



THE VASHON LOOP

Vol. 6, #25

TO INFORM AND AMUSE -- TO PROVOKE THINKING AND ACTIVISM

December 18, 2009

Two VISD Teachers Honored for National Certification

by Anne Atwell

Colleen Carlson (Vashon Island High School English teacher) and Doug Swan (5th grade teacher at Chautauqua Elementary School) were honored by the school board on December 10th for successfully completing the National Board Certification Program.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is an independent, nonprofit, and nonpartisan



Colleen Carson and Doug Swan, center, photo by Anne Atwell.

organization founded in 1987 to create a system of advanced certification for teachers based on high and rigorous standards. National Board Certification is a voluntary assessment program designed to identify, recognize and reward accomplished teachers who meet high and rigorous standards based on what teachers should know and be able to do.

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Paws to Read Needs Volunteers



Sue Bell reads to Gigit and Paws to Learn volunteer, Liz Straube. Photo by Anne Atwell.

Paws to Read is a program that brings registered therapy dog teams into Chautauqua Elementary School to read with students. The students are identified by their teachers as being good candidates for the program. The reasons are varied: some students may be reading below grade level and need more practice time, some may have additional stresses in their lives and some “down time” with a dog helps them relax, or some may

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Reason for hope: Polaris (J28) and her newborn, J46, make a splash in East Passage, north of Vashon. J46 is the youngest Southern Resident. Photo © Mark Sears, 11/22/09.

Dorsal Grins

by Orca Annie Stateler, VHP Coordinator

After a yearlong drought of daytime visits at Point Robinson, the Southern Residents finally showed us the love on December 9. On a bitterly cold day, J and K Pod matriline mixed it up in East Passage, widely scattered in pursuit of prey.

Granny (J2), Ruffles (J1), and other orcas were across the drink near Des Moines, where Mark Sears did focal follows with them. Georgia (K11), Lummi’s daughter, traveled mid-passage, but the rest of her family swam toward Point Robinson. A child on the beach shouted, “I love you, orcas!” Indeed, absence makes the heart grow fonder.

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McMurray Robotics Team Goes to State

by John Williams

On Saturday December 5, 2009 Vashon’s three FIRST Lego League teams went to the regional competition at Aviation High School in Burien. (FIRST stands for “For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology”). At this year’s regional competition, McMurray Middle School’s Team Ratfish placed high enough to advance to the state competition in Bellevue. They competed against more than twenty other teams from schools in our area. Their high score resulted in part because of the excellent presentation of their research on school bus ridership at McMurray Middle School. This study project part of the competition propelled them on to the state finals for the league.



The “Vashon Ratfish” Robotics Team. From left to right Back row – Sage Levin, Aaron Kitchener, Austin Commons, Nathan Williams. Front row – Nicholas Jones, Ethan Hunt, Alden Rogers. Photo by Karl Kitchener.

Students in the FIRST Lego League (FLL) middle school competition, design, build and program autonomous robots using the LEGO Nxt computer platform. These robots are raced through a timed

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The Best Kept Secret on Vashon

by Virginia Miner

The front of the brochure says “The Best Kept Secret on Vashon.” In the past, this was true, but Vashon Country Club is trying to change. Thanks to re-structuring the club is now able to advertise. You may have seen a postcard offering promotional memberships for 2010. VIGCC always saw itself more as a “Club in the Country.” However, the changes in life-style and the current economy make it clear the previous models for “Country



Families enjoying the VIGCC pool, courtesy photo.

Clubs” do not fit in today’s environment.

Today, Vashon Country Club is trying to be more of an integral part of the Vashon Community. The club offers more than just a great nine-hole golf course. Chef Kevin Nicholson has brought new

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Math Is Cool!



McMurray Middle School extended its record of mathematical excellence on Saturday, December 5th, when two teams of 7th and 8th graders travelled to Moses Lake to compete in the Math-is-Cool Masters competition against ten other top teams from Washington state. The 7th-grade team, shown with their ribbons and trophy, placed second. Top row: Sage Levin, coach Gordon Millar, Anna Ripley, TeraJane Ripley, Lauren Houston. Bottom row: Ian McWhirter, Aaron Kitchener, Connor Paw and Teddy Atwell.

Open Space “Tiny Bubbles” New Years Ball!

Dress in finest Vashon Fashion; two bands — dance all night! Childcare on site till 10PM. See ad on page 9 for details!

Get in *The Loop*

Submissions to the Loop

Do you have an event or Public Service Announcement? If it's for profit, please send a contribution to help offset our printing costs. PO Box 253. Email questions or submissions to Ed Swan, editor of the *Loop*, at editor@vashonloop.com. Photos are welcome as jpeg or pdf attachments.

Free Swine Flue Vaccinations

H1N1 flu vaccine is now available to everyone who wants it. Come to a free vaccination clinic to get the best protection against H1N1 (swine) flu! This free clinic is for people who can't afford to pay for H1N1 flu vaccination. You will not be asked for proof of health insurance or citizenship. Clinics will be at Auburn, Bellevue, Federal Way, Kent, Redmond, Renton, Seatac and Seattle (two locations). Call the Flu Hotline at 1-877-903-KING (5464) or visit www.kingcounty.gov/health/H1N1 for Updates and information.

Winter Retreat for Caregivers

If you are a professional caregiver or a family member caring for a loved one, consider taking a few hours for your own self-care. The second of four seasonal retreats will be offered on Friday, January 8, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Burton Retreat Center. Amy Huggins, a yoga and meditation teacher, will teach simple self-care techniques to nourish your body, mind and spirit. A wholesome lunch and snacks will be provided. Attend a single session for \$30; register for two or more sessions for \$25/session. For information or to register, contact Carol Spangler at 206.567-5302.

 Loopy sez: Deadline for the next edition of *The Loop* is **Friday, Dec. 11.**

The Vashon Loop

Writers: Kathy Abascal, Deborah Anderson, Marie Browne, MEarth, Eric Francis, Troy Kindred, Melissa McCann, Orca Annie, Kevin Pottinger, Rex Morris, Ed Swan, Mary Litchfield Tuel, Marj Watkins.
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PO Box 253, Vashon, WA 98070
Paid advertisements in *The Vashon Loop* in no way express the opinions of the publisher, editor, or staff. We reserve the right to edit or not even print stuff. Deal with it. Come eat at the Q...again and again!
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Don't miss an issue. Really. We are in our 6th year of publication and still not bankrupt! (Yet) Wow!

New Year's Eve Party

Community Wide, Alcohol Free, Fun for All Ages
7pm – 10pm

Vashon Presbyterian Church

Vashon Presbyterian Church will be opening its doors to all in the Vashon community who wish to celebrate the arrival of the New Year in a safe, substance free environment. Plans are under way for popular interactive video games, foosball & bingo. Bring and play your own favorite card or board games. Specific activities for young children will also be provided. At 8:30 musicians of all ages join in on a fun jam session.

The very popular special feature of the evening will be a New York New Year at 9pm. Families with young children or anyone else desiring a shorter evening will enjoy the early countdown to "midnight" with hats, noise makers and balloons. All this is followed by a big make it yourself ice cream sundae bar.

Coffee (and the ice cream sundaes) will be provided. Those able are asked to bring a favorite snack or non-alcoholic beverage to share for the rest of the evening.

This is a perfect opportunity to invite friends & neighbors. It will be a family-friendly evening. But it is also an opportunity for seniors and singles to join in on a friendly, festive atmosphere for New Year's Eve celebrating. Vashon Presbyterian Church is sharing its central facility but this is not a religious event. There will be no prayer or midnight worship service. Anyone who desires a safe but fun evening will be comfortable here. Put this on your calendar & start talking with others now!

Call the church at 463-2010 for more details.

Communicating With Your Teen

Learn how psychological type and preferences influence your perceptions and responses when dealing with day-to-day and difficult parent/teen issues. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator will be used to identify parent preferences for communicating, interpreting information and making decisions. We'll use this lens as a way of helping to reframe many of the conversations you have with your teens. The workshop will be from 9-4:30 January 16th. The cost is \$125.00 per person (\$225.00 for a couple). Call or email Dr. Dan Kaufman at 384.5118 or dan@integralpotential.com for more information.

