

The Abbey *Echo* ... *Echo* ...*Echo*

A monthly newsletter by and for the residents of Eugene Abbey - **September 2026**

We Had a Barbeque Party on the Lawn

An unusual thing happened with our summer BBQ Lawn Party this year: the weather was close to perfect. It didn't rain, the air quality was fresh and smoke-free, and the temperature was only in the low 80's after the clouds lifted. There was a good turnout for the outside picnic; I didn't get into the dining room to see how many people chose to eat inside.



A big **Thank You** to Daphne and her crew, who put together all the good fixin's, including her special baked beans, for both locations. Thanks also to Jerry for hauling and setting up everything, and to the rest of the staff who helped make the BBQ a success. We are so lucky to have such a great crew at the Abbey.



Photos by Michele, Words by Bonnie

Ford's Theater

10th Street, Northwest Washington, D.C. – At first glance it looks like a regular street in the nation's capital. It has a mix of old and new buildings, including a quiet little venue named Ford's Theatre that has been around for over 150 years.

Ford's Theatre is best known as the place where President Abraham Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865, while attending a performance of the comedy, *Our American Cousin*.

Perhaps that ill-fated day would not have happened had theatre proprietor John Thompson Ford heeded the warnings of others when he was told it would be bad luck to convert the former Baptist church he leased in 1861 into a theatre. Prior to Lincoln's assassination, the theatre was destroyed once by fire. Later, in 1893, part of the theatre collapsed (talk about a performance to bring down the house!) injuring 68 people.

After Lincoln's death, the theatre was shut down. Ford's Theatre was reopened in 1968 as a living memorial to Lincoln. The theatre is still an operating theater and is currently maintained by the National Park Service, where it has since had better fortune.

From Uncle John's Bathroom Reader (Plunges into History Again)



Thanks, Stanley Coleman

Larry caught three interesting twilight sky scenes:
(with his titles.)

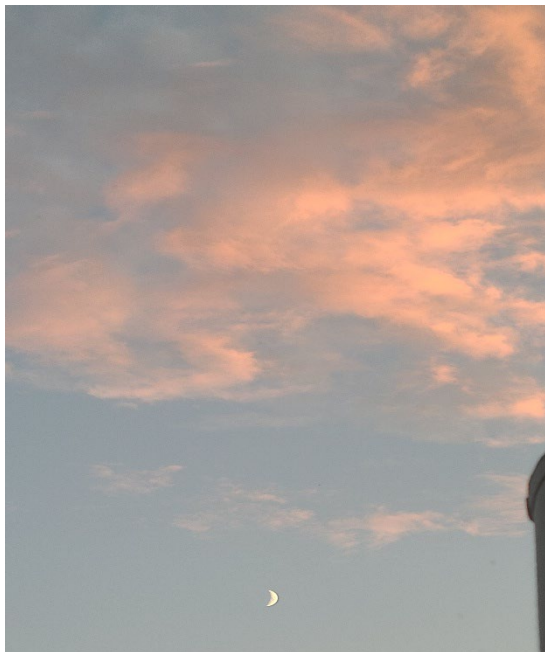


Birds of a feather flock together



Crescent moon over Eugene

**And Susan Matthews noted a
smoky sunset**



Red skies a night, sailor's delight



A Picture of Frustration



On 19 August, the equipment was in place and the audience was seated in anticipation of

Fred's presentation on the Birds of Malaysia.

The only thing missing was the cable to connect Fred's computer to the wide screen.

Fred, Janet and Larry checked all possible places in the Lounge without success.

To everyone's disappointment the presentation was postponed.

But it did happen on Wednesday the 26th, to everyone's delight.

"Laughter is our safety valve that's going to keep us going.

Laughter puts years on your life."

Jerry Lewis,
comedian who died at age 91

For all of our University of Oregon football fans,
Larry has provided the 2026 Schedule.



The Race for the Rest of Us

By Bonnie Hirsch

I miss it. I haven't walked a half marathon since 2020, haven't participated in even a shorter event since 2023. Darned arthritis. Getting older isn't always fun. But this short race looked like fun for a good cause (Meals on Wheels.) Larry and I signed up.

Ah, the old familiar rituals.

Larry's longer legs always leave me in the dust shortly after the start line, but we often pick up our race shirts and packets together. We usually met in the Abbey lobby and head for the starting line together. This time, instead of walking to a crowded shuttle bus, we cram into Stan and Bill's car for the ride.

Ah, the sea of matching race shirts, interspersed with folks wearing shirts from earlier races. I don't notice any line of porta-potties with queues of anxious runners outside

them. Nor do I see the usual folks doing last minute stretches or high-knee bouncing in place, but Bill and Stan are introducing me to some new friends they just made.

The surge toward the start point!

The countdown! Ten. Nine. Eight...

We're off! Larry is already out of sight, somewhere ahead of Bill and Stan who, being tall, block most of my view ahead, and who set their pace to mine.

Right on cue, we are passed by a fit young couple trotting to get to the front where there's room to run. Racers are always bunched up at first, jockeying for position until chaos sorts itself into similar-paced groups. After a mile or so into most races, spectators can watch waves of runners or walkers settled into their preferred rhythms.

Big races like the Eugene Marathon have Pace Setters who run at a steady tempo and carry little flags like Tour Group Leaders – 2.5, 3.5, 4.0 – indicating a finishing time target. If you run with the Pace Setter, you avoid the urge to start out too fast then become too exhausted to finish at all.



The athletes Bill W. Larry, Carolee, Stan.

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My race target always is to not finish last. Once I was next-to-last. But once, in an icy January 10K race, a friend and I were the first women finishers in our age groups. She was 71 and I was 69, so we were in different age groups.

There were no other women over age 65, so technically we were also last in our age groups. But we chose to feel smug about being out there bravely racing, when all the other (sensible) women our age were cuddled with their cats and sipping hot tea on their couches.

