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Monthly

September 2020



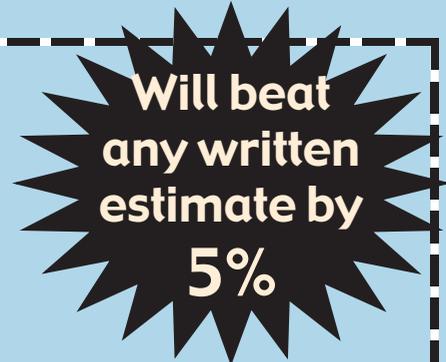
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 by Anita Wilks.



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Register To Vote & VOTE

National Voter Registration Day is Tuesday, Sept. 24.

The day was created in 2012 to “create broad awareness of voter registration opportunities” for Americans across the country. But with all the issues for this election I would suggest registering earlier so you are assured of getting a ballot in your mail.

Also, for anyone who has moved – you should check with your County’s Election Board to make sure they have your current address so you get your ballot with plenty of time to vote early. I think **this election may be the most important presidential election we’ve seen in many years:** so vote early to make sure your vote is counted.

Colorado offers online voter registration. You can register by mail to vote in Colorado by printing a voter registration form, filling it out, and mailing it to your local election office. You can also register to vote in person if you prefer.

Who can vote - To register in Colorado you must: be a citizen of the United States, be a resident of Colorado for at least 22 days immediately before the Election in which you intend to vote, be at least 16 years old, but you must be at

least 17 and turning 18 on or before the date of the next general election to be eligible to vote in a primary election, and at least 18 to be eligible to vote in any other election, not be serving a sentence of detention or confinement for a felony conviction.

4 REASONS TO SUPPORT NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE

The candidate with the most votes should win
 Presidents should have to seek support in all 50 states
 Every vote should be equal
 National popular vote will increase voter participation

Most Votes Should Win: Five of our 45 Presidents have come into office without winning the most popular votes nationwide. There have also been frequent near-misses. The national popular vote winner would have been defeated in four 20th Century elections by a shift of a mere 9,246 votes, 9,212 votes, 20,360 votes, and 1,711 votes. Presidents should have to run a 50-state campaign: The reason why voters in only a few states matter in presidential elections is that most *(Continued on next page.)*

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states award all of their electoral votes to the candidate who gets the most votes inside the state. Consequently, candidates have no reason to pay attention to voters unless they live in a state where the race is close. The 2020 presidential campaign has zeroed in on six closely divided battleground states. Voters in most other states are being taken for granted.

Every vote should be equal: The incumbent became President in 2016 even though he lost the national popular vote by 2,868,518 votes. He won in the Electoral College because he carried Michigan by 11,000 votes, Wisconsin by 23,000 votes, and Pennsylvania by 44,000 votes. Each of the 78,000 votes in these three states was 36 times more important than the 2,868,518 votes cast elsewhere.

National popular vote will increase voter participation:

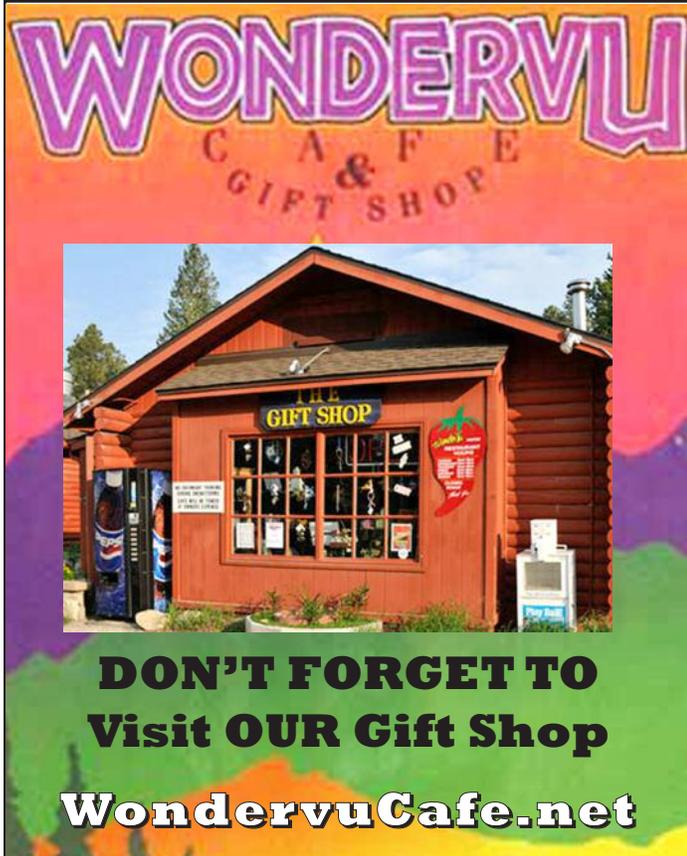
Turnout in the dozen or so closely divided battleground states was 11% higher in 2016, 16% higher in 2012, and 9% higher in 2008 than the rest of the country. The reason is that presidential candidates make no effort to solicit votes in three-quarters of the states, and voters in spectator states realize that their vote is not as important.

TELL YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE BILL

In November, state legislators are up for election in almost every state. They are listening now! So use any convenient system to send them an email asking them to support the National Popular Vote bill in your state.

Senator Cory Gardner, Senator Michael Bennet, Rep. Scott Tipton, Rep. Ken Buck, Rep. Joe Neguse, Rep. Jason Crow, Rep. Diana DeGette, Rep. Ed Perlmutter and Rep. Doug Lamborn - can be contacted via email simply by putting their names in a Google Search. Use their website forms TO CONTACT and tell them how you feel about getting rid of the outdated and unfair Electoral College so our voices really do make a difference in the close and not so close elections of the future.

You can also help get out the vote this year by encouraging you friends and family to vote: It is sometimes confrontational to discuss politics, but just talking about voting without saying who for, can do the trick.



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Candidate Claire Levy For BoCo Commission

By Claire Levy

The Boulder County Commissioners have a lot of big issues on their plates. Denver Water’s expansion of Gross Reservoir; aggregate mining in the Saint Vrain River Valley; a new mountain bike trail through Eldorado Canyon State Park; development in small mountain hamlets like Raymond, Riverside and Allenspark; the agricultural leases on Boulder County Open Space – to name just a few. Chances are good that the two commissioners who are elected this November, of which I hope to be one, will be participating in these decisions. You deserve to know how I would approach that process.

Each of these issues presents a conflict between people who have lived someplace for years, decades and even generations on the one hand and a proposal that some might see as an improvement, an inevitable part of change, or possibly their legal right. To the people closest to the issue, the correct decision usually seems obvious. But if it were obvious, there wouldn’t be any issue!

County Commissioners govern and manage the county. A decision about an applicant’s current proposal may have repercussions far into the future. Allowing a development or preserving land shapes the landscape for generations. As elected representatives, commissioners must listen to their constituents’ thoughts about what they value in their community. But constituents are not always united. Add to this mix is the fact that many issues are controlled by a web of constitutional, statutory and regulatory laws. Bottom line: It’s complicated!

One of the great joys of campaigning for elected office is meeting people in their special corner of beautiful Boulder County. Even during the pandemic I have been able to join people in their backyards, on their favorite county trail and in their farm fields so they can tell me about their concerns for the future of Boulder County and show me the place they love so much.

This is what I am hearing. Not a single person or group is

motivated by that ugly label of NIMBY-ism (aka Not In My Backyard). They love their homes, their land and their community. And it is completely understandable and appropriate for them to fight to preserve it from what they perceive to be a threat.

I have met over the years with residents on Flagstaff, up Coal Creek Canyon and in the South Boulder Creek drainage who are fighting the expansion of Gross Reservoir. I lent my voice to those efforts when I was in the legislature. They don’t want to endure years of blasting and construction; they don’t want the ecosystem to lose thousands of live, healthy trees; and they don’t want yet more water to be sucked from an already diminished river system. Some would say they are trying to stop the inevitable and thwart the needs of the Denver Metropolitan Area. Not I! I would say they are fighting for their property values, their community and the environment. Yes, there may be some benefit to aquatic life in South Boulder Creek from promised minimum stream flows. But at what cost to the larger environment?