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Vashon Library January Programs

All King County Libraries Closed for New Year's Day, January 1st

Great Books Discussion Group

Monday, January 4, 7:00 pm

The Great Books Club meets on the first Monday of the month. The selection this month is *The Unknown Masterpiece* by Honore de Balzac. Visitors are welcome. Our only requirement to participate is that you have read the material under discussion.

Opera Preview: *Il Travatore*

Sunday, January 10, 2:00 pm

Verdi's *Il Travatore* was an instant hit when it was first performed in 1853. "The Anvil Chorus" is only one of a dozen familiar melodies Verdi uses to bring the furious action of *Il Travatore* to vivid life. This lecture will be presented by veteran opera lecturer, Norm Hollingshead, who will illustrate his commentary with musical excerpts from his own collection of recordings, many quite rare. Sponsored by Friends of Vashon Library.

KCLS Study Zone

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00 – 5:00pm; Sundays, 1-3pm, for reading tutoring only. Students in grades K-12 may drop in during scheduled Study Zone hours for homework help from volunteer tutors. It's free!

Friends of the Vashon Library Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 23, 10:00 am
Join the "Friendliest" group on Vashon Island! We support the Vashon Library by raising funds to provide free programs for all ages,

with our book, T-shirt, and plant sales. Meetings are fun and there are always refreshments.

Toddler Story Time

Tuesdays, January 05, 12, 19, 26, 10:40 am. Ages 21 months to 3 years with adult. Enjoy 20-minute program of stories and songs just right for toddlers. Registration not required.

Preschool Story Time

Tuesdays, January 05, 12, 19, 26, 11:30am. Ages 3 to 5. Join us for 30 minutes of stories, songs and fun! Registration not required.

Baby and Me Story Time

Wednesdays, January 06, 13, 20, 27, 10:00am. Newborn to 20 months with adult. A 20 minute program of stories, songs, rhymes and bounces for babies and a caregiver. Registration not required.

Growing Through Grief

Providence Hospice of Seattle is offering a bereavement support group on Vashon for adults coping with the death of a loved one in the last two years. The group, facilitated by a grief specialist, focuses on general tasks of grieving, considers ways of providing self care and creates an environment for mutual learning as group members share their experiences of loss. The group will meet for six weeks beginning on Wednesday, January 6, 2010 at JG Commons. Please call Jane Fleming at 206.749-7704 for pre-registration and information.



H HOME TEAM R E A L T Y

Troy and Marie Do New Years Eve

We don't know about you, but we are more than ready to leave 2009 in the dust and move forward to 2010. It has been a challenging year for so many people in so many ways. People who were trying to sell their houses know exactly what we mean – it's been no fun at all!

Join us in saying goodbye to this annus horribilis (as the Queen of England would call it) and ringing in the new year at the Quartermaster Inn. We're serving a special New Year's Eve menu featuring great hors d'ouvres and drinks. Troy's band Loose Change will rock the house, and we'll dance our way into a promising new year. We can't guarantee that real estate will turn around in 2010, but we can guarantee you a great time!

Got Horses? This is for you!



28112 135th Ave SW

This is what Island living is all about- a lovely home, sun-filled, lightly treed acreage, room for animals, gardens - all very affordable. Property is ready for horses, with fencing and shelter. Inside, vaulted ceilings let the sun shine into the freshly renovated home with two bedrooms and two full baths - one with a huge soaking tub. The cheerful kitchen leads to a spacious living room and a cozy media room. New Pergo floors, fresh paint, and lots of homey touches make this the perfect home.

\$265,000

Call us and ask about MLS#29166112



Incredible View ~Reduced Price

Look at this view! One and a half acres of rolling lawn and woods command a sweeping eastern view across Quartermaster Harbor, Dockton and Maury Island. Beyond, the Cascades frame the view, and to the south, Mount Rainier peeks through fir trees. The property includes an older but nice three bedroom, two bath manufactured home and a newer two car garage in great condition. A second tax lot of about 1/3 acre of the bluff is also included, ensuring control of your view.

Call us and ask about MLS#29035811 **Now offered at \$264,500**

Owner Financing!!

This spacious single level condo is just perfect. Bright and quiet end unit with a small private yard and a deck is tucked away in a peaceful residential area within a short easy walk to town. Two bedrooms and two baths plus a fireplace, vaulted ceilings, and lots of windows make it bright and inviting. Great opportunity to buy in a neighborhood with little turnover. Take advantage of the buyer's market!

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Positively Speaking

Waiting for God to Happen...Ho Ho Holy Prayer

by Deborah H Anderson



The first day I thought it was all a mistake to come and five days were going to be way too long. I was home...where I grew up. I take that back. Where I was a baby, child and teenager. Most of my growing up happened as an adult in Seattle and Vashon.

Now if you are one of those people who know everything, please don't read any further. It just won't mean anything to you. But if you are a person who has come from somewhere and survived and learned new things that bring you wisdom and joy...read on.

Home for me is Southeastern Pennsylvania just west of Philadelphia proper. Montgomery County. It's where Jon and Kate are duking it out if you need your bearings. Norristown, was where I was born, (and went to school my whole life). Norristown State Hospital where Dad was chaplain, was my playground. Montgomery Hospital is where I stayed for three and a half months after The Accident when I was nine.

Jeffersonville is where I lived before we moved out to Betzwood by St. Teresa of Avila school. (The sign in front of it now reads...Dedicated to spiritual growth and academic excellence.) It's why I was totally comfortable and excited about my kids going to St Ben's in the Wallingford district.

Valley Forge National Park and Audubon are the places across the river one way, and down the road the other where I would ride my bike to find peace and solace. It's why I love parts of the Westside and the covered bridge on Cove.

King of Prussia is the place where they built the Plaza that has now become THE MALL (second largest in America) where I had my first and second jobs in retail at Stuart's Dress Shop and John Wanamaker's department store. Home. It's why I like downtown Vashon or Westwood Village tops...if you get my drift.

For the two weeks before the trip I was a neurotic mess. It had been almost two decades. I was going alone to my fortieth high school reunion. In my head and heart I was seventeen again. Only I was afraid I'd remembered it wrong. I was afraid I would find out I hadn't remembered what was real. "Why do I call it home?" I would ask myself. I haven't lived there since 1970, my last summer at home. I'd spent my senior year in Europe. So really...longer than that.

The first day driving down memory lane, following my nose past familiar landmarks, I couldn't stop crying and thought the whole idea was a mistake and that I

certainly shouldn't have taken a long weekend to spend so much time there.

Everything I remembered was true. There was the house in which I was abused regularly. (I told you, if you have a perfect life don't read this.). My heart was filled with so much sadness. And everything had changed. (Of course ...it having been almost two decades since I was there)

But as I sat eating my afternoon meal at what once had been Shrack's corner and the Walker Farm and now was the biggest Lowe's and WalMart Superstore, Giant Foods (complete with made up road with an historic name) I'd seen since visiting the suburbs of Chicago, I took note of my heart. My head was very sad. My heart was, actually, very encouraged.

Everything that had been changed was for the better and had been appropriately placed. The fields of the farm also held a new Greek Orthodox. I thought back to the drive that morning. St Teresa's had grown bigger and bigger. The convent was now an early childhood learning center. My old house had a new deck with a pool and a climbing structure. My church had meals for the homeless and served a bilingual population. Even Valley Forge now had tours with Minutemen dressed to help school children understand how our country was born against all odds from Imperial tyranny.

As I continued in reflection, I realized God was showing me he had answered every prayer. It's a leap. You had to be there. Trust me. By the time I had enjoyed the entire weekend and was sitting eating a Salmon Quesadilla in the Detroit airport (I kid you not) I realized that all those years, God had been rescuing me over and over again from all kinds of bad situations. I was joyfully aware of the continuity of...drum roll...prayer.

Each holiday season I write about the importance of Jesus in my life. Everybody has their own guru. He's mine. He's more than a guru. In 1969 while in Europe, I surrendered my heart and my life to him. I've never regretted it. Even when it cost me everything to follow him, no regrets.