Meanwhile in this Race for the Rest of Us, on a balmy summer morning, we approach the first turn. A tutu-clad volunteer points his cardboard arrow to indicate which way to go. At the next intersection a perky balloon-carrying volunteer points another turn and tells us, “You’re doing great! Looking good! You can do this!” Another block on, another cheerleader urges, “Keep going! You’re almost there.”

And indeed we are! In the next block, the balloon archway is flanked by volunteers handing out Finishers’ Medals, “Congratulations! You did it!”

And indeed we did! Every one of us finished the entire 0.5K race. That translates to 0.31 miles, or about five city blocks. Stan, Bill, and I have a celebratory lunch.

Larry walked all the way home. But then, he’s younger than me. Three months younger.

By Bonnie Hirsch



Some folks may have “partied a little too hardy “at Happy Hour on 13 August.
(Yes, Larry is a non-drinker; he’s just there to hold Annie upright.)

King of the house – and so much more!

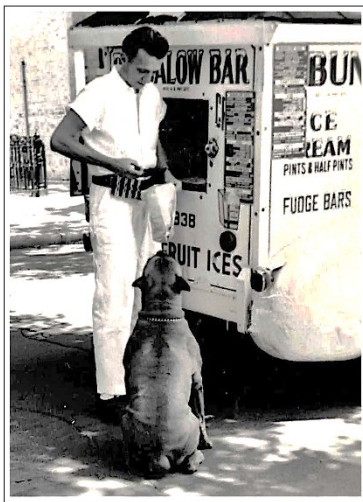
By Linda Schield

King was the 80-pound that my family acquired while I was in high school. While he responded best to my father, he was my buddy and my walking companion, and had a fascinating personality. He was very intelligent (and also very stubborn), but almost always willing to work for food. Somehow, we got word of this contest for a dog to be in the movie *Pal Joey* with Frank Sinatra, and we decided to try out for it. Long story short: King did win the contest, but something fell through and we never made it to Hollywood.



The photo isn't King, but this pup does have the same underbite that King had. While it was certainly alarming to people who didn't know him; underneath, King was the friendliest, happiest boy.

One of my favorite stories was how he loved to go get a Dixie Cup from the Good Humor truck. King would hear the bells and get very excited. My father would put 15 cents in a paper bag and give it to the dog to give to the Good Humor man. The driver would give King his Dixie Cup of ice cream, and King would bring it home for someone to open it and give it to him to eat.



King waiting for his ice cream

My father worked for the New York Telephone Company, and the following article appeared in the company's monthly employees magazine, *Telephone Review*, April 1957 edition:

"For all too brief few days, King the Boxer sniffed success. And it was all because of a bagel. Seems Hollywood had a movie role for a dog that likes the delicatessen doughnut. With traditional hoopla, the movie studio took over the Latin Quarter and held a contest, bagel eating contest, that is. Anyone who owned a "chow" hound was invited to compete.

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Linda Lehner convinced her father, Fred, a staff supervisor in Manhattan that her King had the stuff from which stars are made – all 80 pounds of him. So, the soul of dignity, King padded into the Latin Quarter the day of the contest, escorted by Fred and Linda. He coolly looked over the other 50 entrants and when his turn came tackled the food with such gusto that it was no contest.

It's understandable that his snub-nosed head was turned slightly as he posed between two shapely chorines (some of the owners' heads were turned too!). Wrenched from his quiet home life into publicity's glare, he found it difficult even for his even temperament. And who can blame him if he was a little preoccupied during the next few days as he prepared for the winner-take-all contest with a West Coast dog. There were dreams aborning – a palatial dog house overlooking Monterey Bay, a platinum leash and collar, a paw print in the sidewalk of Graumann's Chinese Theater, perhaps even a date with Lassie.

Alas, it was not meant to be. One evening the newspapers carried the story that a dog had been chosen in Hollywood. Cruel world, and without a glimpse of make believe.

Be it to King's credit that without a tear and with a stiff lower jaw he put aside all frivolities. After all, to the children in his Queens neighborhood he is still the King. What more is needed? What more, indeed."

Linda Schield

When you're stumped:

Remember the Latin saying, often attributed to Diogenes,
"solvitur ambulando," which translates to
"it is solved by walking."

The training process was tedious, but now he knows he is not allowed on the couch.



**This single letter from
The Gutenberg Bible
is widely recognised as
the best in any typeface...**



It's an old e, but it's a good e

Seven Smart Reasons to Use Vinegar in Laundry

Cheap distilled vinegar costs a third of the price of laundry softener.

From an article in goodnews.com, 22 August 2026

Using inexpensive distilled white vinegar in the laundry is smart because it will whiten, brighten, reduce odor, and soften clothes without harsh chemicals.

It's Cheap

Plain distilled white 5 percent vinegar runs around 3.5 cents per ounce in the typical supermarket when purchased by the gallon, and even cheaper when you can find it at the dollar store.

Name-brand liquid fabric softeners come in at about 10 cents per ounce—nearly three times the cost. As an alternative to liquid softeners, dryer sheets are a cheaper way to ruin your clothes and linens. On average, they're about 5 cents per sheet.

It's Colorless

When buying vinegar to use in the laundry, choose distilled white vinegar with 5 percent acidity. It contains no synthetic color and no natural plant dyes that can stain clothes.

It Softens

Plain white distilled vinegar with 5 percent acidity is a natural fabric softener. The acid helps remove detergent and soil that is left clinging to fabric fibers, which is what allows clothes and linens to come out feeling soft and clean.

Commercial softeners work just the opposite. They are designed to coat fibers, leaving behind their scented residue, which can build up over time, rendering those items nonabsorbent, dingy gray, and anything but soft.

Adding 1/2 cup of white vinegar to the final rinse, on the other hand, will soften fabrics and leave no residue at all. Pour it into the washer reservoir marked for laundry softener. A light scent can be added, if you want, with a few drops of lavender oil. However, once dry, your laundry will not smell like vinegar.