I met with residents of the Saint Vrain Valley on a property that overlooks a beautiful expanse of the river. Aggregate has been mined and cement produced in their viewshed for years. But applicants want to extend those uses and mine in new places, and Lyons is considering extending the town along Highway 66. These activities will intrude on their peace and quiet, possibly threaten habitat for protected species, potentially harm their wells and extend industrial uses into the landscape. Are these residents being selfish? Not in the least! They want a seat at the table. They want to know their voices are genuinely being heard. They want their government to take their concerns seriously.

I sat in a backyard along South Boulder Creek to hear how residents of Eldorado Springs feel about a new mountain bike trail through Eldorado Canyon to Walker Ranch. As we talked, I could see *(Continued on next page.)*



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the cars streaming past on a “quiet” weekday. Front Range mountain bikers, including many who live in Boulder County, have been clamoring for a trail that would connect the mountains with the plains. What could be better than biking through one of the most scenic canyons along the front range? A whole lot, according to town residents and park users! Residents of the sleepy town of Eldorado Springs endure throngs of visitors driving through their community every weekend. Their cars line the roads; they trespass on private property and camp illegally. Adding another user group to the mix would overwhelm this already overloaded community. It would create conflicts between families on a leisurely walk and bikers looking to cover some miles. But which constituency should the commissioners serve?

Boulder County’s large mountain biking population seeking another recreational opportunity or the small group of residents trying to preserve the quiet of their homes? To me, the questions begs the answer.

Equally complex issues came up in a lovely back yard in the little settlement of Riverside and in a virtual meeting with residents of Allenspark. Some residents want more flexible development restrictions so they can adapt their modest mountain cabins to their needs as they age, and so that young families could live in the community. But others

fear any relaxation of building restrictions or house size limits will lead to gentrification. Most say that not all of Boulder County’s building code requirements make sense in the mountains. Some want better services in the mountains so they don’t have to drive to Boulder or Longmont. But others believe that mountain living isn’t suitable for people who need county services. These residents are seemingly divided over growth, yet they are all deeply committed to protecting the mountain lifestyle.

There is common thread in these conversations. Most people’s largest investment is in their home. And most people’s home isn’t just an investment. It holds their family history and their memories. It is where they go for quiet refuge from the hurly-burly of

life. For residents of unincorporated Boulder County, the commissioners are their only elected representatives. They want to know their government is looking out for them. The bottom line: People want to be heard. And I intend to listen.

Editor’s Note: In case you recognize the person in this photo, Claire has attended public hearings about the Gross Dam Expansion over these many years. Her voice could be a vote for those of us who wish to stop the proposed project by Denver Water.



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RMNP Closures ~ Senior Pets

Closures In The Northwest Section Of Rocky Mountain National Park Due To Cameron Peak Fire

In an abundance of caution, due to forecast winds and extreme fire conditions, Rocky Mountain National Park is implementing temporary closures in the more remote northwest area of Rocky Mountain National Park due to the Cameron Peak Fire. The fire is approximately 4 miles from the park's northwest boundary. This closure includes wilderness campsites, cross country zones and trail systems in the northwest section of the park. There are currently no road closures within Rocky Mountain National Park.

Included in this closure is the Mummy Pass Trail, Commanche Peak Trail, Mirror Lake Trail, Poudre River Trail, Crater Trail, Colorado River Trail, Red Mountain Trail, Grand Ditch Access, Skeleton Gulch Trail, Thunder Pass Trail, Little Yellowstone Trail and Holzwarth Historic Site access beyond the historic site. Closed cross country travel zones include Cascade Creek, Cache La Poudre, South Cache La Poudre, Hague Creek and Mosquito Creek. Twenty wilderness campsites are also included in this closure area.

If the Cameron Peak Fire moves into Rocky Mountain National Park, fire managers' objective will continue to be full suppression of the fire.

When recreating in Rocky Mountain National Park visitors should always practice situational awareness, especially during periods of extreme fire danger. Always let someone know where you are going and when you are expected back. It is critical to plan ahead; before you hike, know the weather and wind forecast. Watch for columns of smoke and hazy skies. Wildfire can move rapidly in the right conditions, faster than a person can run. Avoid canyons and draws and areas where there is a lot of dense and dry vegetation, such as high beetle kill and dead and down trees. Fire typically moves faster uphill than it does downhill. Avoid being at the top of a ridge with a wildfire below. Carry essential items, like a topographic map, and have wayfinding skills in case you need to evacuate an area.

If you see smoke or fire, call 911 to report it. Avoid traveling near it. Do not try to put out a wildfire by yourself. **A complete fire ban has been in effect in Rocky Mountain National** (Continued on next page.)

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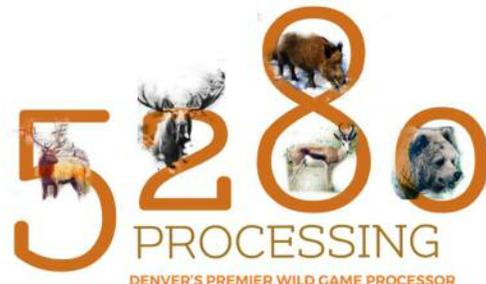
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Park since Friday, August 14. Campfires, including charcoal briquette fires, are not permitted anywhere within the park. However, petroleum fueled stoves and grills will still be permitted in developed campgrounds, picnic areas and in designated backcountry campsites. Stoves must be able to be turned on and off. **Smoking is also prohibited**, except within an enclosed vehicle, or stopped within a developed paved area devoid of vegetation for at least three feet. Visitors are reminded to properly extinguish all lighted smoking materials and dispose of properly. Fireworks are always prohibited within the park.

For further information about Rocky Mountain National Park, please visit www.nps.gov/romo or contact the park's Information Office at 970-586-1206. The park's recorded Fire Information Line is (970) 586-1381. -NPS-

Senior Pets Grace Our Lives

Grace wasn't all that graceful on the outside, but she was pure grace on the inside. When we adopted her as an 8-year-old we didn't know all the fun she had in store for us for the next six years. Grace was a big gal, a husky mix with a goofy sense of humor and a tail that always wagged. Senior dogs have a slim to none chance of leaving a shelter because most people think a puppy or young dog will offer more. Yet, seniors are most often already well-trained, well-behaved and have just as much love to give. What could be a better choice in a new family member? We have a 12-year-old who zips around like a 2-year-old. We

also have a 13-year-old who doesn't hike quite as far anymore but still participates in all of our activities, just at her own pace. Every senior dog is different and ages differently, but always with grace and courage.

There are important considerations when adopting a senior. An owner of a senior pet must be prepared to cover the costs of care. This is true when adopting a pet at any age. A senior pet might need a special diet or medication at some point, or just a memory foam pillow for joint comfort and a ramp to get on the couch or in the car for a fun ride. Senior pets might be a little whiter around the nose, but each one has a lifetime of gratitude to bring to a forever home. Fostering is also a great option if you're not quite sure a senior is right for your lifestyle.

Senior pets bring joy, wisdom and calmness to our lives. They are wonderful, steadfast companions, especially when life seems to be sending curveballs our way. Grace had a heart of gold, just like every other senior pet waiting for you! — Leslie W. Stupka



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Hope Remains

By Brian Calvert Aug. 1, 2020 High Country News

Each day lately has been like waking in an alternate reality. The United States has become a country where facts are optional, face masks are political, and climate change is a hoax. We explore conflicting realities and spreading ideologies, and we offer several stories of cooperation and hope.

The past decade has been a boon for the West's militia movement, but with the current contagion and the Black Lives Matter uprising, "Patriots" are making a recruitment push. Where concerned citizens assemble to protest state violence, police brutality and white supremacy, militia members have also appeared, armed and dangerous. Similar groups have sought to provide services, from security to food distribution, eroding the legitimacy of the government. Dangerous ideas are spreading in a moment of national confusion.