But before Jesus...there was prayer. Do you pray? Your own prayers? Speak to God from your heart? I hope so. It's lifesaving. Life changing. Trust me. God is listening. Learn to order your life so you can hear God speak to your heart. Then



Amber Tjemsland is featured in this photo from Rebecca Douglas' show Vashon Women: Maternity in Nature at the Vashon Womens Health Center.



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Presenting a photo gallery of images by Rebecca Douglas in December. Stop by to enjoy a cup of tea and Rebecca's beautiful photographs.

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act on the conversation. Embrace the grand adventure of something bigger.

This season, pray. God wants to hear it all. In your own words. God loves you. That's the real reason for Christmas. Linus is right. You know...Charlie Brown's Christmas.

Pray. In those prayers, God will teach you what is excellent and holy and beautiful. God will change your name. God will heal your heart. Pray.

Merry Christmas
Love
Deborah



Paws to Read Needs Volunteers

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have trouble reading out loud and the dog provides a perfect non-judgmental audience. Whatever the reason, Paws to Read has proven to be quite popular with students. In fact the program could use more volunteers. Currently, there are six volunteers, working with 17 students.

To be a volunteer: Teams include a dog and handler. Each team needs to be registered with Delta Society (<http://www.deltasociety.org/Page.aspx?pid=259>), an organization that promotes and facilitates the use of therapy animals in academic or health-care environments. To register, teams must attend a workshop or complete a home-study course. They are then evaluated to determine if both handler and animal have the proper skills and temperament to work in schools, libraries, or health care facilities. Once a team is registered, they are then qualified to begin Animal Assisted Therapy work.

What we offer: Paws to Read/Paws to Care is an Island group that formed a little over a year ago. Some of our members volunteer at

Chautauqua, some at Vashon Community Care Center. We are strictly a volunteer group sharing our experiences to try and help others become registered. At our meetings we expose those interested in animal therapy to the exercises that will be covered in a Delta Society evaluation as well as real-life situations that registered teams have encountered while volunteering. We leave it up to the individual handler to determine if additional training with a professional is required. Many members supplement our weekly meetings with obedience classes.

When we meet: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month, 5:00 - 6:00, at Chautauqua 2nd and 4th Monday of every month, 6:30 - 7:30, at the VHS cafeteria.

For more information: Liz Straube, straube@straube-HQ.com.

Eat at the...



We've Got a Lot of Kids

Frosty Pop

by Kevin Pottinger

I'm not a seasoned business traveler. It's not a skill I hope to acquire, especially by experience. I am fond of saying that I hate to travel for work.

Recently, I discovered that the movie "Planes, Trains and Automobiles" wasn't a work of fiction, but in fact a sort of comedic documentary. I've come to realize that large parts of that movie were rather straight, dry and pretty realistic accounts of cross-country business travel in the depths of winter.

For most of the last week, I've been trapped inside of that movie. Flying to the Midwest on business earlier this week, before the blizzard hit, our airplane spilled gallons of jet fuel all over the tarmac, and we were delayed several hours while we got a fresh plane that could better hold its naphtha. The delay landed me at my hotel in the middle of the night, dazed, checking in under the rude glare of buzzing fluorescent lights.

Shortly after arriving at what airlines insist on calling my "final destination" (which is different than my place of eternal rest), a blizzard dropped a foot and a half of snow, with howling fifty-mile-an-hour winds, and daytime highs hovering near zero. Power lines were down as trees snapped in half from the cold. Knowledgeable TV meteorologists provided wind chill estimates so low they lacked any sort of practical meaning.

All automobile traffic was at a standstill. Public transportation was shut down. The business I had was cancelled. At the airport I found that all airline flights out of town were cancelled. I waited three hours for a cab to take me to a hotel near the airport where I could wait for a flight out of town. I finally abandoned the empty, desolate cab stand to walk the few miles to the hotel, and a cab driver chased after me on foot and offered a ride in his warm cab with several other stranded travelers headed back to their downtown hotels. It was three below zero. *He must have been an altar boy.*

What's amazing is not that my carefully planned and plotted schedule was so completely blown-up by a severe winter snowstorm, but that such labyrinthine schedules are even possible under the best of conditions. The coordinated time tolerances that airlines and cabs and trains and hotel shuttles and all the rest operate on over thousands of miles are so tight that even minute deviations between links in the chain throws the whole thing into disarray. *My world is a collapsing mug on a furiously spinning pottery wheel.*

I had an idea that I could read the kids a bedtime story from my hotel room every night, which didn't happen. Failing to pack any kid's books, and after searching fruitlessly on the net for free, online, non-satanic bedtime stories, I settled for the more practical short chat with each kid in turn at bedtime. When long pauses happened on the kid's end of the phone, I had to remind our youngest kids to use actual words, rather than nodding or shaking their heads.

Eventually, things get sorted out, planes come and go and flights home are available. On my way out of the airport I picked up fifty bucks worth of shoddy, but not cheap souvenirs to distribute to the kids when I get home. *To trade for Manhattan: trinkets for the savage's amusement.* I gave our five-year old girl a little souvenir fake-snow scene, with I-heart-something-or-other on it and she said "Thank you Dad. Now I'll always have you with me." *Which slays me.*

I've not traveled for work since my wife Maria and I have been fruitful/multiplied. While I've been gone, she has been doing all the caring and cooking and cleaning by herself. While she kept a brave face, at times her voice betrayed her, cracking at the ends of unrelentingly cheerful sentences. As a woman often does, Maria took up the slack and did that which must be done, for her family.

There is only one person whose flights are never cancelled because of inclement weather or spilled fuel and is always home on time, and whose aircraft never goes mechanical, as the pilots call it when a plane is taken out of service for repairs. He flies completely around the world in one night, in an open cockpit, propelled by eight reindeer, and visits every home where there's a child and a wish. Everyone else flies commercial. Merry Christmas, everyone.



Loopy sez: Deadline for the next edition of *The Loop* is **Friday, Jan. 1.**

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**This Concert Service is a FREE event open to the community.
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St. John Mary Vianney Catholic Church - 16100 115th Ave SW, Vashon

The Best Kept Secret on Vashon

Continued from page 1

and intriguing items to the restaurant menu. House Manager Sasja Michael-Brown has improved the quality of service, creating a memorable dining experience; be it breakfasts on Sunday, mouth-watering lunches, ethnic buffets on Bingo Night, great dinners or appetizers for Happy Hour. Between the food and the view, it is a great venue for events as well as an evening out with friends. When the pool is open, from May through September, there is no better place to relax and enjoy.

In order to offer Island residents more, the Board is developing new, short-term memberships designed to allow everyone a chance to enjoy the club. The Golf Pass membership, the 2010 Dining & Pool membership and the 2010 Golf membership are available now. Also in the works, weekend memberships, a Bed & Breakfast membership, business

memberships and several other options.

Vashon Country Club will celebrate its 45th anniversary in 2010. It continues to support the organizations that make Vashon special; Vashon High School, VAA, Vashon Youth & Family Services, the Food Bank and many others and to provide a place for family recreation.

The hope for 2010 is that more Island residents will discover the "Best Kept Secret." For information, visit the website, www.vashoncountryclub.com or call the office at 206.463.9410.

Moisture Festival of Comedy/Varietè coming to Vashon Island's Open Space venue March 26,27 - Details in January!





Aries (March 20-April 19) I've often thought that all matters spiritual would be easier to understand if we remove the word 'spiritual' from the language. Everything we think of in this 'category' needs to be thought of as normal rather than as something distinct and special; then we will get it. That would include having a broad mental horizon, honoring ethics, being honest, treating people as equals and the world as one place, and living in the spirit of love. As I've grown older, I've rethought my position on this; the qualities covered under my concept of spiritual need to be identified and honored as such. They need a place and as you know, that place is everywhere; it's not church. Your charts this week suggest a return to the heart and soul of your faith. In that case we might well ask why you are concerned about anything else.