It's Safe to Use

Distilled white vinegar is safe to use in both standard and high-efficiency washers. At 5 percent acidity, it is 95 percent water, which makes it mildly acidic.

Once added to the washer, food-grade vinegar becomes even more diluted when mixed with gallons of rinse water in the typical machine.

Vinegar in the laundry is not only safe in septic tanks but is also beneficial to that type of system and to the environment as well.

It Whitens and Brightens

The acetic acid in distilled white vinegar will not harm washable fabrics because it is so mild but also strong enough to dissolve the alkalis left by soap and detergent.

Adding 1/2 cup of vinegar to the final rinse will result in brighter, clearer colors. Add the distilled white vinegar to the fabric softener dispenser, or add it manually at the beginning of the rinse cycle, if your washer gives you that option.

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It Reduces Odor

Wet towels left sitting in a hamper or forgotten in the washer can produce a sour, moldy smell. To get rid of that problem and to get those towels smelling nice and fresh, do this:

Fill the washer with hot water. Add two cups of distilled white vinegar and run a complete wash cycle with no detergent. Run a second complete cycle with detergent added.

This works well for minor situations and small loads. For more serious situations, you'll want to use this more aggressive treatment.

It Releases Lint and Pet Hair

Just 1/2 cup of white distilled vinegar in the rinse cycle will help prevent lint and pet hair from clinging to clothes. The vinegar will help the fabric fibers relax and “release” the hair. For the same reason, it helps get rid of the excessive lint if you accidentally wash something dark with something that produces lint, such as towels.

Thanks, Robin Haggard

Stair Climbing has Proven Health Benefits

From an article in *goodnewsnetwork.com*, 19 August 2026

A meta-analysis of nine studies and 480,000 people found that regular stair climbers were 39% less likely to die from cardiovascular disease and 24% less likely to die from any cause, with even six flights per day linked to measurable benefits. University of East Anglia, published in American Journal of Cardiovascular Drugs.

Be careful where you shop online. We ordered a german shepherd and now this guy lives with us.



Theobromine Benefits: Can Dark Chocolate Really Slow Aging?

by Jordan Smith, June 24, 2026, allhealthy.com

New research shows that theobromine, a compound found in dark chocolate, may support longevity.

New research shows theobromine, a compound found in dark chocolate, may support longevity. Reaching for a piece of dark chocolate can offer an afternoon pick-me-up, but chocolate lovers may also get longevity support from their favorite treat. A recent study published in the journal *Aging* found there may be a connection between a naturally occurring compound in chocolate and the speed of your biological aging — how your body ages on the cellular level.



Research associates dark chocolate (and coffee) consumption with heart-healthy benefits, and that's often thanks to theobromine, a compound found in both of these — let's face it — daily essentials. Theobromine benefits include reduced blood pressure and healthier cholesterol levels. But does the chocolate itself slow aging, or are dark-chocolate lovers just more likely to practice other habits that support longevity?

What You Should Know About Theobromine

You've probably heard about the heart-healthy benefits of dark chocolate. The antioxidants, such as flavanols, found in cocoa can help reduce inflammation, protect the health of your cells, and even support your cardiovascular system and healthy blood flow.

As it turns out, it may even help slow your body's biological aging process, essentially the age your body is considered when factoring in health markers such as heart rate and blood pressure, which may be different than your chronological age, or the number of candles on your birthday cake each year.

This may be due to the presence of theobromine, another natural compound found in cocoa, coffee, and tea, with the highest concentrations in dark chocolate; it's what gives it that bitter taste. Think of this lesser-known compound as a cousin of caffeine, since it's a much milder stimulant and acts differently in the body. Theobromine is found primarily in cocoa, and moderate to high intake of the compound has been linked with heart health benefits.

More good news for chocolate lovers: The study referenced links higher theobromine levels, which may come from your favorite dark chocolate bar to slower biological aging.

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Going Deeper on Theobromine and Aging

Researchers at King's College London analyzed data from roughly 1,700 adults across the U.K. and Germany to see if theobromine plays a part in healthy aging and longevity. The discovery group was made up of women, with the findings then replicated in a larger mixed-sex cohort.

Comparing both biological-age measures against theobromine levels in the blood, researchers found that people with more theobromine looked younger than their chronological age on DNA-methylation aging clocks, which help predict disease and mortality risk more accurately than birthdays alone. Higher theobromine also showed a more modest link to longer telomeres, the protective caps on chromosomes that shorten with age or chronic stress.

While the association appeared specific to theobromine, it's important to note the study is observational, so it doesn't necessarily prove the compound, or eating dark chocolate, actually slows aging or show exactly how it may support your biological age. And it raises more questions, like if it's a marker for other known [markers of antioxidants](#) in cacao, like flavanols, that weren't measured in this study.

The Takeaway

While higher theobromine correlates with slower biological aging in this study, more research is needed to establish why exactly this is the case. Until it's established exactly why the two are linked, it's (unfortunately) not a prescription to eat more chocolate. To get health-boosting benefits we already know about, nutritionists [suggest](#) looking for dark chocolate that contains at least 70 percent cacao and less than 8 grams of sugar. A daily serving is about one to three squares, or 10 to 30 grams, of your favorite dark chocolate bar.

Bottom Line

Since this study was observational, the results can't definitively establish that a higher intake of dark chocolate (and theobromine) is the reason study participants saw a younger biological age than their chronological age. Essentially, it's not yet known if the compound truly is the secret ingredient to better aging or if it's perhaps due to overall flavanols you consume when eating dark chocolate. While dark chocolate may not be the answer to keeping your body younger — yet — you can still consume it in moderation as part of an overall healthy diet. There's just no need to load up on the sugary stuff in an effort to pause aging.