At another scale, the dismissal of climate warnings by national leadership has left the country ill-prepared for what is coming. The lengthening wildfire season is straining firefighters, causing post-traumatic stress that our health system cannot handle. To make matters worse, our poor response to the current contagion has brought a massive economic downturn, including for the renewable energy sector. We are entering negative feedback loops. In a fragmenting world, we must work harder to connect.

Where systems fail, individuals can step up. To give one example: the current contagion economics are presenting a housing challenge in the San Francisco Bay Area, which was already experiencing severe economic pressure and gentrification. There, though, citizens are pushing for policies that help them buy buildings, so that people can stay in their homes. To give another: In Washington, where these issues are disrupting food distribution, people are learning to grow their own food and supply their neighbors.

A similar kind of cooperation was essential, too, for the recent return of a ceremonial shield to the Pueblo of Acoma. As Contributing HCN Editor Elena Saavedra Buckley reports, the

shield was stolen from the tribal nation decades ago, only to appear for auction in Paris. Through steadfast pursuit by and cooperation between Acoma leaders and U.S.



investigators, the shield came home. It was a major win for the Acoma, and also proof that there are still good people out there, willing to do good work. In this splintered, confusing time, such goodwill goes a long way.

Brian Calvert is the editor-in-chief of High Country News. (Continued on next page.)

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Highlander Issues

A housing policy that's turning back gentrification, some California cities are introducing tenant protections.

By Nick Bowlin June 30, 2020 High Country News

In the summer of 2019, Elizabeth Bell's apartment building in San Francisco's Mission District went up for sale, and real estate agents were soon giving tours to prospective developers. As fear of eviction or rent hikes sank in, Bell, 74, started getting heart palpitations. Her apartment was cheap, rent-controlled, a necessity for Bell, who supplements Social Security with gig-translation work to make ends meet. There's a rail stop less than two blocks away — useful, because Bell does not bicycle as easily as she used to. And she loves the place, which has a "beautiful arch over the front door" with cracked stained glass above the frame. The other residents are a diverse mix — long-time Latino families, one with a disabled son; low-income seniors like Bell; a young couple. All depend on rent control to live in the Mission, the historic home of San Francisco's Latino community, now riven by some of the city's most intense gentrification.

To save the building, she and other tenants contacted housing advocates, who eventually introduced them to the Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA), a long-time Bay Area nonprofit. Over the past few years, MEDA has emerged as a leader in an anti-gentrification effort,

known as a "right-to-purchase" policy, where local nonprofits obtain residential buildings to prevent development and displacement. The average income of residents in properties acquired by MEDA is more than 30% lower than the area's median income. Prior to the current economic downturn, the average rent for a one-bedroom in San Francisco was \$3,360 a month, the San Francisco Chronicle reported. To date, MEDA has acquired 32 buildings (more than 250 units), with two more on the way.

This and other tenant-protection policies are spreading across California. The current downturn caused unemployment rates not seen since the Great Depression, and experts fear a housing crisis will follow. San Francisco's city council recently passed an eviction ban. Oakland and Berkeley had already introduced their own right-to-purchase polices, both of which gained urgency. Los Angeles extended eviction protections through the summer and, is considering its own right-to-purchase policy. And in late June, a bill was introduced in the California legislature that would create a statewide version of the policy.

MEDA bought Bell's building in February, just as illness was beginning to surge in the Bay Area. In addition to financial peace of mind, the purchase allowed Bell, whose age puts her at heightened risk, to remain in her home. Doctors never determined the cause of her palpitations, she said, "but I can tell you, I do not have them anymore."

THE ENORMOUS LOSS of wealth for, and displacement of, low-income and Black and Latino families after the 2008 financial crisis convinced MEDA staff that they needed new and better tools "for when the next financial crisis comes," Johnny Oliver, an organizer for the group, said. As properties foreclosed, developers bought them and turned them into high-end condos. Oliver described MEDA's work as "reversing gentrification in the Mission District," which has been transformed by years of unrestrained housing development and speculation. The Latino population in the Mission has shrunk by nearly 30% — a conservative estimate, given the challenge in counting undocumented people — over the past two decades.

Abetting this displacement is a California law called the

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Ellis Act. A powerful driver of gentrification, the Ellis Act allows landlords to evict entire buildings of tenants before selling a property. The new properties become condos or tenancy-in-common flats, a housing designation that allows buyers to purchase a percentage of the property. The rise of TICs in San Francisco is associated with the Silicon Valley tech boom. Cash-rich coders can buy their share of the building up front. For tenants, the Ellis Act can mean forced displacement; for landlords, it eases the process of selling a residential building.

Oliver and other housing organizers say that repealing the Ellis Act is not feasible given the powerful real estate lobby, so they set out to find their own policy tool. First came a program to publicly fund purchases of local buildings, established in 2014. But housing advocates found that many properties changed hands in back-channel deals between landlords and developers. San Francisco addressed this problem in fall 2019 with the Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA), which guarantees local nonprofits like MEDA a five-day window in which to make an offer on a distressed property, before the building owner can sell. The nonprofit then has 25 days to match other bids.

Landlords and developers oppose COPA, largely due to this bureaucratic delay. Joshua Howard, executive vice president of local government affairs for the California Apartment Association, a trade group that represents 25,000 rental property owners across the state, said that more housing is the key to addressing California’s housing crisis. Policies like COPA don’t do this, he said, but they do “create bureaucracy and delay.” Howard supports funding for nonprofits like MEDA, but said they should bid on properties that hit the market, just like a private entity. “(Right-to-purchase policies) would not create new units of housing,” he said, “but do serve to slow down the process for a property owner to sell their rental unit.” “These are the people who keep this city running, who make this city what it is.”

For Bay Area residents, the Ellis Act is so notorious that it has become a verb. Chloe Jackman-Buitrago, who was born and raised in San Francisco, said she feared being “Ellis Act-ed” back in late 2019. Jackman-Buitrago owns a photography studio around the corner from her building in the Inner Richmond neighborhood. When her apartment building hit the market, she looked at other rents in the area and doubted she would be able to stay in the city if she was forced out. MEDA bought the building instead, and she

was able to stay. “(MEDA) is keeping people in their homes,” Jackman-Buitrago said.

THE BUILDING-ACQUISITION program requires that all residents of a property favor the purchase. When she talked to her neighbors about supporting a MEDA purchase, however, Jackman-Buitrago ran into a strange problem: To people used to the city’s typical real estate moves, it seemed too good to be true. It took some convincing, but eventually they came around. With the help of the city, MEDA will manage the building for a 99-year term. It has also promised to do work that the previous landlord neglected; in Jackman-Buitrago’s apartment, for example, dirt would creep up from under the floorboards, and the wall behind the bathtub had rotted away. Jackman-Buitrago, her husband, Michael — also born in the city — and their 1-year-old son will soon move into a previously empty unit. MEDA is undertaking major repairs, including replacing the rotting boards in the old apartment and updating the kitchen in her new one.

Nick Bowlin is a contributing editor at High Country News.

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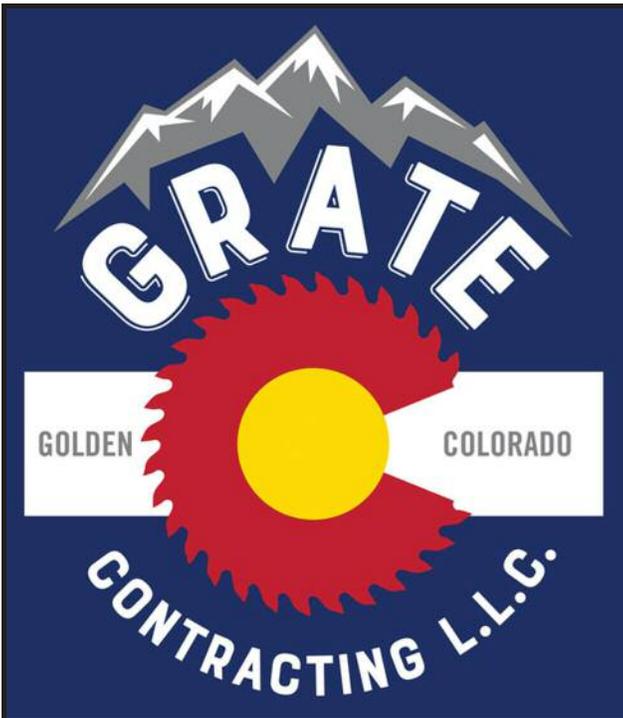


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A Lifetime Of Lessons From A Parent

By Barb Lachenbruch Aug. 13, 2020 High Country News

If I held a hammer correctly, the way my father taught me, and then swung it down on a rock, the rock would break. I would have caused that to happen. I would have transferred kinetic energy from my arm to the hammer's handle and then to the hammer's head and then to the rock. The energy would cleave bonds in the rock, and release sound and heat. My father taught me all that, long ago.