Taurus (April 19-May 20) You have many admirable gifts and attributes; the one you consistently forget to reach for is leadership. Even going back 15 years and up to the present day, you've been called on to take a stand for what is right, and to help organize the efforts of others. Part of why this is so frustrating to you is that while you can accept people in their imperfections, it's another thing to be responsible for their conduct, or to depend on the undependable. True enough. The solution is a new concept of leadership, based on mutually supportive relationships. You can think of these relationships as involving sacred contracts, where everyone involved gets the purpose of the gig, and responsibility and the burden of dealing with human flaws are fairly distributed. You are creating or renewing some of those sacred contracts these very days.

Gemini (May 20-June 21) It's often difficult for you to stand up to your relationships because you see so much that's outside you as larger and more influential than yourself. If we remember that the Galactic Core is in your opposite sign (which signifies relationships), it's possible to adjust the scale and remember that nothing in our world is quite that monumental. You now have a point of emotional access to a situation or circumstance that once seemed daunting. That's all it takes — a little common ground; the feeling of being recognized; the emotional sensation of trust, whereas before there was just an idea. If as the weeks and months progress you lose your sense of scale, remember this feeling. Connect with the reality that people are people. We're all in this together, no matter what anyone thinks or tries to convince us.

Cancer (June 21-July 22) Are you grateful for your health? The planet is in crisis about this right now, and it's not just about how to pay for doctors. Between the faltering global immune system, poor nutrition and the constant overdose of stress, I suggest you practice a yoga path of appreciating even the most modest experiences of wellbeing: such as making your own food and walking under your own power. Yet it's also time to reconsider what exactly we mean when we say healthy. There is something in there about staying connected to your source; to your inner core, which is always alive and always thriving even if we don't quite express it in the world, or feel it in our emotions. This source can be tapped into when we need it. It takes practice, but you happen to be in an excellent position to learn (or relearn) the basics.

Leo (July 22-Aug. 23) Your potential is opening up in unexpected ways. You're never one to fear how amazing you can be, though you have a way of getting stuck on one level. Then you forget you're there. You're suddenly rising to a new occasion or accepting a mission that stretches your talent. This has been developing for a while, but now the sense of a calling is undeniable. You seem to have made a decision about how you see the world, or perhaps learned something

from an important relationship. This has helped you redefine yourself; perhaps an analogy would help. Imagine someone who didn't feel that beautiful caught a glimpse of herself in a mirror, in a certain light or from an angle that provided a new perspective; and that momentary glance changed her self-image forever. But this is not about how you look; it's about who you are.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22) Remember your relationship to the world. Not to the 'little world' of activity around you, but the very world. The whole story, the drama of our time in history, and the planet Herself: the planet that's your home. Why you have such a deep sense of the Earth and her reality is not just about Virgo being an earthy sign. It's about the placement of Sagittarius in your 4th solar house: your roots, your safety and your grounding. In one system of astrology, Sagittarius is the sign associated with the Earth. This week's New Moon is an invitation to celebrate your home; which as you know is part of a much greater whole. I suggest you take some time this weekend and celebrate the fact of your belonging, your involvement and your sense of authentic contact — rare among humans — with the planet you belong to.

Libra (Sep. 22-Oct. 23) Have you figured out that you think by divination? Most people hardly think at all, or try to use an outdated version of logic more resembling MS-DOS than an iPhone. Your mind is a crystal ball. You don't exactly think; you allow a moment of no-mind and 'unknowing' — then you recognize what's really going on. You've just had a big glimpse into the crystal. So much information came through that you might have forgotten the whole experience. However, it would seem that international travel plans are involved, and that you suddenly have a sense of your long-term trajectory. And there was the latest pleasant shock into some new creative or erotic territory, someplace you've been expecting to go for years, but are now suddenly willing to take the chance and explore with your senses and your soul.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22) Do you have the feeling that you just avoided some grave danger that you only found out about after it was over? Check in with the year 1999 and see if that time in your life, or in the life of the world, has any messages for you. You seem to be going back over the territory of a relationship that happened then, which may be leading you to question some current situations in your life. True, there is common ground between the two situations — but most of that involves your memory. You're actually standing in a hologram of where someone close to you was some 10 years ago. You're able to feel a little of what they felt, which is delivering some surprising information. Stick with this process — it has a lot to teach you; and along the way you can be grateful for how far you've come since then.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 22) Feminine does not mean passive. True, most girls and women are raised to be more fearful and retreating than are most boys and men; but feminine is an alert, potent state of mind. Particularly in your relationships, the key to opening up to your receptivity is allowing yourself to flow from experience to experience. Notice who notices you. Respond if you like the vibes. Observe who is drawn in your direction and notice the first thing they say to you. Yet the real gifts will come from listening carefully to your intuition. Solutions to problems that have puzzled you for years may enter your mind, but unless you notice and actually write down what you hear, the benefits of that information will likely pass you by. This year has been all about learning to focus your mind. Now is the time to put that skill to work.

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Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 20) You seem driven toward a goal without knowing what the goal is. Well, it's about you, not a place, a thing or an accomplishment. I don't think there's been a time in your life when you've been under so much pressure to become someone you are inside. The early to mid-1990s contain a clue, but that was likely such a chaotic time in your life you don't like to think about it so much. Yet you learned a lot, the most significant thing being that you can rise to the occasion of highly demanding situations. Growth in this particular case involves dismantling some aspect of your personality: or releasing some habit of existence that has gradually become a false reason for living. It would be nice if less were going on at the same time. Yet part of what you're learning is how to distribute your energy effectively, and to make personal evolution part of your life experience every single day.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) For a long time it felt like you were not ready to act. Suddenly you feel overdue for action. Don't worry about that interval between the two observations about yourself. There wasn't actually a moment when you 'became ready', though you're currently in the moment when you're noticing. That's the time to cast the chart or draw the runes. Recognition is the connection point. You still have the ability to drift, delay or pause; your next

reminder won't feel like the original message. You will have to summon more of your internal will rather than moving with the flow. At the moment, you have the option to let go into the circumstances and events that are shaping you and allow yourself to take a new form, precisely at the beginning of a cycle in your life. You have reasons to make a move; you have reasons to hesitate, though remember — you can delay change but not defy it.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20) You're starting to fill in the blanks on just how accessible some extraordinary success really is. Success is elusive to you because generally it demands being competitive. While you're capable of this, it doesn't feel good; no goal is worth feeling less than human. However, a truly human version of recognition and reward are available right now. This is partly because you're so visible at this time of year. You're finding it easy to be authentic lately, and someone who can provide a vital connection is actually noticing what you're up to. Proceed every day as slowly as you can, whatever you may be doing. Emphasize what is beautiful about your work, without neglecting how much you've achieved. And if you're doubting that, I suggest you make a list of how far you've come in how little time. This will help you remember your confidence as a conscious act of will.

Island Epicure



An Old-Fashioned Mincemeat Pie

by Marj Watkins

Once a year I make mincemeat pie like grandma used to make and my best beloved enjoys a sentimental flashback to Christmas dinners of his youth. This is the old recipe, with real meat in it. The fruits and spices cover up the meat, though . You might not notice it, but it flavors the pie and gives it protein and texture. Not all my readers are carnivores, so I've included a vegan mince pie filling.

QUICK MINCEMEAT for PASTIES

Makes enough for 1 pie

- Or 6 to 8 "pasties"
- 1 cup chopped Granny Smith apple
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup currants
- ¼ cup diced beef fat or butter, cut in small bits
- 1 cup brown sugar or brown Splenda®
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon powdered cloves
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup canned consommé or ½ beef bouillon
- 1 cup chopped cooked beef or bison
- 2 Tablespoons fruit jelly, any kind
- ¼ cup brandy or Madeira wine

Combine all the last 3 ingredients in a large saucepan. Simmer 30 minutes. Add meat, honey, jelly and brandy. Simmer 15 minutes. Make into a two-crust pie or 6 to 8 pasties (turnovers).