(Editor's note: The above information may be too late for some of us who have reached a certain age, but we can still enjoy Dark Chocolate! I just wish they hadn't mentioned Theobromide – it sounds so [chemical](#)!)

Five Healthy Drinks besides Water, Backed by Research

By Lauren Keary, 10 July 2026, *allhealthy.com*

Five beverages that hydrate and pack a little extra kick.

Water is still the baseline for staying hydrated, and your body needs it around the clock. But when people ask about the healthiest drinks besides water, research flags a short list of beverages that hydrate and add an extra boost of something beneficial, like antioxidants or probiotics. The downside of these drinks is usually added sugar, so how you choose matters as much as the type of drink you choose.

What You Should Know About Hydrating Beyond Water

“Just drink water” is classic wellness advice you’ve likely heard countless times throughout your life from doctors, your parents, coaches, etc. But there are other beverages that add to your daily fluid intake and also carry nutrients plain water simply doesn’t. The difference between a smart choice and a bottle of sugar typically comes down to preparation — black coffee vs. a creamy, syrup-filled latte, or an unsweetened electrolyte powder vs. a heavily-sweetened sports drink.

The 5 Healthy Drinks Worth Adding to Your Rotation

- **Coconut water:** The liquid inside young green coconuts is naturally high in potassium, plus some sodium and magnesium — the electrolytes your body relies on to hold onto fluid. Research putting it up against sports drinks found it rehydrates about as well after moderate exercise, with less sodium and no artificial dyes. It’s lightly sweet on its own, so skip the versions with added sugar and make sure the label says 100% coconut water.
- **Black coffee:** Your morning cup is one of the most studied drinks on the planet, and the research keeps landing in its favor. Large cohort studies following people for years tie a few cups a day to lower all-cause mortality and reduced heart disease risk. A review of coffee and cardiometabolic health credits its antioxidants with helping steady blood sugar and tamp down inflammation. The catch is what you pour in — cream and syrup turn a near-zero-calorie drink into dessert, so keep it black or close to it.

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- **Electrolyte drink mixes:** These powders stir into water and add sodium, potassium, magnesium, and chloride to your glass, which are all minerals you sweat out. The idea behind them is that [staying hydrated](#) depends on the balance of fluids and electrolytes (not just water), which matters most when you're working out or out in the heat. There are plenty of unsweetened electrolyte powders on the market, which are all far better for you than your typical sports drink that's packed with sugar.
- **Tea:** [Green and black tea](#) leaves are loaded with polyphenols, antioxidant plant compounds tied to [better heart health](#). Tea mixes caffeine and L-theanine, an amino acid that takes the jittery edge off caffeine and leaves you with steadier focus. In one [controlled trial](#), that combo improved accuracy and alertness better than caffeine on its own. Herbal teas have varying benefits depending on the plant — peppermint tends to settle digestion, hibiscus can nudge blood pressure down, etc.
- **Tart cherry juice:** Montmorency cherries are one of the few food sources of melatonin, the hormone that runs your [sleep-wake clock](#). In a [small study](#), tart cherry juice raised melatonin levels, and improved how long and how well people slept. Even unsweetened juice is concentrated, so a small evening pour (4 to 8 ounces) beats drinking it by the glass.

The Takeaway

Research suggests these beverages can hydrate you while adding nutrients and electrolytes that water alone just won't. A balanced plan is to keep water as your main drink of choice and mix in a couple of these depending on each day — maybe coffee or tea in the morning, an electrolyte mix after a workout, etc. Watch for added sugar and be aware of your own caffeine tolerance.

Bottom Line

These drinks genuinely hydrate and bring extra benefits, though the specific perks depend on the drink you choose. The “healthiest” ones have minimal added sugar and are well-portioned, but several come with more caffeine than some may want. Think of these drinks as enjoyable additions that work alongside your water bottle rather than replace it entirely.

Lauren Kery, NASM-CNC, is a NASM certified nutrition coach. She's also the web editor at All Healthy. She digs through the research on nutrition, fitness, supplements, and the buzzy wellness products everyone's asking about, then turns it into expert-backed advice you can actually use.

The Three Types of Empathy and How to Increase Them in Your Relationships

Rebekah Brandes, 11 January 2025, [nicenews.com](https://www.nicenews.com)

From about the age of 3 onward, the typical human being has the capacity to experience the emotional state of another person. That capacity is empathy, and it's critical to our well-being — both as individuals and as a collective.

“In general, empathy is a powerful predictor of things we consider to be positive behaviors that benefit society, individuals, and relationships,” social psychologist Karina Schumann explained in an article for the American Psychological Association. “Scholars have shown across domains that empathy motivates many types of prosocial behaviors, such as forgiveness, volunteering, and helping, and that it's negatively associated with things like aggression and bullying.”

But empathy isn't just about feeling sad when someone else feels sad. The opportunity to empathize presents itself in myriad aspects of life: when we argue about politics, when we feel frustrated at work, when we're waiting in line at the post office. It may help us cooperate better with others, derive more satisfaction from our romantic relationships, and adopt more positive attitudes toward stigmatized groups. In a larger sense, it can spur us to action to improve the world.

As a society, more empathy may also aid us in bridging the political divide. “Empathy is a democracy's job,” sociologist Sherry Turkle told CNN, adding: “At the end of empathy, people are not supposed to agree with each other. You're supposed to have listened to each other, and be willing to share a bit of road with another person [and] find a way to make peace so [we] can live in real life with each other in a democratic community.”

Simply telling yourself to stop and see things from someone else's point of view can be immensely helpful for both parties in the moment, but understanding empathy on a deeper level may have more profound and far-reaching effects. Read on to learn about three distinct types and ways to increase your own capacity.

Three Types of Empathy

Psychologist Paul Ekman, best known for his pioneering work on facial expressions in relation to emotion, delineated the three main types of empathy.