Now he lives in an adult foster home outside Corvallis, Oregon. When I grin at him as he sits in his wheelchair, he grins back. I can cause that to happen, too. But how? There is no law of physics to explain the transfer of emotions, no equation to describe the difference between what I send and what my father receives. I need that equation because that difference, I fear, is increasing.

When I was young, in the hills above Stanford, California, my days were explosions of wonder. There was so much, and then there was even more. My father, a tall and thoughtful man, guided me toward the underlying laws so I could see relationships, not just the individual phenomena. He shielded me from overload, so I could still revel in what was around me. At night, I'd keep him at my bedside, asking question after question.

One night, I asked him, "Why is the man-in-the-moon just a fingernail tonight?" The bed dipped toward where my father sat, as he explained orbits, the sun and the Earth's shadow. The moon made sense. As he bent for a goodnight kiss, he said, "The same circling of the moon also causes the tides."

"How does that work?" I asked. He rocked back, the bed

dipped again. He raised two fists and described gravity and the tides, how the moon exerts its pull even when it's below the horizon. "Sometimes something happens, and you can't see its cause," he said. "But if you scratch your head and think about it, you might get lucky and figure it out." "That's the fun of it," I said. "I think so," my father told me. "In fact, that's a big part of the fun of life."

THE MOON CIRCLED THE EARTH, and the oceans were drawn toward it. Many times. I grew older. We kept talking. Over a pot of oatmeal roiling on the stove, my father explained the transfer of convective, conductive and radiative heat. When I learned to drive, he explained friction and momentum. In the garden, tracing fissures in the mud, he taught me that even though cracks are called failures, they can be good things, allowing conflicted parts to go their separate ways.

Kneeling next to a dried-up mud hole, he said, "Mud shrinks when it dries, which makes stresses. When cracks form, they relieve the stresses. A lot of times, what looks random actually isn't. I bet the crack started here," he said, his fingertip on a smooth spot, "where it looks a little siltier. That would make it mechanically different." He pointed out the dried mud, the right angles in the cracks. The mud made sense. "That's boss," I said. But some cracks come in at different angles, he explained, showing me one. When I asked why, he said it wasn't 100% figured out. And in a way I could not define, that idea was the most captivating of all.

"Still," my father said, "if you know something's mechanical properties and the forces on it, you can often predict how it will distort," and *(Continued on next page.)*

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he pulled his cheeks in opposite directions, leaving mud prints on his face. “This whole network of mud cracks is an example of how a disrupter at one scale — the weak spot in the mud — can cause a pattern we see at a completely different scale!” I nodded, but did not yet understand how relevant these matters would become.

MUD DRIED AND CRACKED. Many times. We grew older. I worked through different sorts of problems — how to escape the restraints of my orbit, make use of momentum, and control failures so I could pull away. I discovered there was always another stress after a first one was relieved, and that surficial problems could be traced to causes deeper down. And, just as my father had told me, I could usually see a pattern at one scale before I figured out where the weak spot had been at a smaller scale. Those adolescent problems seem trivial now.

In his old age, my father moved near me, to a small care home in the Willamette Valley with beds of floppy perennials, and beyond them, apple trees, chickens and a cow. I visited frequently. Although we’d shared much, there was always more. One afternoon, we came across an



Barbara Lachenbruch, at five years old, with her father, Art Lachenbruch, in Palo Alto, California in 1962. Edie Lachenbruch

inscription he’d written in a book some decades before: “To Barbara I pass - This curious source. Tho’ I took from it much - It’s still there, of course.” We laughed and laughed, our guffaws reigniting each other’s merriment, like contagion.

Gradually, my father’s senility began to muddle our interactions. After a visit, I would realize how much I had simplified the stories I’d told, how heavily I had guided our conversation. Although we still interacted, I felt a growing solitude. I alone held the details we had once shared. The detail-holding part of my father was dissipating, like radiative heat from oatmeal. “So we’d better enjoy the present while it lasts.” But the logic-holding part remained. We talked at length about the metaphysics of time. The

past, we decided, was intangible. Our only pieces of evidence that it existed at all were relics — photos, or cracks in the mud. The future was no more than a course we anticipated based on our assumptions of current trajectories, which themselves were problematic because there was no past. That meant the present perches on the cusp between nonexistent pasts and futures. I felt like I was with him again. Even as our visits unfolded, a random disrupter occurred — on the coating of a coronavirus on a different continent. A chemical change allowed a contagion to alter the physiology of humans. The disrupter jumped scales, affecting individuals, then entire populations.

I shared with my father what I knew about the contagion. “It may affect yet

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another scale,” I told him. “Our society.” He asked for information, in spite of the stack of newspapers and magazines next to his computer, which sat by his television. But the details were not transferring. The next time I visited, I arranged to meet him outside, even though it was 46 degrees Fahrenheit. I was already sitting in a wicker chair on the dormant lawn when he rolled out the door. He smiled broadly, then continued toward me. I backed away, chair and all, explaining that we mustn’t get close because one of us could infect the other. He heard me, but didn’t follow my explanation. “If you think we should sit at a distance, OK,” he said, amiable as always. “I don’t understand, but I understand you have reasons.”

Then society banned our in-person visits, so we met up via video chats instead. But my father didn’t understand why I didn’t come by. “You’re traveling a lot? You’re really busy?” he’d ask. “No. There’s a contagion. I don’t know if I have it. It would be dangerous to you and the others if I carried that to you.” “Can you get it fixed?” he’d reply. “What is it you need to fix? Is it your phone?”

We repeated that exchange every few days. I would hang up, seething and stressed. If only I were with him, I’d think, I could mold our discussions, seed them with old events, draw up his memories. I could help him connect them back to his past and his future, sewing them all

together, whatever that meant. Then he would still be there for himself. And for me.

I wanted to ride my bike to his home. Wanted to pound kinetic energy from my torso through my legs to the pedals, translating their circular motion to the eccentric path of the chain, to move the cog, to turn my tires along the planar surface that stretched three miles from my garage to his home. I wanted to bang on his window — my kinetic energy converting to a clatter — and pantomime, “Hello,” “I love you,” and “I’m with you.” And I wanted to receive the same messages back. But the transfer would not have been complete. My father would have puzzled over my appearance at the window. Then, relieved that I had finally come by, he would have transferred kinetic energy from his arms to his hands to the rims of his wheelchair wheels, rolling them in a circle and propelling his chair over the planar surface from his bedroom to the outside door. Where I would not be. Perplexed, my father would have rolled back to his room, saddened by my incomplete visit.

I have sketched and I have pondered. But it’s not 100% figured out. It’s not figured out at all. I have come up empty as a moonless sky.

Barb Lachenbruch is a writer and a retired professor of forestry and natural resources in Corvallis, Oregon.