QUICK, EASY MESCLIN PASTRY

Makes enough for 1 (9-inch) 2-crust pie

- Sift into a mixing bowl:
- 2 cups wheat flour
- ½ cup rye flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 1 ½ teaspoons sugar
- Stir briskly in a measuring cup:
- ½ cup light olive or canola oil
- 1/3 cup milk or water

Make a dent in the dry ingredients. Pour the liquids in and stir until the dry flour is all absorbed, adding a few more drops of water if necessary. Form a two balls for a 2-crust pie, or one large ball for a batch of pasties.

Place a ball on a sheet of wax paper, or a 20-inch strip of wax paper for 1 large ball.

Cover with another, same size sheet of wax paper. Flatten well with the palm of your hand. Finish rolling out with a rolling pin. Transfer to a cookie sheet. Refrigerate a few minutes to solidify while you roll out the second ball.

Repeat with the second ball of pastry.

For a 9-inch pie:

Peel off the top wax paper. Flip the pastry into your pie pan. Peel off the other wax paper. Ease the pastry to fit. Put the mincemeat filling in. Moisten the pastry rim.

Peel the top wax paper from the second pastry. Invert it and position it atop the pie. Remove the other sheet of wax paper, which is now on top.

Trim the edges and crimp with the tines of a fork to seal.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Bake 12 minutes.

Leftover pastry from trimming may be balled, rolled out, sprinkled with cinnamon and sugar, and cut in shapes to baked along with the pie. Those 'cookies' make good snacks.


SUZANNA'S VEGAN MINCE PIE FILLING

Makes enough for a 9-inch, 2-crust pie

- Or 2 single crust pies
- 1 cup currants
- 1 tart apple, chopped
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/3 to ½ cup honey
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon clove powder
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 heaping Tablespoon flour
- ½ cup apple juice or cider
- Juice of ¼ lemon

Mix the flour with a little juice and stir into the other ingredients in a large kettle. Reduce the heat to medium low and simmer 20 to 25 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a pre-baked pie shell.

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The Log of the *HMV Oatus*, Part 3: Noses Run; Water Does Not

by Rick Tuel

Nov. 5, 1970 Fri.
After breakfast, two fellows by the name of Allen and John came by from the Albion Ridge Ranch, which I guess must be down around where we thought Felix jumped ship. They too spoke of engines and left saying they would return with more information.
When we left to find Brian and his truck, we discovered roads (or perhaps ruts is more accurate) far too impassible for *Oatus's* bulk. When we finally located his truck, there was no one home so we followed a path down to the bottom of a ravine and up the other side where we found an abandoned chicken ranch to explore.



Illustration by Rick Tuel

Later in the afternoon another of Granny's many friends dropped by to use Everett's truck to haul a load of trash to the dump. Butch was his name and at the moment he is a candle maker by trade.
By way of another trade, we learned of another engine that was being housed at present in an old 1952 Plymouth that was quietly returning to the soil on his property. If we worked fast we might be able to rescue it before it disappeared altogether. We made a date for tomorrow.
Nov. 6, Sat.
Man, the weather has been low and wet lately! For some reason, my own system has been closely approximating the conditions of my sign, which is Air (I'm a Gemini); for some reason all the air in the area is heavily congested. Wheeze!

Late in the morning Butch came by; we loaded tools, batteries, and Nigel the dog, and sputtered off to visit the old Plymouth.
The land is truly good here; Autumn has nipped into these hills quite nicely. Butch's property is blessed with an old Gravenstein apple orchard and I happily munched on a few while wandering about in the rain.
We were too late to help the old engine (which offered no response at all) so Butch built a fire out back and began melting candle wax in a big cauldron. We drank tea, ate fruit, helped put wicks in 140 quarter-sized candles, and departed with a glow.
Chris and I got back to the Red Shanty just in time to go take a sauna with Everett, Berta, and Unkie, a great relief for us Trucknics! We've been growing progressively smellier for a week now. This is the only way to get clean in Fort Bragg at the moment since the whole town is on water hours. I thought I left this sort of thing behind when I got out of the Navy!
Perhaps the people who operate the sauna also run the local water system. Theirs is the only place in town that has water and the whole town is lined up to bathe on a weekly schedule, at \$1.50 a pop! What a sweet deal! Everett, Berta and Unkie's time slot is on Saturday, from 7:30 to 8:00 p.m.; not only did they get us admitted as their guests, they also paid our way!

I think they wanted to be sure that we wouldn't miss out on an opportunity to clean up and in their kind, tactful way, decided to go ahead and foot the bill in case we didn't happen to have the gate fee. Since we have no way of knowing how long we will be their guests, this probably amounted to an investment in their peace of mind and was therefore well worth the money! As I noted earlier, we've been growing progressively smellier for a week now.
Nov. 7 Sun.
Today we thought to recuperate some. My raging head cold has opened a branch office in Chris's head and he awoke this morning snuffling, spewing and snorting. We got a fire going and kept to our bunks, attending to our individual afflictions.

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Not for long though! Granny came out and enlisted our aid in picking up an old freezer over at somebody's house. We ended up doing it mostly by ourselves and with effort and resolve managed to drag the damned thing back to the Shanty in one piece; then it was back to the truck to chase continuing drips in the roof; also the nose.
Because it's Sunday and telephone rates are low, I called my folks to let them know we are in port for repairs. That's the news for today.

Help Out Rick Tuel

A benevolent fund has been opened for Rick Tuel at Chase Bank. He is no longer working for Water District #19 due to health issues. Our community can donate funds to help Rick deal with his mounting medical expenses. People can contact Rick at Box 238, Vashon. Folks can also purchase a CD of Rick and his wife Mary in a trio at the website www.threedampduck.com.

Magnesium


Continued from page 9

A magnesium mantra may help you be more moderate at the holiday buffet and entice you to make sure you have some healthy food along the way.
So, where can we get magnesium? Before you run out to buy a magnesium supplement, be aware that magnesium from food lowered blood pressure while supplements did not. Magnesium apparently needs to be absorbed from food to be fully functional in our bodies. Plant foods like nuts, whole grains, legumes, and green leafy vegetables (Swiss chard, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, and such) are good sources of magnesium. Some drinking waters, where the water is hard, are a good source. We also get magnesium from fish and other animal foods but when we calculate the amount of magnesium per calorie, plant foods are a better primary source.

New Classes Starting By Kathy Abascal

Eating for Health & Weight Loss

Inflammation is a big factor in all chronic conditions including hypertension, arthritis, and diabetes. Excess abdominal fat is another inflammatory condition that takes a significant toll on your health. Fortunately, diet can effectively and easily reduce inflammation and the problems it causes. In this class you learn why some foods quiet inflammation while others increase it. Eating to quiet inflammation provides significant benefits that include a relatively effortless weight loss (if needed), improved sleep, and the disappearance of annoying aches & pains.
New 5-week series: Tuesdays beginning January 5, 7:00 – 8:30 PM
New 5-week series for graduates: Back on Track, a solid 3-weeks on the elimination phase, exploring plateaus, and some reminders why we need to quiet inflammation.



Sundays beginning January 10, noon-1:30 PM.
Advance registration at the Roasterie/Minglement and prepayment (\$105) is required. There are also classes beginning in Burien, West Seattle and Seattle and online. For information on these classes go to ToQuietInflammation.com or email Kathy Abascal at info@toquietinflammation.com
Kathy Abascal is a professional member of the American Herbalists Guild and was taught herbal medicine by Michael Moore at the Southwest School of Botanical Medicine in New Mexico and Arizona. She has written several books on medicinal plants including *Clinical Botanical Medicine* (newly released in a revised and expanded edition) and *Herbs & Influenza*. For information on private herbal or nutritional consultations, call Kathy at 463-9211.



Magnesium for the Holidays.

by Kathy Abascal

Magnesium is a critical mineral for our bodies. It regulates and helps maintain normal blood pressure. Magnesium also helps regulate our cholesterol levels. Low stores of magnesium increase the risk of abnormal heart rhythms, which are associated with both heart attacks and strokes. Magnesium strengthens our bones and we store almost half of our magnesium in our bones. A diet rich in magnesium prevents the formation of gallstones.