Cognitive empathy refers to intellectually understanding what or how a person is feeling. For example, you see someone's bag of groceries break on their way back to their car from the store, with everything spilling onto the parking lot, and you quickly ascertain that they likely feel embarrassed and frustrated. Cognitive empathy falls under the same umbrella as perspective-taking, or the ability to see something from someone else's point of view.

Emotional empathy refers to actually sharing the emotions that someone else is going through. So, you see the person's groceries fall, and you *yourself* feel a sense of frustration and embarrassment. Additionally, you feel a level of distress that the person is having this unfortunate experience. This is sometimes called “affective empathy.”

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Compassionate empathy refers to not just understanding and experiencing someone else's pain, but seeking to improve the person's situation to lessen their negative feelings. I.e., you desire to help that person pick up their groceries, and offer them one of the reusable bags you brought to the store. Compassionate empathy is also called "empathic concern."

These three types of empathy are available in different people to different degrees. Someone may be very good at cognitive empathy but not at emotional. Someone else may have no trouble feeling what another person is feeling (emotional empathy), but less of an inclination to take action to alleviate their suffering (compassionate empathy).

Certain situations may not call for all three. If you find yourself enraged at a friend for their take on a social issue, it may be helpful to activate your cognitive empathy so you intellectually understand how their circumstances influence their choices. When a natural disaster or tragedy occurs, it may be most beneficial to invoke your empathic concern.

"Ekman calls compassionate empathy a skill, the acquired knowledge 'that we're all connected,'" psychologist Daniel Goleman wrote for Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center. "This can lead to outbursts of what he calls 'constructive anger.' In other words, reacting negatively to injustice or suffering can motivate us to work with others to make the world a better place."

How to Increase Your Empathy Empathy is not a fixed trait; it's more like a muscle you can build with the right exercises.

Start With a Growth Mindset

To the previous point, believing you can improve — taking a growth mindset — may aid you in the improving. "People who believe that empathy can grow try harder to empathize when it doesn't come naturally to them, for instance, by empathizing with people who are unfamiliar to them or different than they are, compared to people who believe empathy is a stable trait," social psychologist Erika Weisz explained to the APA.

Listen to Other Perspectives

As with many interpersonal skills, actively listening, without focusing on your own thoughts and emotions, can increase your capacity for empathy. And listening to perspectives you might not normally hear is a great way to turbocharge this.

"Paying attention to other people allows you to be moved by their experiences," Sara Hodges, a professor of psychology at the University of Oregon, told the APA. "Whether you are actively perspective-taking or not, if you just pay more attention to other people, you're likely to feel more concerned for them and become more involved in their experiences."

It can be difficult to listen to other perspectives without feeling that your own beliefs are being threatened, but the more you do it, the easier it becomes.

"The foundation of empathy has to be a willingness to listen to other peoples' experiences and to believe they're valid," added psychology professor Raymond Mar. "You don't have to deny your own experience to accept someone else's."

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Think Back

When someone is having an emotional reaction that differs from how you might react in the same situation, it may be hard to jump from cognitive empathy to emotional. In these circumstances, recalling a time you *did* feel that way (regardless of the event) can get you closer. In an article for *Inc.*, Justin Bariso quotes Hendrie Weisinger, author of *Emotional Intelligence at Work*.

“If a person says, ‘I screwed up a presentation,’ I don’t think of a time I screwed up a presentation — which I have [done] and thought, no big deal. Rather, I think of a time I did feel I screwed up, maybe on a test or something else important to me. It is the feeling of when you failed that you want to recall, not the event.”

Try Second-Guessing Yourself

It can be an uncomfortable experience to be wrong, especially about something we believe in strongly — so uncomfortable that we often go out of our way to avoid the possibility. But openness and learning are key to building more empathy, and that starts with questioning our assumptions and automatic reactions. “As scientists, we second-guess our assumptions all the time, looking for alternative explanations,” Hodges told the APA. “We need to do that as people, too.”

Empathy as an Acronym

There is often a disconnect between what we’re feeling and what other people “think” we’re feeling, something that has led to plenty of misunderstandings and arguments between friends and strangers. That’s why learning how to effectively communicate our empathy to others, rather than simply feeling it, can be helpful in strengthening trust and inviting vulnerability in relationships.

Eye contact,
Muscles in facial expressions,
Posture,
Affect,
Tone,
Hearing,
Your response.

Larry snapped this photo of a bird he says was guarding the Solarium. We both thought it was some kind of pigeon, so I asked Bonnie – who is a Birder -- and she said,

Quote:

“It’s a Steller’s Jay, actually a little smaller than a pigeon, but sizes are always hard to judge at a distance. They are more common in the woods and higher elevations, but I’m seeing them more often here in town. One common name is “camp robber” - like gulls, they have learned now to take advantage of “people food.” Related to our common Scrub Jays, Crow, and Ravens - very intelligent birds.”



What I like about Clark's chair yoga (in no particular order):

1. All yoga classes begin with the instructor saying that all moves are optional, but Clark says it at the beginning and then repeats it with each move, which I do find reassuring.
2. Clark explains the benefits from doing each move, not only on the joints involved, but also the lymphatic system, the fascia, the various organs affected, and more.
3. Clark's speaking voice is beautiful, and listening to it for an hour is a pleasure!
4. Once in a while someone interrupts the flow of the class to say something, either something funny or something serious, and it feels perfectly OK.
5. The moves we do in Clark's chair yoga help my joints stay mobile.
6. The deep breathing that we do keeps me calm, and it's a practice that I now use more frequently during the day in other circumstances.
7. The "hugging ourselves" moves do fill me with feelings of unconditional love, for myself and others, and that's something I particularly love doing.

We meet every Wednesday at 11am til noon in the gym. All Abbey residents are welcome, including people with walkers.

Janet Bernstein

The Late, Great Dolly Parton

With the passing of Dolly Parton, I would like to mention a few things that I have learned about her.