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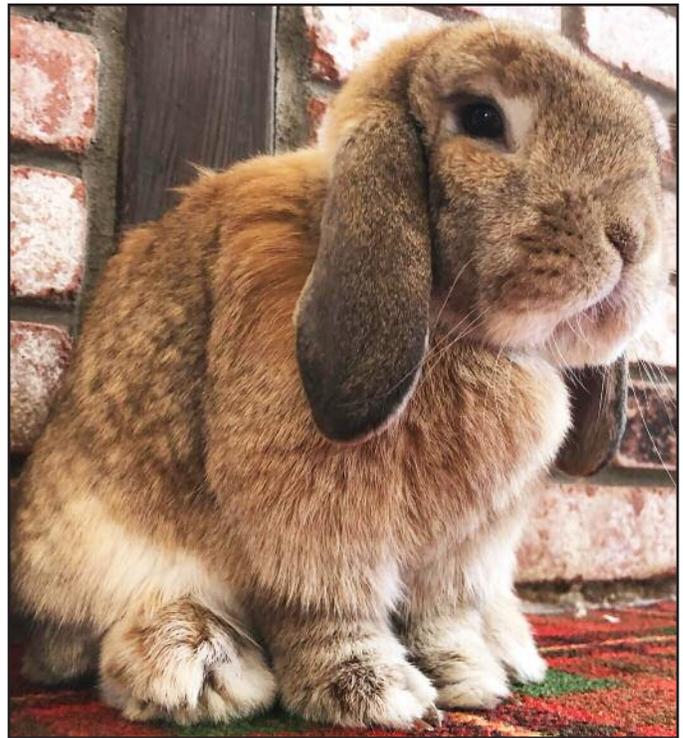
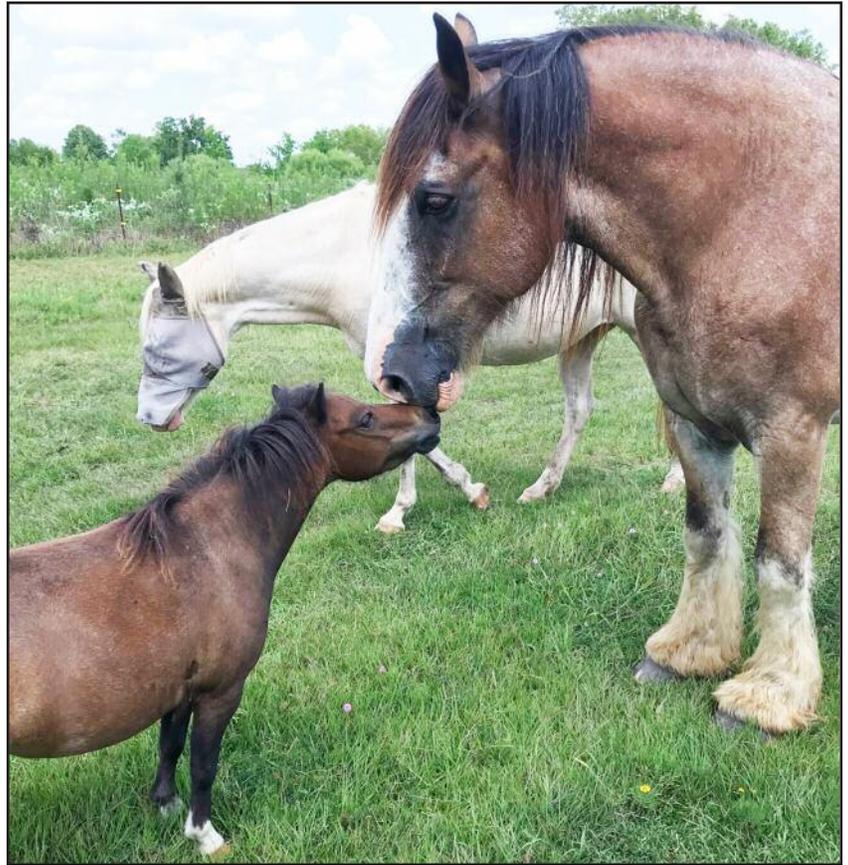
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This page top left: *Chocolate Lab.* Right: *Pony meets Draft.*
Bottom left : *Coconut the cat.* Right: *Chubbers the Lop.*

Next page top left: *Oriental Shorthair Kittens.*

Bottom left: *Therapy Cats.*

Bottom right: *German Shepherd trio.*



Maintaining A Vehicle

From Jim Plane - State Farm Insurance

Simple things you can do to maintain your vehicle.

You know how much your vehicle means to you. It brings you and your family freedom and security. So whether it's on the road, or in the garage, there are simple things you can do to minimize the risk of crashes, breakdowns and theft. While your vehicle owner's manual can provide you with some of this information, here are some helpful tips from us to you.

Tips while shopping for a vehicle

You realize how important it is to make an informed decision. So before buying a used vehicle or new car, truck or SUV that will transport you and your loved ones, you'll naturally want to do research. Some of the things to look for include how the vehicle performed in crash tests and a list of its safety features. Here are a few other areas:

Steps to take if you've experience a crash

Even the safest driver can get into a crash. You do your very best, but sometimes, trouble can't be avoided. If it should happen to you, be aware of the traffic, and, if safe to do so, do the following:

Check for injuries and give first aid. Necessary supplies

should be in your vehicle's roadside emergency kit.

Call for an ambulance if necessary. Call police.

After looking for a fuel spill and confirming there's no risk of fire, warn traffic by signaling (while in a safe portion of the roadside).

Write down other drivers' names, license plate numbers, vehicle descriptions and insurance companies.

Get names, addresses and phone numbers of witnesses.

Use your cellphone or a camera to photograph the scene and damages if it is safe to do so.

Report the crash to your insurance agent.

Don't sign agreements or make any commitments with others involved in the crash.

Possible ways to prevent auto theft

Your car is more than the thing that gets you from point A to point B. Here are some tips to help keep it safe from theft.

Park in well-lit areas, roll up the windows, lock the doors and set the emergency brake. Be sure to always take the vehicle keys with you.

When home, lock your car in the garage.

Never leave your vehicle unattended while the engine is running.



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When buying a new vehicle, look for anti-theft devices like a factory immobilizer or a locking steering wheel.

The road to safety starts here

By taking some of these steps to safeguard your loved ones and yourself, you can help avoid some potential issues, and provide more opportunities for family car trips and other memorable moments.

Why make a car maintenance schedule?

Learn about preventive auto maintenance, and how it can help your car — and bottom line.

According to 2015 data from the Car Care Council, 84% of vehicles surveyed required immediate service. Among the issues: low or dirty oil, contaminated air filters and inadequate coolant levels. Neglecting preventive auto maintenance means easy fixes can become expensive repairs down the road.

Why is preventive maintenance important?

It saves you money. “Preventive maintenance helps you get the most out of what has become a significant investment in transportation,” says Tony Molla, Vice President of Communications for the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). “For most consumers, a car is [one of the biggest purchases] they’re going to make in their lifetime.”

It increases longevity. Molla says it isn’t unreasonable for today’s vehicles to last 250,000 miles or more and regular maintenance can help them run longer.

It improves safety. Keep your car in top shape to reduce the risk of malfunctions that could cause an accident or

leave you stranded. Regular maintenance will help you identify a tire that’s about to blow or brake pads that need to be replaced, Molla says.

It maximizes efficiency. Something as small as a misfiring spark plug can affect gas mileage. Molla says your vehicle needs regular maintenance to deliver the manufacturer’s estimated fuel economy.

What preventive maintenance should I perform?

You should follow generally accepted maintenance schedules, such as the car maintenance schedule in your vehicle owner’s manual or one from the Car Care Council. However, these are simply guidelines. How often, where and how you drive affects the type and timing of service your vehicle needs.

Although you can perform some repairs yourself, it’s best to have your car inspected by an ASE-certified technician at least twice each year in the spring and fall to determine maintenance needs.



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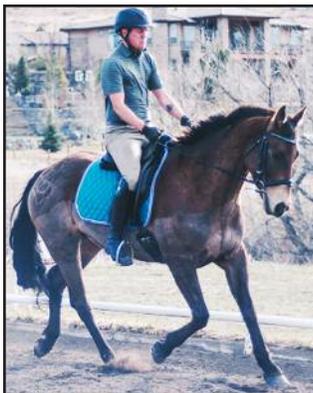
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Trading Native Artifacts Does Real Harm

By Robert Alan Hershey Aug. 3, 2020 High Country News

The Hopi Tribe and other Puebloan societies continue to fight French auction houses that promote the sale of sacred belongings that these Native nations regard as critical to their customs and their heritage. Tribes elsewhere have been alerted to other potential national and international auctions that could foster disappearances of their own cultural patrimonies. Yet traders and collectors continue to perpetuate these transfers.