Lack of magnesium is a big issue in diabetes, being overweight, and in insulin resistance or syndrome X. Magnesium influences the release and activity of insulin, the hormone that helps control blood sugar levels. When that system malfunctions, our



Illustration by Kathy Abascal.

blood sugar levels rise. As they rise, we start losing magnesium in the urine. In summary: Magnesium is needed for more than 300 biochemical reactions in the body. It helps maintain normal muscle and nerve function, keeps heart rhythm steady, and bones strong. It is also involved in energy metabolism and protein synthesis.

Unfortunately, most Americans do not get the recommended daily allowance of magnesium on a regular basis. To make matters worse, we do many things that deplete our bodily magnesium stores, especially over the December holidays:

We drink more alcohol. Drinking causes a prompt, vigorous loss of magnesium in the urine. As a result, the chronic intake of alcohol depletes body stores of magnesium and many of the side effects of alcoholism are attributed to the

effects of too little magnesium. Because this mineral helps maintain the heart's rhythm, magnesium loss may explain why women simply drinking a glass of wine a day had more heart arrhythmias, including atrial fibrillation. Another problem with alcohol is that while the liver is processing alcohol, it stops maintaining blood sugar levels and they plummet. This makes sugary breads, pastas, and desserts much more irresistible.

Tempting holiday foods rich in white sugar, white flour, and high fructose corn syrup quickly take their toll on the body. A high sugar diet uses up magnesium and predisposes us toward insulin resistance and bad levels of cholesterol. Free fructose in those foods interferes with the heart's use of magnesium. One of the consequences is an increased tendency to form blood clots that can cause stroke and heart attacks. And our typical diet today — without extra holiday foods — contains too much fructose. In 1980 the average person ate 39 pounds of fructose and 84 pounds of sucrose. In 1994 we ate 66 pounds of sucrose and 83 pounds of fructose. Today some 25 percent of our calories come from sugar, mostly in the form of fructose.

Other things in the background add to our inability to maintain magnesium levels. Many of us take calcium supplements, and high levels of calcium can block magnesium absorption. Many of us have high blood pressure (often because we do not get enough magnesium) and we take a diuretic drug to lower that pressure. Diuretics, even those that spare potassium, deplete magnesium. So a vicious circle arises. Our diet is too low in magnesium so our blood pressure rises. We take a diuretic to correct our blood pressure but the drug lowers our magnesium levels further. In the end, this may well increase our chances of suffering strokes and heart arrhythmias.

Diabetes causes a loss of magnesium in the liver. High blood sugar levels, which many of us experience thanks to holiday eating, triggers a release of more insulin. In turn, insulin increases the amount of magnesium we lose. Finally, consider a few more holiday triggers of magnesium loss: Sodas, coffee, high salt intake (think ham, bacon, and processed foods), and of course, stress. Yes, all the stress of trying to make the holiday picture-perfect eats up magnesium.

As we move through the holidays, we need to keep our magnesium levels in mind. Beginning with Thanksgiving, we typically eat fewer vegetables. We eat more fatty meats, more mashed potatoes, gravy, rolls, and chips. We drink more alcohol and eat lots more sweets. So we stop getting magnesium from our food and deplete what little we have stored in our body. Our health begins to suffer, and our immune system responds with inflammation. We ache more, we sleep poorly. As you go to all of the holiday functions and parties try to remember magnesium.

Continued on page 8



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To Think and Feel Fit

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What does it mean to be fit? How does fit feel? These are two interestingly complex questions under the surface. The common answer may be to list particular goals and once those goals are achieved then one should feel and be fit. Is that really the case though?

It's not uncommon to set fitness goals, achieve those goals and yet in our mind remain distanced from our preconceived archetypal prototype. It seems as if we may be chasing the elusive appearance of being fit.

What if we transitioned our thinking in relation to being fit from what we think we should look like to how we feel? Too many of us link our understanding of fitness to exercises, set/rep schemes, physical appearance and the like. It is then that we enter into a relationship with the unattainable. The chase is on with the catch never to be realized.

A helpful approach one might imagine to begin the transition away from the unattainable and toward the possible is to answer these questions:

- 1. What thoughts arrive in our conscious mind during movements?
- 2. Do those thoughts drive us toward or away from particular movements?
- 3. How do those thoughts relate to how the movement feels?

It is not hard to witness the psyche's struggles within the difficulty of challenging movements. When the mind's struggle is manifested in physical movement or vice versa, stay with the movement adhering to ideal form with patience so that what you feel and how you feel can be consciously understood as it evolves over time. This is challenging and difficult at

times, and yet one can come out the other side with more understanding about oneself and a deeper respect for what fitness may actually be.

This philosophy of fitness integrates the coherent relationship of human movement patterns and

the thoughts and emotions related to or unveiled by that relationship. Next time you find yourself



engaging in the attempt to achieve fitness, ask yourself which movement patterns (or exercises) you may be avoiding. Now, perform them with ideal form and feel your way through the movement. Have patience, allow the movement to be difficult and analyze the discoveries you come to understand. Use descriptive terms as the feeling of the movement becomes more calculated and apparent.

If you are unsure of what ideal form is, ask for help from a fitness professional. Once you are sure of how the movement is to be performed correctly, begin to feel the sensations and thoughts behind the movement. I believe this approach to be the essence of self strength, pliability and fitness.

It is not the goal, it is the relationship of mind/body that creates fitness.

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Two VISD Teachers Honored for National Certification

Continued from page 1

Doug and Colleen have met these high and rigorous standards. They join McMurray math teachers, Jenny Granum and Cornelius Lopez, who have previously received national certification.

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teachers are currently in the program and working toward certification.



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Do Mormons Believe in Christ?

This is a question I have heard more than once – even recently. Quite honestly, it astounds me as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that one could think that we do not believe in Christ. One needs to look no further than the real name of the church to obtain the answer. Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith.

Perhaps it is the constant reference to the nickname of the church – Mormon. Where does this nickname come from? Mormon was the name of a man who lived around 550 AD here on the American Continent. Mormon was called as a prophet (just like Moses, Noah, or Abraham). The calling he was given was to summarize the writings of his people as there were numerous writings compiled over the course of 2,500 years). The prophet Ezekiel prophesied of the coming of this book when he spoke of the stick of Judah (Bible) being joined with the

stick of Ephraim (Book of Mormon) (See Ezekiel 37: 16, 19).

Mormon summarized these records and compiled them together – the Book of Mormon. The most important chapters record Christ's birth and subsequent visit to the American people after His crucifixion & resurrection (John 10:16). We use the Book of Mormon, together WITH the Bible, as scripture. The Bible and the Book of Mormon contain the gospel of Jesus Christ our Savior and Redeemer.

Please join us as we celebrate Jesus Christ's birth during our Christmas Service on Sunday, December 20, 2009 from 9:00 AM – 10:20 AM. There will be a Brunch social to follow so bring your favorite dish and join in the fun.

Merry Christmas to all.
Gene Kuhns, Jr.
1st Counselor, Vashon Branch
Presidency, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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Continued from page 1

Our first close encounter with Lummi’s descendants since her death evoked gratitude, grief, and joy simultaneously. Lummi’s granddaughter Skagit (K13) glided by with a cluster of relatives, followed by great-granddaughter Spock (K20) and her Vashon son, Comet (K38). Comet is now five years old. In December 2004, Mark Sears discovered K38 as a newborn in Colvos Pass.

Oreo’s family, the J22 matriline, also swam close to the point. Oreo’s story is bittersweet. In a period of less than two years, her sister Ewok (J20), mother Tahoma (J10), and brother Everett (J18) died. Everett’s body washed ashore in March 2000

show that the Southern Residents are currently eating blackmouth (immature Chinook) in Puget Sound, in addition to or even instead of chum salmon. Moreover, some fecal samples collected this season contained parasites. Parasites add stress and deprive our endangered orcas of vital nutrients, forcing them to work harder to find food that falls short of sating their hunger.

Consider the immense effort expended by J, K, and L Pods just to forage. Watching wild orcas in our waters is an unparalleled privilege that obliges us to be gentle, thoughtful, and respectful with our dignified top predators. We must give them space and serenity.