First, I should probably confess that I am a life-long fan of traditional country music. (My late brother, Gene, had a weekly program on our local radio station singing country music in the tradition of Hank Williams (Senior).



Dolly and her husband of 59 years, Dean

Among the things that attracted me to Dolly (whose high-pitched singing I don't especially like) are her modesty and loyalty.

Dolly began her national reputation when Porter Wagoner, then a national star, invited her to join him for an appearance on The Grand Old Opry in Nashville. She immediately became a member of Porter's traveling group touring the country.

When the time came that Dolly decided it would be better to strike out on her own, she composed a song to tell Porter that she was leaving his band. The song was entitled, "I Will Always Love You. The words of the song appear to explain that the singer is leaving her lover; which in a way is true – except that both Dolly and Porter were both happily married – to other people, and their relationship had always been properly Christian.

Dolly was born in a one-room cabin in eastern Tennessee, the fourth of twelve children, whose father was an illiterate sharecropper.

Dolly was married to Carl Dean from 1965 until his death in 2025.

In addition to her singing career, she has also written more than 3,000 songs, and had an acting career, starring in "9 to 5" and "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas."

Dolly established a theme park, Dollywood, near her hometown in East Tennessee.

She also established a charity that, as of 2025, had delivered more than 100 million ! books for young readers to local charities.

continued...

A bit of local color, thanks to Karen Fierman:

Dolly visited the Lane County Fairgrounds in 1972 while touring with Porter Wagoner and The Wagonmasters. In front of an audience of 1,500 people, Parton received a standing ovation for her performance of “Coat of Many Colors.” At the time, Parton told The Register-Guard that was her first time receiving a standing ovation mid-way through a set.

But that night, she was ill. The standing ovation brought her to tears.

The kindness shown by the crowd inspired her to write the song, “Eugene, Oregon,” writing it that night on the tour bus. She released the song much later, in 2009, on a four-CD box set titled “Dolly,” featuring 99 songs spanning her career.

“To this day, it is one of my favorite songs,” Parton told The Register-Guard in 2009.

Jim McConnell

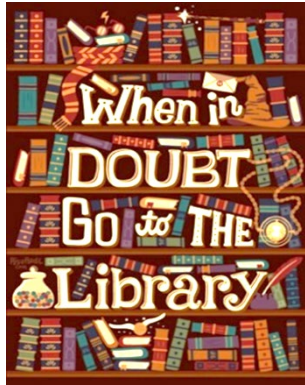
P.S. My favorite quote from Dolly about her performing appearance:

“It costs a lot of money to look this cheap!”



Larry shot this full moon behind clouds
At 2:40 AM on 26 August

Library Report



With the seasons a-changing and fall around the corner, it's also annual back-to-school for students. Not to be remiss, the Abbey Library Committee offers its own curriculum for self-guided learning, including books, of course, and events. So, come get an education at the Abbey Library!

Two sources of books are available: Abbey Library books and Eugene Public Library loaner books (see paragraph below). There's a good selection of biographies from presidents to entertainers. There are several texts on early American history, including The Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Lewis and Clark, the constitution; recent history; Oregon history; and even Abbey history, including the "Eugene Abbey and Its People" binder.

League of Women Voters Event

The Library Committee will sponsor a presentation by the League of Women Voters of Lane County at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 7, in the 4th Floor Lounge. Voter registration, election security, and other topics will be on the agenda.

New Committee Members

A welcome to new Library Committee members Maggie Springer and Karen Duncan. Thank you!

Public Library Books

The Eugene Public Library on a quarterly basis loans the Abbey at no charge 100 regular and large print books. These books are located in the first-floor landing bookcase, across from the elevator. Please use the check-out form on the adjacent desk. A bin is on the bottom shelf for book returns, and committee members will reshelve them. Look for a new selection of books to arrive at the end of October.

Resource Rack

New to the Resource Rack, located on a wall in the library, is the City of Eugene Fall Recreation Guide. Applications for the Oregon Talking Book & Braille Library are available and there's "Learning to Hear Again" information. If you have ideas to make the Resource Rack more helpful, please let us know.

Books on Display

Historical fiction and historical fiction mysteries are new large print format acquisitions in Books on Display, located under the window at the top of the stairs on the first level. They were purchased from ThriftBooks with funds raised from book sales. Thank you! To borrow these book(s), please use the open notebook on the desk inside the library.

continued...

Book Talk

Book Talk, an informal time of book sharing and a great source of ideas to put on your reading list, is the first Thursday of the month, from 4-5 p.m. in the Downstairs Lounge, B Floor.

Book Sale Recap

Thank you neighbors for buying books at the Summer Used Book Sale and for your donations. A special thank you to Wes, the key manager of the book sale, for staffing the sale for many hours. Proceeds from book sales are used to purchase new acquisitions.

— Library Committee: Chair Chris, Jeanne, Wes, Maggie, Karen, Cindy

Shall We Take a Little Walk?

By Bonnie Hirsch

Elsewhere in the Echo you can read about our walking in a 0.5K event. Since that walk, Larry sent me an article about a team from Willamette Oaks who walked the Eugene Marathon's 5K event last April. As you probably guessed, a 5K is five kilometers or 3.1 miles long.

Eight Willamette Oaks residents, with ages ranging from 79 to 95, walked in the Eugene Marathon 5K last April. "Doing it together is so much fun, and that's what keeps me doing it each year," said Margaret Prentice, age 95. Sally Sherman, age 80, said, "Rising to a challenge is always a good thing, especially if it's a challenge that you're not sure you can complete."

So if a group from Willamette Oaks can walk three miles, can a group from the Abbey to do it, too? Let's start a walking group and find out. The first step is to take one step. See how far you can walk today, with or without a walker or cane. Try again tomorrow. And the next day. Walk every day, and gradually add a bit more. It's hard at first, but if you keep at it, some day you may find yourself feeling stronger. You might even have fun.