It is reprehensible to lock away religious belongings that are vital to cultural continuation in museums and private collections — a veritable extension of war by other means. Individuals, institutions and organizations that continue to hold sacred items take on contemporary roles as villains benefiting from a history of violence and conquest, claiming property rights over the lifeblood of Indigenous communities.

Existing federal statutes and international treaties are woefully incomplete and often ineffective at preventing the escalation of looting on Indian reservations, public or private lands, and they are completely inadequate when it

comes to halting private land foraging. Diggers on private lands need only the landowner's permission. Sacred items and even the remains of ancestors and their burial belongings continue to be sold in the "art" market, without any notification of the affected tribes. Auctioneers and traders of "antique" Indian art claim that they need tribes to furnish lists of what constitutes their sacred items. Otherwise, we are told, these dealers have no way of knowing how to make such determinations on their own. This is both specious and disingenuous. The high market value the collectors place on these items is indicative of their special attributes of spirituality. Traders cannot claim ignorance and, at the same time, benefit from the "perception" of sacredness.

In May 2018, artifacts from the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde were returned to the tribe after being held at the British Museum in London for nearly 120 years. Collectors should be held to a reasonable standard: If they have reason to suspect that an item is culturally and historically important, they have a duty to investigate. Once they determine an item's Indigenous affiliation, they must return it to that Nation. But if comprehensive, meaningful and systemic repatriation is to occur, tribes and Native nations cannot rely solely on laws created by the colonizing powers. Indigenous governments can enact or amend their own laws to articulate civil and criminal penalties for the taking and holding of prohibited items. Tribes can systematize what items are secure for sale and appreciation and create certification mechanisms of provenance. Most importantly, they must seize their own processes by enacting comprehensive consultation and repatriation laws. They must dictate the terms by which consultation and the recovery of sacred belongings will take place.

One cannot categorize or treat repatriation as an issue isolated from its context in historical genocide and the subsequent intrusion into Native peoples' cultures. The consequences of conquest — the absolute authority of the

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United States government over Native nations and the concretized doctrines of nearly unshakeable property laws — cry for a paradigm shift in how our attitudes shape our policies toward “Indians.” We are battling a romanticism whose consequences include continued repression. Tribal laws that enhance self-determination and provide avenues and structures for redress must be seen as educational, be self-validated and then given measurable support from and be upheld in concert with federal and state laws. Native Nations should not be bound to Western-centric laws that separate the realms of intellectual property protections into the tangible and the intangible. A sacred or holy belonging is the repository of a community’s traditional knowledge, a part of a holistic whole both physical and metaphysical.

When a person collects Native bones, knowledge and artifacts, there is a tendency to project onto those objects an intangible awareness of the collectors’ own special significance, as if those belongings hold mysticism — Indian power — and can somehow endow their possessor with an efflorescence of adopted sacredness. People who collect these objects say they are honoring the Indians. But appropriation is not the kinfolk of honoring. It is the dark side of intention. Our intentions are irrelevant and often harmful. Yes, one can buy, love, and enjoy contemporary works of Native carvers and smiths and artists. That is



appreciation. But to hold onto sacred belongings is anathema to integrity and moral ways. Very few have the right to revere, to venerate, these objects without the necessary contextual knowledge and permission. Others cannot in any way understand them, nor comprehend the importance they hold for an Indigenous culture.

Robert Alan Hershey has specialized in Indian Affairs for nearly five decades. He is Professor Emeritus at both the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law (Arizona Law) and American Indian Studies.

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Plastics ~ Waterfalls

Dear EarthTalk: Any tips for reducing the amount of disposable plastic I use for food storage?

— J. Spencer, Gaithersburg, MD

Analysts estimate that of the over six billion tons of plastic produced worldwide since the 1950s, we have recycled only nine percent of it and incinerated another 12 percent. The remaining, some 4.8 billion tons of plastic is either still in use, filling up landfills, or littered into streets, streams and eventually the ocean.

About a third of the plastic produced worldwide is for single-use applications (bottles, bags, utensils, food storage, etc.)—and it is these items that most commonly end up on the side of the road. Researchers discussed in a 2019 paper in *Nature* that if we do nothing to step up flagging efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle plastics, we could have three times as much of it littered into the global environment by 2060.

So, what’s an environmentally conscious consumer to do? For starters, avoid getting plastic bags at the store. Either bring your own reusable one or if you need to go disposable, at least opt for paper that can be recycled or composted. And if you are food shopping, gravitate toward the bulk items aisle where you can buy just the right amount without unnecessary extra packaging.

Another way to cut down on single use plastic is ditching plastic straws. Americans go through about 500 million plastic straws daily. Opting for reusable straws (metal, silicone, bamboo or glass, anyone?)—or no straw at all—is one of the simplest ways to cut down on disposable plastic.

According to the non-profit Center for EcoTechnology (CET), the kitchen is one place where you can definitely

make some easy adjustments to save plastic. For starters, ditch the plastic wrap; it’s difficult to recycle and can clog recycling processing machines. One great alternative is beeswax paper, which is reusable, washable and compostable. (Make sure to wash it with cold water only so the wax doesn’t melt.) “Another alternative to plastic wrap is storing your food in glass storage containers or glass jars,” adds CET. “Glass is 100% recyclable and can be recycled endlessly without loss in quality or purity.”

Putting dish cloths to use is another way to eschew plastic wrap for keeping produce fresh. Simply wrap up those fruits or veggies in a cloth instead of plastic—or put them in a bowl and cover with a dish cloth and rubber band for a tight seal—and put ‘em in the fridge.

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Dear EarthTalk: Is it true that being around a waterfall makes you feel good? – S.B., Lewiston, ME

The notion of waterfalls making you happy is often viewed as an “old wives’ tale,” but there may be some truth to it given the so-called “negative ions” pervasive in such environments. The collision of water molecules with each other causes water to be positively charged and surrounding air to be negatively charged. According to Pierce Howard, Ph.D., author of *The Owner’s Manual for the Brain: Everyday Applications from Mind-Brain Research*, it makes sense that waterfalls can make you feel good, given that negative ions hitting our bloodstream can produce biochemical reactions linked to alleviating depression, relieving stress and boosting energy.

“High concentrations of negative ions are essential for high energy and positive mood,” he reports. “Negative ions suppress serotonin levels in much the same way that natural sunlight suppresses melatonin. Hence the invigorating effect of fresh air and sunshine and the correspondingly depressed feelings associated with being closed in and dark.”

“The atmosphere we breathe normally is full of positive and negative ions,” he adds. “Air-conditioning, lack of ventilation, and long dry spells remove negative ions...the best ratios of negative to positive ions are associated with waterfalls and the time before, during and after storms,” says Howard. “The worst are found in windowless rooms and closed, moving vehicles.”

Our love of waterfalls only underscores that people thrive when they are exposed to nature on a regular basis. A 2013 study in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology* definitively linked exposure to nature directly with improved mental health, comparing the mental health of those who moved from city landscapes to greener, more natural settings with those who relocated in the reverse direction. Researchers found that those who relocated to settings with a higher exposure to nature were noticeably happier during the three-year study period. “[E]nvironmental policies to increase urban green space may have sustainable public health benefits,” they concluded.

In another recent study, researchers sampled the effects of nature on 537 University of Rochester students in both real and imagined situations, and found that individuals who spent time outdoors—or even just imagined themselves in nature—consistently experienced higher energy levels and increased feelings of happiness. Study participants who spent just 20 minutes

outdoors a day experienced significant increases in energy levels as well as noticeable mood boosts. Even indoor plants played a role in helping study participants feel more energized.