On November 30 and December 8, several observant Islanders spotted a solitary, juvenile gray whale around the Island. The whale foraged for hours in Maury Island shallows on December 8. Amphipod crustaceans and other sediment-dwelling organisms were the likely attractions. Gray whales feed by scooping mouthfuls of mud from the sea floor, and then filtering the edibles through their baleen. Mmm, ghost shrimp!



Oreo (J22) and a close relative at Pt. Robinson, 12/9/09. Richard Rogers photo.

at Tsawwassen, BC. His necropsy was a gift to killer whale research. Oreo (J22) now cares for her two sons DoubleStuf (J34) and Cookie (J38), as well as her orphaned niece Rhapsody (J32).

On a humorous note, Slick (J16) and her family lagged far behind the other whales, rolling around all touchy-feely in a group grope. Slick’s son Mike (J26), leviathan lothario, flashed us his, um, pink floyd/whale maker/junk, choose your euphemism. He showed us the love on another level!

Please support the work of the Vashon Hydrophone Project (VHP): REPORT LOCAL WHALE SIGHTINGS ASAP TO 463-9041. Send whale photos to Orca Annie at Vashonorcas@aol.com. We are grateful to everyone who calls! See more fabulous Point Robinson orca photos by Richard Rogers at Vashonorcas.org.

About the research vessels: Mark Sears and other NOAA researchers work under MMPA permits that allow them to approach whales within 100 yards to obtain ID photos and collect samples of fish scales, regurgitations, mucus, and orca scat. Focal follows require the researchers to move in quite close to the orcas.

If our fish-tossing sea lions in Colvos Pass are any indication, I predict recent prey samples will

Need last minute gifts for your podmates? Check out “Art for Whales and Wolves” at the Vashon Island Coffee Roasterie, December 19-20, Saturday and Sunday. Tlingit artist Odin L o n n i n g , www.OdinLanning.com, will be there demonstrating. He

will have a variety of work for sale: carvings, paintings, drums, and clothing. Layaway is welcome. Support the VHP and Wolftown while enchanting your loved one with a soulful, affordable art piece by Odin.

Find the Loop on-line at www.vashonloop.com.

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Don't Forget the Birds Christmas Bird Count Excitement



by Ed Swan

Early this December on the monthly Vashon Audubon field trip, the group went chumming for gulls at the end of the Tramp Harbor fishing pier. Gary Shugart, one of the trip leaders, whipped a bag of bread pieces out and attracted the attention of the gulls. Pretty soon a whole bunch showed up from five different species: Glaucous-winged, Mew, Thayer’s, Herring and Ring-billed. Glaucous-winged is the common, year-round large gull and Mew is the common medium sized winter gull. Thayer’s and Herring are rare in winter and Ring-billed are very rare. Big flocks of Thayer’s hang out at the Port of Tacoma and Ring-billed Gulls forage there and in the Seattle area but both just don’t come over to Vashon much. Herring and Thayer’s Gulls provide a

significant challenge to tell apart. The gull flock created a great opportunity to compare and contrast and learn about a family of birds that people just dismiss as “it’s just another gull.”

The Christmas Bird Count multiplies by a dozen the groups looking at Island birds and the chances to see and learn something new. On Sunday, December 27, Vashon Audubon will hold this year’s Christmas Bird Count, counting as many birds as possible in a 15 mile diameter circle centered on Vashon Island. Group leaders will take participants to all of the Island hot spots and many lesser known, out-of-the-way locations to find and count birds. It will be a good way to get outdoors, enjoy our beautiful Island and learn about

birds. Beginners are welcome and encouraged to take part.

The count goes all day and ends with a potluck at the Land Trust building to share sightings. Participants can join a counting party for part or all of the day. Those with just a half an hour or hour can count the birds in their yard or on their property and help out as a “feeder watcher.”

Some of us may go “owling,” listening for Great Horned, Barred, and Northern Saw-whet Owls as well. That group usually starts about 4am and goes until dawn. It would also help if Islanders would report any owls heard from midnight until dawn on the night of the 26th/27th and from dusk until midnight of the night of 27th/28th.



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Q: What is one horsepower?
A: One horsepower is the amount of energy it takes to drag a horse 500 feet in one second.
Q: How can one determine how close a lightening strike was?
A: You can listen to thunder after lightening and tell how close you came to getting hit. If you don't hear it you got hit, so never mind.
Q: What is an orbit?
A: When people run around and around in circles we say they are crazy. When planets do it we say they are orbiting.
Q: How are clouds formed?
A: I am not sure how clouds get formed. But the clouds know how to do it, and that is the important thing.

Don't you wish there were a knob on your TV to turn up the intelligence?
There's one marked "Brightness," but it doesn't work.

Two retired professors were vacationing with their wives at a hotel in the Catskills. They were sitting on the veranda one summer evening, watching the sunset.
The history professor asked the psychology professor, "Have you read Marx?"
To which the professor of psychology replied, "Yes. I think it's these pesky wicker chairs."

"Mother," said a little boy after coming from a walk. "I've seen a man who makes horses."
"Are you sure?" asked his mother.
"Yes," he replied. "He had a horse nearly finished. When I saw him, he was just nailing on his feet."

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Ed Swan
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LOGJAM


BY Jeff Hawley

My full-grown and willful German-shepherd mix, Trevor, was having a tough time of it in obedience class. A trainer insisted on holding his leash while I walked off to call him. "Otherwise he'll chase another dog instead of going to you," she stated.
I told Trevor to "stay" and went the required distance. "Come!" I said firmly. Trevor did — with gusto. The trainer kept up with him the first few feet and then fell face-first on the wet grass. An undaunted Trevor dragged her right up to my feet.
Slowly the trainer picked herself up and looked into my stricken face. "Don't forget to praise your dog," she said and walked off.

There are some days I practice positive thinking, and other days I'm not positive I am thinking.

A woman was instructing the new maid on the great care required in handling certain valuable household objects. She pointed to the dining room and said with obvious satisfaction,
"That table goes back to Louis the Fourteenth."
"Oh, that's nothing," the maid interjected. "My whole living-room set goes back to Sears the fifteenth."


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Loop Arts

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On Saturday, January 9, at 7:30 p.m. celebrated William Chapman Nyaho brings a unique cultural background and extraordinarily eclectic sense of music to the Blue Heron Art Center, propelling an evening of his music to, as one critic put it, “reach great heights.” In addition to standard classical repertoire such as Lizst, Schubert and Bach, Nyaho will play and discuss music by composers of African descent. Books and CDs will be available at the show. Call 463-5131 for tickets, \$10 students/\$13 VAA members, seniors/\$15 general admission. Also available at Books by the Way, Heron’s Nest and brownpapertickets.com.

Robbie Fulks & Jennifer Sheinman Play the Red Bike

by Pete Welch

Robbie Fulks is one of the more heralded talents in the alternative country movement, displaying an offbeat, sometimes dark sense of humor in many of his best moments. As time passed, he moved away

compositions are silly, funny or spoof songs, while others are serious country songs.

Jenny Scheinman is a singer, violin player, composer and arranger. She grew up in the sticks playing folk music with her family, went on to study at Oberlin Conservatory, and has been performing as a violinist/fiddler since she was a teenager.

She has taken the #1 Rising Star Violinist title in the Downbeat Magazine Critics Poll and has been listed as one of their Top Ten Overall Violinists for the last five years. In addition, she has garnered numerous high-profile arranging credits with artists such as Lucinda Williams, Bono, Lou Reed and Sean Lennon, and has toured and recorded with Bill Frisell, Norah Jones, Madeleine Peyroux, Nels Cline, Vinicius Cantuaria, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, and Mark Ribot.

This is an all-ages show ‘til 11pm, then 21+ after that and the cover charge is only \$10.



Jenny Scheinman, courtesy photo.



Robbie Fulks, courtesy photo.

from the country twang of his early work and into a crunchier roots-rock hybrid.