It's often easier if you walk with someone. Partners can encourage each other to keep going even on the days they don't feel like it. It's easier to wimp out if nobody else will notice. So we propose a walking group. If you're interested in how a walking group could work, there's a sign-up sheet in the Pub. You're not committing to anything but a meeting.

The Eugene Marathon 5K event happens on April 24, 2027. Larry and I want to be there. How about you?

Art Committee Report

We welcome new member Sandy Topazio, who is a quilter and textile artist. She has volunteered to help put information labels on any unlabeled wall art.

Are you curious about what else we do as a committee? The big picture is that we oversee the art in the Abbey's public areas. We give preference to original art created or collected by Abbey residents.

The Pub's temporary exhibits take the most constant attention. We find and schedule local artists, schedule and publicize their talks, and hang and later remove their art..

The other most visible work is managing the longer-term displays of resident-owned art in the halls and community gathering areas. Again, this involves finding and recruiting resident artists and art collectors, hanging (and sometimes removing) their art.

The less visible component of our work is record-keeping. We track who has loaned which art pieces for display. We label the art to tell viewers who has loaned each piece and who created it in the first place. This task tends to be postponed, so we are delighted that Sandy has volunteered to help us catch up.

Since much of the art is from former residents, ideally we need to document their stories and tell why this art is relevant to the community. (For instance, who was Tilly Kreiger, and why do we have so much of her collection?)

Upcoming Pub Exhibits:

September continues Sean Hammond's acrylic paintings.

October will be a silent auction. Occasionally the committee is given art which we do not want to keep. Here is your chance to bid on art for your apartment or as a gift to someone else. Minimum starting bid is three dollars. Minimum additional bids are one dollar.

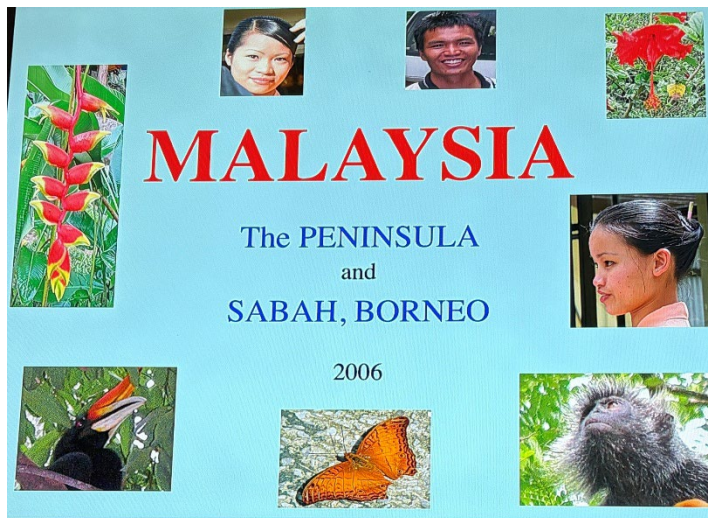
November - December: Marilyn Kent collages.

January and beyond: We have several possibilities, but no firm commitments yet. If you are interested in sharing your own art, or if you can recommend an artistic friend or relative, please tell us know.

Committee Members are Patty K, Nita N, Karry S-N, Katherine W, Sandy T, Wes B, Bruce B, and Bonnie H

The Abbey Goes to Malaysia With Fred

After a bit of technical help from Betsy and Janet, we took off for a fun trip to Malaysia. First Fred oriented us to where Malaysia is on our planet and then we sat back to hear about and to see some amazing critters, birds, butterflies, primates and reptiles. I hope that those of you who didn't get to see the show enjoy these photos.



On the way upriver



Rhinoceros Hornbill



A colorful bird



A winged Lizard

continued...



Brilliant blue bird



Proboscis Monkeys



Orangutan and baby



Monitor lizard, 8 feet long

Our next trip with Fred will be to Oaxaca, Mexico.

Betsy Hall

Monster of God, by David Quammen

A Book Review by Betsy Hall

If you have ever wished to learn how to pickle a crocodile head to keep the Hells' Angels happy, this is the book for you. This is one of the interesting things David Quammen discovered as he was studying Salties, the wild saltwater crocodiles in the Aboriginal Land Reserve in the Northern Territory of Australia. As part of his research into how indigenous people managed to share space with these man-eating reptiles he went on a river trip with the "Professor", an aboriginal elder. There were Salties everywhere making this river and many others extremely dangerous places. The "Professor" believes that his dead father's spirit might now dwell within one of these crocs. But it is OK to kill them for food as long as the protocols and rituals are observed.

Quammen is not a scientist; he is a science writer and an exceptional one. In the 450 pages of this book he tells of his research travels, the scientists, biologists, wild life managers, ecologists, and the natives he interviews. He has a bibliography that is as long as one of his chapters. In his adventures, he describes the geography of the land, the plants, trees, the rivers, the people he meets, the political influences and the research he has studied. The only chapter I skipped was the comparison of the dentition of crocs, tigers, bears and lions.

I felt like Quammen took me along as he traveled to India to study crocodiles and lions, Romania to study brown bears and Far Eastern Russia for tigers. In many places the story follows the same pattern. Indigenous societies manage to live with these alpha predators, but as humans begin to crowd them out and compete for their space and prey, conflict escalates. Eventually both indigenous peoples and the newcomers realize that big money can be made by treating them as resources. Crocodile skin makes luxurious leather, lion and tiger pelts make gorgeous rugs and wall hangings; their various parts are valuable to the Chinese and others for folk medicine. A tiger penis can bring \$10,000. Eventually some enlightened humans realize that these predators are close to extinction and conservationists set up Reserves and Refuges.