Another way to look at it would be to consider our sedentary, indoor lifestyle as a drain on our energy reserves and taxing to our mood and general sense of well-being. In the landmark 2005 book *Last Child in the Woods*, Richard Louv coined the term “nature deficit disorder” to explain how our lack of time outdoors has led to behavioral problems in kids and adults alike. Louv’s prescription? Spend more time outdoors (away from screens) interacting with nature and each other. In case you needed another reason to get off the couch and out into the woods on a waterfall hike, now you have it. You’ll be sharper. You’ll be more productive. You’ll be invigorated. And you’ll be happier.





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By Ingrid Winter

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Saying
That instead of rescuing
Injured wildlife
There is another option:

To let nature takes its course
So that the injured animal
Becomes food
For other animals
And thus isn't wasted

I think about this
For a long time
Until I finally realize
Why this statement
Is only superficially valid –

Thanks to us humans
And our destructive ways
Nature is now
So far off course
That we have to intervene
In our modest way

By saving
A bird
A squirrel
A raccoon –

And so help heal nature
So that she can
Once again
Take her course!

Photo by Alexa Boyes.



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A Wildlife Refuge Under Siege

By Jessica Kutz Hi High Country News Aug. 11, 2020

During the fall of 2019, the Department of Homeland Security began pumping large amounts of water from a southern Arizona aquifer to mix concrete for the current administration's border wall. The aquifer is an essential water source for the San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge, so when the pumping escalated, U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials watched helplessly as the water levels at several ponds — the main habitat for the endangered fish at this Sonoran Desert refuge — dropped "precipitously." In what Bill Radke, who has managed the refuge for two decades, called "life support" actions, staff was forced to shut off water to three of the ponds to minimize broader damage. As a result, biologists had to salvage endangered fish from the emptying ponds. It was "like cutting off individual fingers in an attempt to save the hand," Radke wrote in an email to staff.

Since its creation in 1982 the 2,300-acre refuge's sole mission has been to protect the rare species of the Río Yaqui, including endangered fishes like the Yaqui chub and Yaqui topminnow, and other species, such as the tiny San Bernardino springsnail and the endangered Huachuca water umbel, a plant that resembles clumps of tubular grass.

Through a series of artesian wells connected to an aquifer, the refuge has kept ponds filled in this fragile valley for nearly 40 years.

Under normal circumstances, a significant construction project like a border wall would be required to go through an extensive environmental review process as dictated by the National Environmental Policy Act. The Department of Homeland Security says it operates under the spirit of NEPA and solicits public comment. But with environmental laws — including NEPA, the Endangered Species Act and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act — waived for the border wall, the refuge lacks any legal protection, either for itself or the endangered species in its care. So wildlife officials have tried to work with the department, sending hydrological studies and providing recommendations about how to reduce water use near the refuge — information that the Department Homeland Security has repeatedly claimed it takes into consideration.

But as emails recently obtained by High Country News through a Freedom of Information Act Request show, Homeland Security consistently ignored the expertise of Radke and his team. The emails, which were sent from August 2019 to January 2020, chronicle months of upheaval at the refuge and dysfunctional communication between Fish and Wildlife and Homeland Security. During crucial moments, Homeland Security kept wildlife agency staff in the dark as land managers and hydrologists worked to anticipate damages.

"What we are seeing in these FOIA documents confirms a pattern with CBP and DHS that goes back 15 years," said Randy Serraglio, Southwest conservation advocate with the Center for Biological Diversity.

Matthew Dyman, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection spokesman, stated that "DHS and CBP have and continue to coordinate weekly, and more frequently on an as needed basis, to answer questions concerning new border wall construction projects and to address environmental concerns from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service." Nevertheless, documents confirm that border wall



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Water trickles through a wash at San Bernardino Wildlife Refuge.- Russ McSpadden/Center for Biological Diversity

disappointed today to see first hand that DHS and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers did not abide by the (most recent) October 16, 2019, Fish and Wildlife Service request to minimize water withdrawal from the aquifer that supports all wetlands on San Bernardino NWR,” Radke wrote. “Instead contractors made plans to drill even closer to the refuge, drilling their second new well 480 feet east of (the refuge).”

CBP spokesman Dyman maintains that construction contractors honored the buffer request. But emails show otherwise: At least one well was drilled less than 500 feet from the refuge boundary; it was abandoned only after it didn’t produce water. And Fish and Wildlife soon learned that even more well locations were being considered near the refuge, according to emails. Homeland Security also

continued to pump large volumes of water from a private landowner whose well is just 1.5 miles from the refuge. *(Continued on page 31.)*

construction caused groundwater levels to plummet and harmed endangered fish at the refuge.

IN OCTOBER 2019, RADKE wrote to Fish and Wildlife staff that “the threat of groundwater depletion” at the San Bernardino Refuge had gone from “concerning” to a “dire emergency.” Subsequent emails detail the refuge’s difficulty in obtaining water usage estimates from DHS contractors for an accurate risk assessment. Fish and Wildlife officials sent the department a hydrology analysis to raise an alarm and requested a five-mile buffer around the refuge for well drilling.

According to the emails, though, the Department of Homeland Security did little in response. “I was



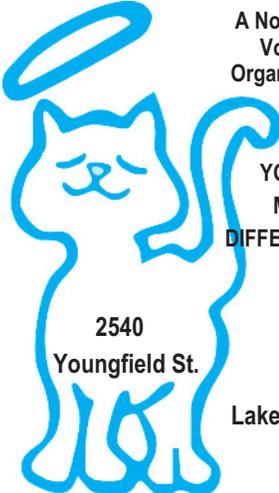
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Around the same time, pond levels in the refuge dropped. In a series of emails in late November, Radke grew increasingly frustrated. On Nov. 22, he wrote to agency employees, "Our refuge water monitoring is already showing harm to our aquifer during months when the refuge has always demonstrated an increase in groundwater levels. We have ponds dropping precipitously (as much as a foot already) that have never gone low during the winter months — not ever." Fish and Wildlife had warned Homeland Security that this would happen, but no apparent action was ever taken. "I do not know what reaction to expect from DHS or (the Army Corps of Engineers) to our continuing requests for them to minimize or mitigate impacts to the refuge," Radke wrote, "but so far our requests have been consistently met with indifference."

ON DEC. 12, RADKE CALLED the water withdrawals for the border wall "the current greatest threat to endangered species in the southwest region." By that point, refuge staff had begun to track the impact themselves; there was little else they could do. The monitoring became "an overwhelming priority that diminishes our ability to adequately meet other important objectives, obligations and due dates," Radke wrote.

By January, the impact on the ponds was obvious. According to a Fish and Wildlife memo, swings in water pressure and depth were clearly documented. The report noted that these changes "began to occur as water was used off refuge for border wall construction." Earlier emails speculated that the situation would only grow more dire at the refuge during the sweltering summer months, when evaporation both from the ponds and the water being pumped would use even more of the precious desert resource.

In an email, Dyman told High Country News that Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers "are working closely with the construction contractor on estimated water usage requirements for barrier construction in Arizona as well as working with San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge to mitigate the impacts of groundwater use for the project." Beth

Ullenberg, a spokeswoman for the Fish and Wildlife Service, confirmed that the refuge is working with Homeland Security. The agency "has identified that larger capacity pumps are now needed in order to maintain pond levels and appropriate pond outflows," Ullenberg wrote. She said the contractor is purchasing and will install the new pumps at the refuge.

Those pumps came too late for at least three ponds and according to a document obtained by Defenders of Wildlife, as recently as May water pumping near the refuge was still having a direct and detrimental impact to the refuge. Environmental groups say a pattern of secrecy, lack of communication and failure to coordinate with land managers at the border continue to endanger other biodiverse regions, such as Quitobaquito Springs in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, where they intersect with border wall construction.

"(The Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Patrol) have consistently ignored the input of land managers and landowners and other stakeholders along the border with regard to these construction projects," Serraglio said, "and it has resulted in serious damage time and time again."

Jessica Kutz is an assistant editor for High Country News.

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Silence & Action

By Frosty Wooldridge

Silence and Action Are True Wisdom's Best Reply

As this world turns, each of us faces extraordinary challenges, ordeals, emotional pain, trauma, loss of loved ones and disappointments during our lives. It goes with the territory of living. Even at this point with a contagion raging around the planet, we need to hold on to "hope."