Robbie is an American alternative country artist originally from Pennsylvania but who is a longtime Chicago, Illinois resident. Fulks is known for his disdain of mainstream modern country and the country music industry, as exemplified by his scorching rebuke of Nashville titled “F*** This Town.” His live performances feature improvised rearrangements of his original songs, off-the-cuff musical humor, and covers of songs by Michael Jackson, Cher and others.

As a songwriter Fulks is difficult to pigeonhole. Many of his

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The Balance of Farming

by T. Yamamoto, www.wolftown.org,

463-9113

choose to eat. They never have foot problems. The cheese from them is incredible; however we cannot sell it yet. We need patrons to help us start a dairy and wool mill.

We feed hay only to have a day off or a sick day. We try to use local. However, many pastures on Vashon lack something. The hay is cut late, because there is not enough manpower or equipment. And nothing is ever added back on the land. So the nutrition of the hay is down. (You can cut hay by hand.) We need grant writers and patrons for this, this too will create jobs.

You cannot take and take. You must either put livestock on the land to fertilize it after harvest. Or spread composted manure on the land. You must seed with forage that most naturally balances with this eco-system. And Vashon must make silage, a fermented hay product that helps preserve hay in this very wet climate. (A lot of fertilizer bought commercially is made with petroleum products. If you use lime be sure to check where it came from and what it is made out of.)

Thank you Vashon, without the support of the community the work Wolftown does would be impossible. We are always striving, because of your belief and support of us.

Please buy my new book American Lambs. Royalties go to Wolftown’s agriculture program.

Years ago I wrote an article called The Balance. It was about the swinging of systems within predator and prey and the environment and how we fit into this equilibrium.

There is another Balance. The Balance of Farming. I raised sheep now for 8 years. These sheep are crossed with primitive sheep to produce hybrid vigor and traits that fit into Vashon’s ecosystems. I choose sheep because my Grandpa thought it a good idea. Sheep provide meat, milk, clothing, hides, and soap. All of which Wolftown produces by hand. We are creating paying jobs with this.

The sheep create these things by browsing the trail edges and some pasture. Not by grainbut by the time honored shepherd tradition of foraging. The wool hat you wear from the sheep is indigenous brush, recycled. This allows for forests to stay intact, which provides diversity of wild species. (A lot of our clothes are made with petroleum products. When you are done with wool cloth you can use it as mulch.)

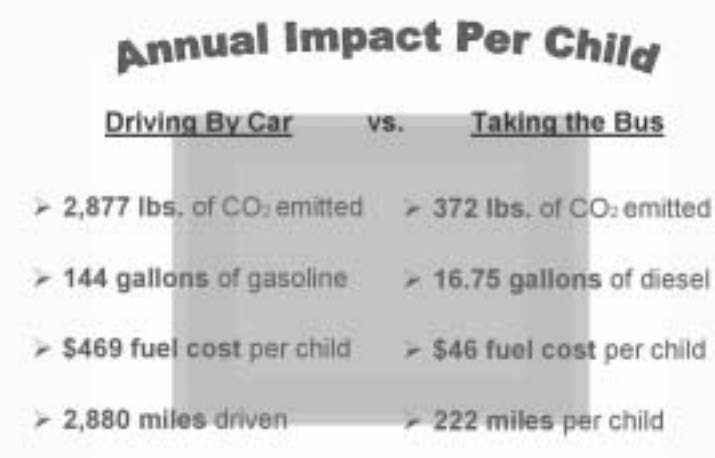
The cuts of meat come smaller in our sheep, and very lean, like athletes. The sheep grow slowly, as that is healthy. They are smaller because in the niche they fit into, smaller, slow-growing sheep work better. However the meat is tastier and healthier. There are many articles on the internet about grass fed and the different kinds of fat.

The sheep are allowed to walk miles per day in search of what they

McMurray Robotics Team Goes to State

Continued from page 1

obstacle course, while gathering objects, or performing functions to earn points. The team that earns the highest points wins – but the maze race is only ¼ of the team’s overall score. Teamwork, robot design and a research project all make up the other ¾



of the overall score. The team must decide on a specific research project within a FLL determined topic. The team collects their data and results and presents it to an audience prior to the competition. During the competition they must again present it before a panel of judges. FLL chooses a new topic each year for the competition. The topics have an underlying theme of how science and technology influence our world and our lives. This year’s FLL subject was transportation.

Team Ratfish surveyed nearly 50% of McMurray students regarding how many days a week they rode the bus, the average distance from their house to school, why they did or didn’t ride the bus, and what improvements could be made to get them to ride the bus more often.

They found that the majority of the students who rode the bus rode it all 5 days per week. The main two reasons for their riding were that they were made to ride by their parents, or they were riding so that they could see their friends on the bus. The survey also found that 86% of students who did not ride the bus at least once a week were driven to school. The main reason given for their not riding the bus was that they were offered a ride to school by their parents. 95% of the students were aware that riding the bus to school was better for the environment than driving a car.

As part of the research project, Team Ratfish also calculated the environmental impact and dollar costs of riding the bus versus driving a student to school as an annual impact per child. They gathered data collected by the district regarding ridership as well as fuel prices and costs for operating buses. Their calculations assumed a best case of one student being driven 4 miles school, and the equivalent student riding the bus for a school year of 180 days.

Driving a single student by car produced 2,900 lbs of carbon dioxide, used 144 gallons of gas, required 2,880 miles of driving, and cost \$469 dollars of fuel. (This cost calculation did not include the operating costs that are assumed by the IRS in their standard mileage cost value of 55 cents per mile. Using this value for the 2,880 miles would give an annual cost of more than \$1500).

In comparison, a student taking the bus produced only 372 lbs of carbon dioxide, used 16.75 gallons of diesel, required 222 miles of driving, and cost \$46 dollars of fuel. Team Ratfish members presented their data and conclusions to the Vashon school district school board during their November meeting. The school board members were very impressed with the presentation and commended them for their work.

If you know of students who are interested in joining FLL, or wish to volunteer with FFL please contact Vashon FFL at vashorobotics@gmail.com. Teams for next year’s competition will be forming in June 2010. The competition will be held in November 2010, and the theme will be Biomedical engineering.

Christmas Lessons and Carols Service at St John Vianney


The parish of St John Mary Vianney Catholic Church is presenting a Lessons and Carols service at 5:00 PM Sunday, December 20th, at the church. A Lessons and Carols service is a series of Scripture readings paired with matching Christmas carols, selected to trace the story of Christ’s birth from the book of Genesis, through the Nativity story in the Gospel according to John.

There will be a varied program of Christmas pieces: carols for solo and quartet featuring sopranos Jennifer Krikawa and Marita Ericksen, tenors Kevin Joyce and Dr. Gary Koch, and baritone Andrew Krikawa, and choral pieces performed by the St. John Vianney choir. Charles Lovekin will accompany on piano and organ, and Kevin Pottinger will conduct.

The church is located at 16100 115th Ave SW on Vashon. Admission is free. For more information contact Kevin Pottinger at 463-2129, pottinger3@comcast.net.


VIPP Adopt-A-Cat Day

Vashon Island Pet Protectors will host an Adopt-A-Cat Day EVERY Saturday from 11:30-2:30 at our NEW VIPP ADOPTION CENTER at 12200 SW 243rd St. Please go to vipv.org for directions or call VIPP at 206-389-1085.



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Christmas Bird Count Excitement

Continued from page 11

Sue Trevathan, the count coordinator, divides the Island into

Passage in Pierce and Kitsap County. Contact Sue at 463-1484 or sue.trevathan@centurytel.net to go along with one of the roving count parties or to let her know about watching a particular yard or property.

Still trying to think of creative gift ideas? Give a personalized birding tour for here on the Island or around Puget Sound to Nisqually, the Skagit Delta or Mt. Rainier. I provide tours finding particular species bird watchers would like to see or just a general trip to see a good variety of Puget Sound and Island birds. Contact me at 463-7976 or edswan@centurytel.net.



Sue Trevathan found this beautiful Snow Bunting at Pt. Robinson in the winter of 2005. Maybe the counters will get lucky this year and find one again. Photo by Richard Rogers.

North, South and Tramp Harbor/ Maury Island sections as well as sections on the other side of Colvos

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