These predators were once honored and shown respect. In some isolated places they still are. Recently discovered Paleolithic art made 35,000 years ago in the Chavet Caves in France shows cave lions in "monarchical grandeur". The Maldharis live in the Protected Gir Forest in India in the midst of lions. Their settlements are protected by thorn fences where they raise cattle and buffalo, but they do have to go outside their protective fences to tend to their livestock. They have no guns. In the presence of lions they use caution first and then bluff and lastly if the lions come too close they bonk them on the head with a short handled hoe.

continued...

In the Carpathian Mountains of Romania sheepherders take their flocks high into the mountain pastures for the summer. The surrounding forest is full of brown bears. The shepherds have no guns. Instead they have many fierce dogs who protect the sheep, scaring the bears back into the forest. They believe that “a forest without its treasured bears is empty”.

We visit the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles, discovered during an excavation for a new building. About 10,000 years ago the last of the saber-toothed tigers fell into the pit and along with them humans. The question is: “why did these fearsome cats become extinct and humans didn’t ? The cats had everything - strong forelegs, deft paws, retractable claws, canines like scimitars, muscular necks?” Quammen speculates that perhaps the climate and vegetative changes favored smaller, faster cats like our lions and tigers today. And humans had also gotten smarter and had better weapons. It is one thing to realize that these beasts can kill you. It is another thing altogether to realize that you are meat.

Think of our apex predators today like wolves in Yellowstone and otters along the West coast. They are keystone species Quammen says and their disappearance has had profound challenges to the ecosystems where they lived. If we continue to lose our keystone species, survivor species will be small bodied, herbivore, have faster reproductive rates and wider distribution. Will we be left with house sparrows, gray squirrels, opossums and Norway rats ?

Something to ponder. Who is the “Monster of God”? Is it us ?

This book is in our Abbey Library, thanks to Fred Ramsey

Betsy Hall

And yet another:

“Experience is a good teacher, though her fees are terribly high.”

— William Ralph Inge

In Memorium Janet K. Swanson

Late Partner of Keith Nastiuk, who is a new member of the Abbey community.

Janet K. Swanson was born September 17, 1942 and died from complications of cancer on July 19, 2026. Born in Portland Oregon, she was adopted by Ray and Mable Swanson of Noti, Oregon where she spent the early years of her life.

She graduated from Noti Elementary School in 1956, followed by graduation from Elmira High School in 1960. She then moved to Eugene, Oregon and did advanced studies at Eugene Business College.

Jan worked in the business field of banking in Portland and Eugene for thirty-two years, making many friends and professional connections.

Her father Ray had developed a successful lumber and timber management business. Upon his retirement he asked Jan to step in and serve as the CEO of Transition Timber Management Inc. Several years ago, Transition was liquidated, moving Jan into retirement.

Jan loved to spend her spare time bicycling, swimming, visiting with friends, shopping, and traveling on cruise ships. In doing so, made many life-long friends. She was an avid supporter of many non-profit agencies within the Lane County community. She had a particular affinity for organizations that promoted the timber industry and those that provided support for the less fortunate citizens in her community.

Jan was thought of by her friends as a “a strong woman”. She loved people and making new acquaintances. She was highly respected within the Lane County business community.

“Go Ducks” was a familiar “sign off” to friends when saying goodbye.

Jan is survived by her partner Keith Nastiuk of Eugene, daughter, Lorinda Haynes of Phoenix, AZ, brother, Gary R. Swanson of Mill City, OR sister, Marilyn Thoms of Phoenix, AZ, and aunt, Donna Ruse of Nampa, ID. She was pre-deceased by her parents, Ray and Mable, and granddaughter, Natasha Haynes. She is also survived by numerous extended family members, and her cat, Ebony.

There will be a Celebration of Life on Saturday, September 26 from 2- 4 PM at the Valley River Inn in Eugene Oregon.

Donations in memory of Jan Swanson may be made to the Eugene Mission, the Eugene YWCA, Bushnell College Nursing Program, or the Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon.

Arrangements are provided by Musgrove Mortuaries and Cemeteries.

Posted online on August 25, 2026

Published in The Register Guard

The Importance of Keeping Our Building Secure

Recently, Michele has reminded us several times that we should only let people we know, who are here specifically to see us, into the building. All others who are here for a good reason, which we are neither qualified nor authorized to determine, will find another way to enter.

I have a personal reason for wanting all of my fellow residents to adhere to this rule, one which I've thus far only shared with a few people, but would now like to share with all of you. My 27-year-old grandson, Sam, born and raised in Eugene, is, unfortunately, mentally ill — a paranoid schizophrenic. For most of the year plus that I've lived at the Abbey, Sam has been living with his parents: my son and daughter-in-law, his symptoms managed by medication. Lately, however, he's stopped taking his meds, and his symptoms have worsened. In the past few weeks, he's threatened his parents with bodily harm several times and been involuntarily committed to a locked psychiatric facility. A few days ago, on Monday, August 26th, Sam was released to an unlocked residential placement, from which he is free to come and go.

In the recent past, Sam has visited me regularly at the Abbey, and if he can be stabilized via medication, that may be the case again. But for now, because of the unpredictability of his behavior, and his violence toward his parents, I don't want visits from Sam, and I don't want him to be given access to the building. I don't have a recent picture of him, but he's well over six feet tall and has straight, longish, light-brown hair. If someone fitting this description asks you to let him in the building, kindly explain that you're only allowed to let people you know in.

If you see him in the building, which you won't if we all follow the rules, please let me and Michele (or whoever's in charge) know. Don't engage him in conversation.

The Abbey staff and I are doing our best to keep us all safe, but we're depending on you not to let anyone in the building who isn't here specifically to visit you.

I'll let you know if Sam's status changes.

Thank you —

Maggie Springer, #409, 541-285-7458, maggies@efn.org

From Fred Ramsey:

OAXACA

Back to the Western Hemisphere;
a slide show featuring the birds of tropical
Mexico, including the glorious

Rosita's Bunting



Wednesday, September 16

6:30 pm - 4th floor lounge