I remember vividly when Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) the lead character in the *Shawshank Redemption* sat in the corner of the prison yard with his friend (Red) Morgan Freeman discussing how Andy got swindled into prison by another man's deeds. As they sat there, Andy gave instructions to Morgan Freeman to look him up at his hotel on a beach in Mexico as he worked on an old boat getting it ready for charter fishing for his guests.

The only problem: Andy faced life in prison for 'killing' his wife, which, of course, he didn't do the deed. And the prison warden held Andy into a stranglehold of his life. There was no chance for escape to a free life. But for Andy, "hope" made anything possible. Andy uttered these iconic words, "It's time to get busy livin' or get busy dyin'." With that statement, he decided to get busy living.

Later, Andy dug his way out of prison, and with brilliance, walked into the banks in Portland, Maine to claim his accrued money that he surreptitiously purloined off the warden as the warden was scamming his slave prison labor. He outsmarted the warden via the U.S. mail, crawled to freedom and skipped into Mexico. He left evidence of the warden's evil deeds with the newspaper. The warden committed suicide as the cops came to lock him up. Morgan Freeman reunited with his friend Andy in Mexico to show that Karma works. Stephen King's iconic book and movie will be seen 100 years from now by adoring audiences. It epitomizes our struggles out of the darkness into the light.

At the same time, each of us enjoys the choices of creative thought, actions and deeds. Since I have stood astride my bicycle for over 65 years, there's a deep-seated joy in my soul. From my Schwinn Wasp and my paper route in my teen years to my fancy road bikes, to my sturdy touring bikes, I've enjoyed great energy, tremendous joy and soulful fulfillment via touring around the world on my bicycle.

The one thing about riding a bicycle, especially a touring bicycle, it calls for your best integrity, your true grit that comes from your sterling character. As you watch this movie of a man on a bicycle, you know how he feels. You know every movement, jump, 360-degree turn, balancing act, and total flow, even under water took his fortitude, many failures and countless mistakes to gain his expertise. From that, he gained his joy!

He will look back on his life and that video of him riding his bicycle through all the trials and tribulations as a metaphor for choices, and in fact, each of us makes those choices.

I am reminded of the great Roman philosopher Epictetus who said, "Tentative efforts lead to tentative outcomes. Therefore, give yourself fully to your endeavors. Decide to construct your character through excellent actions and determine to pay the price of a worthy goal. The trials you encounter will introduce you to your strengths.

Remain steadfast...and one day, you will build something that endures; something worthy of your potential."

During this tenuous period in the United States, Canada, Europe and the world, let's all pull together, do our part, build our bodies, strengthen our minds and practice compassion. Let's let our actions, our minds and spirits triumph individually and collectively. May the God bless each and every one of us.

As it's been said, "May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back. May the sunshine warm upon your face and the rain fall softly on your fields. And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of his hand."

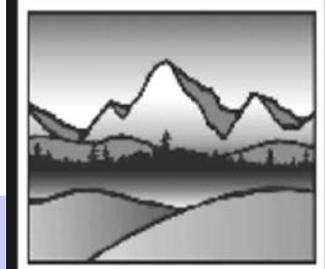
Be well for yourself and your family.

*Latest book: **Zen Between Two Wheels: Eat, Pedal, Sleep**
by Frosty Wooldridge*

Editor's Note:

While it has been my endeavor to keep the current contagion from the pages of this publication, to stay positive and give my readers a break from the negative of our daily trials - not an easy task - as this month reveals.

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Power Update

September
2020

Does Your Family Have a Disaster Plan? September is National Preparedness Month

Between a combination of a quiet storm season and other things consuming our thoughts over the course of 2020, preparing for a potential disaster situation may not be high on our list of priorities. However, natural disasters may come in an instant, and it's important to make sure you and your family are prepared. Each September, the Federal Emergency Management Agency recognizes National Preparedness Month to educate and empower Americans to take simple steps to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies that could affect us where we live, work and visit. This year's theme, **"Disasters Don't Wait. Make Your Plan Today"**, touches on four distinct aspects of emergency preparation:

Make a Plan. Expecting the unexpected begins with having a plan in place to respond, and those conversations can begin casually over a meal or strategically in a family meeting. If you have kids, include them in the disaster planning process. Prepare with your friends, family and neighbors to develop communications plans. Finally, practice your plan.

Build a Kit. Gather supplies for several days, considering the unique needs of your family. Include items such as food, water and any necessary medications or pet items. You may also include items such as a first aid kit, flashlight and/or radio. Remember to update your kit regularly.

Prepare for Disasters. Different areas and regions are impacted by different natural disasters. In Colorado, we can experience devastating floods, debilitating blizzards or even strong tornadoes. Make sure your disaster plan above includes steps for each potential event. Be mindful of disasters that could also occur on travel or vacations.

Teach Youth About Preparedness. It's important to teach your children about emergency preparation, such as how to communicate in the event of separation or what to do if you're away. They should know how to communicate with you, friends or emergency responders. Provide sufficient information and carefully walk through individual steps of your disaster plan or have them practice building their own emergency kits.

For more information on emergency preparedness, including sample emergency plans, visit www.ready.gov.

Wildfire Mitigation System Improvements

Wildfire preparedness is always on our minds at United Power, especially for our mountain territory. This past year, the cooperative unveiled its strategic wildfire mitigation plan that included the enhancement of system components across the service territory, from proactive vegetation management to system communication tools that allow us to more quickly recognize and resolve issues that may interrupt power to members.

Although the current pandemic has interfered with many of our daily lives, United Power has continued to make progress implementing new technology onto our system to further mitigate the threat of wildfires. One of the higher profile projects United Power crews are working on in Coal Creek Canyon is the installation of a new insulated cable, known as Hendrix Cable, which offers an added level of protection against wildfires.

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6 Car Garage
Coal Creek Canyon
Gorgeous Updated Log Home - 1.82 Acres
4 BD/ 4 BA 3,817 sq.ft. **\$1,100,000**



Horse Property
31448 Coal Creek Canyon
Slice of Heaven - Barn & Corral
3 BD/ 1 BA 11+ Acres **\$575,000**



181 Hummingbird Lane
Nicely Updated - Theater Room
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,129 sq.ft. 1.29 Acres



Dream Garage
5 Ronnie Road
Fantastic Home - Dream Garage
4 BD/ 3 BA 3,358 sq.ft. **\$650,000**



Under Contract
11838 Ridge Road
Lovely Mountain Home with Walkout
3 BD/2 BA 2,280 sq.ft. 1 Acre **\$469,900**



New Listing
3497 Coal Creek Canyon #18
Adorable Summer Cabin
3 BD/ 1 BA 1,184 sq.ft. **\$259,000**



Under Contract
11470 Ranch Elsie Road
Horse Property! 3.8 Acres
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,948 sq.ft. **\$455,000**



Under Contract
198 Range Road
Solar Powered & Secluded "Treehouse"
2 BD/ 2 BA 1,652 sq.ft. 2.7 Ac **\$569,900**



Under Contract
294 E. Dory Drive
Wonderful View Home 1.24 Acres
3 BD/ 3 BA 1,934 sq.ft. **\$469,900**



Vacant Land
1257 / 1316 Chute Road
Secluded 5+ acres, Divide, City,
and Gross Dam Views **\$165,000**



Under Contract
11440 Inspiration Road
Amazing Views at Road's End
3 BD/2 BA 2,341 sq.ft. 1.5 Ac. **\$540,000**



Under Contract
31992 Coal Creek Canyon Drive
Horse property- Walkout Guest Ste. - 4 Ac
3 BD/ 3 BA + Den 2,907 sq.ft. **\$689,900**



SOLD!
Coal Creek Canyon
Custom Log Home - 4.2 Acres
3 BD/ 4 BA 3,300 sq.ft. **\$900,000**



SOLD!
85 Valley View Drive
Breathtaking Divide & Lake Views
4 BD/ 4 BA 3623 sq.ft. 1+Ac. **\$775,000**



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Kathy or Janet & USE
the moving truck for FREE**



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