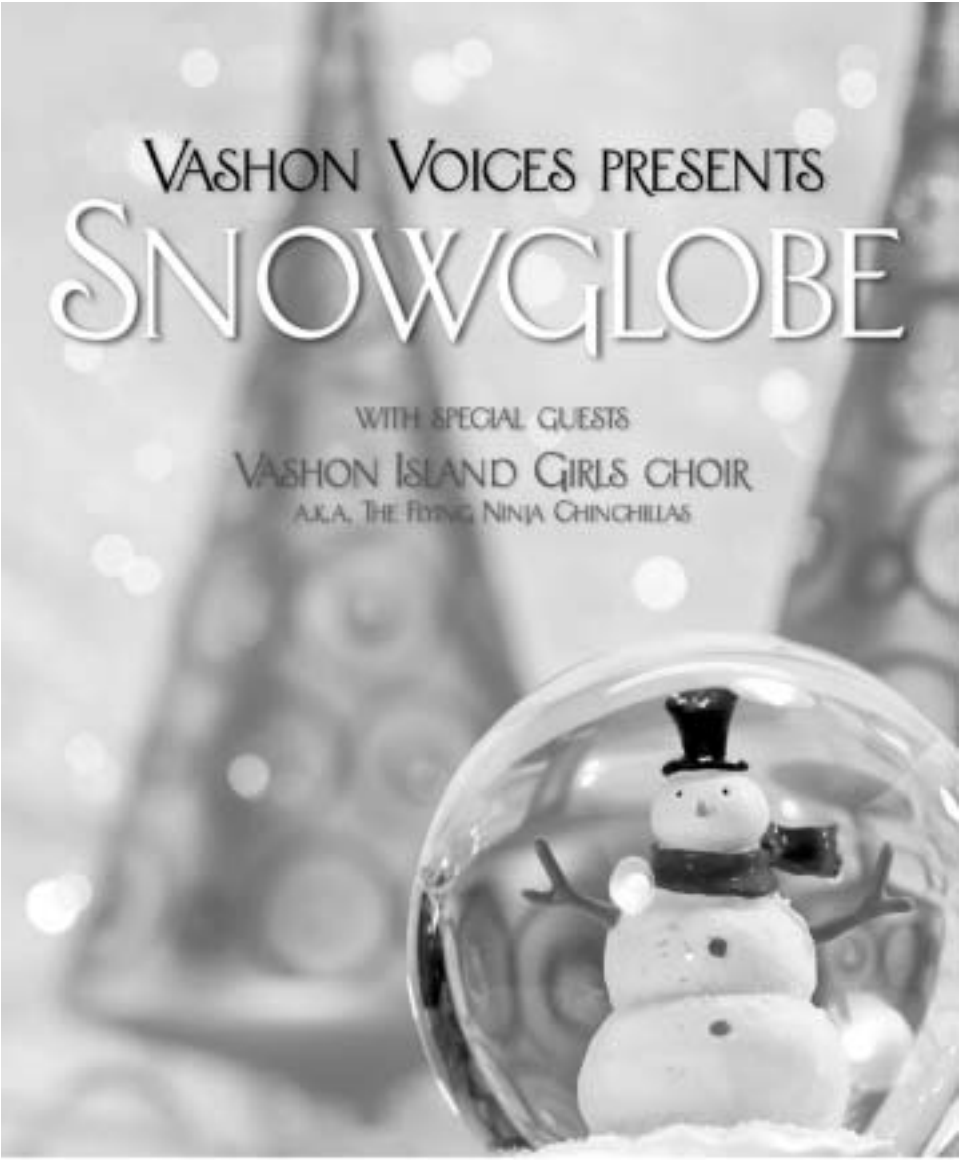
Free cover on the weekend before Christmas, you can’t beat that for a treat like this!



Drummer John Johnson and Henry Kammerer on guitar form Hillstomp. Photo by alice-photo.com.

“One Word,” the duo has developed into a legitimate songwriting team as well. The original numbers hold all the potency found in the music of the North Mississippi Hill Country.

Hillstomp is tending a fire that has been smoldering in the hills of northern Mississippi for nearly a century, bringing it alive for another generation. In them you can glimpse the past, present and future of the



Friday, December 14 and Saturday, December 15 at 8:00pm

Vashon United Methodist Church  
17928 Vashon Highway SW, Vashon Island

**\$10 Adults, \$5 Seniors & Children**

Tickets available at Books By The Way & Vashon Bookshop and at the door

Childcare provided—Handicap accessible facility. For more information visit [www.vashonvoices.org](http://www.vashonvoices.org).

## Vashon Voices Present “Snowglobe”

Tempting fate with Mother Nature again, Vashon Voices is back to perform yet another concert with a snow name—“Snowglobe.” This time, however, they are counting on the weather to allow them to perform! The concert, entitled “Snowglobe,” celebrates some old familiar holiday favorites and introduces some new repertoire from other parts of the globe.

From the rousing, percussive Nigerian opener, “Betelehemu” to the inspired Hanukkah number, “Light the Legend” to the familiar strains of “Deck The Hall” and “White Christmas,” the Voices promise to “shake-up” your winter holidays with seasonal songs from near and far.

This year, the Voices will be joined by special guests, the Vashon Island Girls Choir (a.k.a. The Flying Ninja Chinchillas). The group is under the direction of islander Elizabeth Nye.

Concert dates are Friday, December 14 and Saturday, December 15 at 8:00pm at the Vashon United Methodist Church. Tickets to “SnowGlobe” can be

bought at Books By The Way and the Vashon Book Shop starting November 26, as well as at the door before each concert. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors and children. There will be holiday refreshments at intermission and free childcare is available. And don’t forget about the audience sing-a-long of your favorite Christmas carols!

Joe Farmer is the Director of Vashon Voices and he has over a decade of performance experience with the Seattle Men’s Chorus, Philandros and The Esoterics. Linda Lee, who has many years of professional choral accompanying experience, accompanies the group.

Vashon Voices singers for this concert are: Cynthia Becker, Jim Boardman, Patty J. Campbell, Dennis Davidson, Marita Ericksen, Carol Ferch, Shannon Flora, Rebecca Graves, Elaine Kearney, Mary Lawrence, Dan McDevitt, Sue Parker, Dick Paulsen, Brian Schott, Rick Skillman, Judy White.

For more information, visit [www.vashonvoices.org](http://www.vashonvoices.org).



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Loopy sez: Deadline for the next edition of *The Loop* is **Friday, Dec. 28**



Loopy sez: Deadline for the next edition of *The Loop* is **Friday, Dec. 28**

## A black and white photograph of a man from the chest up. He is wearing a textured flat cap, dark sunglasses, and a light-colored, ribbed crewneck sweater. He is smiling at the camera. He is holding an acoustic guitar, with his left hand on the neck and his right hand near the body. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with trees and a fence.

The Vashon/Maury Chamber Orchestra invites island students aged 12-18 to audition to play a solo with the orchestra. The concerts will be on Saturday night and Sunday afternoon on March 1 and 2. Music Director Jonathan Graber and members of the orchestra's Artistic Advisory Committee will hear students on Saturday, January 5, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the UMC. To apply, please contact Graber at [jonathansgraber@aol.com](mailto:jonathansgraber@aol.com) or (360) 479-8914 with your name, school, age, private teacher, proposed piece, and duration of that piece.

O Come, O Come,  
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A Service of Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 23, 2007  
5:00 pm at  
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Catholic Church



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Call 206-567-4149 for more information.**

**St. John Mary Vianney Catholic Church - 16100 115th Ave SW, Vashon**

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Vashon High School Theatre







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