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Highlander horses,
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Help Pets Avoid Hazards During The Holidays

By Dr. Heather Weir

As we head into the busy holiday season, it's good to keep in mind that our pets require careful supervision to keep them safe.

Emergency visits increase for both dogs and cats during this time of year – a reminder that holiday threats can come from a variety of sources, including food, decorations, gift wrapping, and even the comings and goings of friends and family members. Here are tips to avoid these hazards during the holidays.

Food-related reminders - Most people do more cooking and baking this time of year. Chocolate – especially rich, dark chocolate – can be toxic to dogs. Symptoms range from vomiting and diarrhea to tremors and seizures.

Ingesting uncooked yeast can cause serious discomfort and possible intestinal rupture in pets. Grapes, raisins, and nuts are often found in holiday recipes, and they can pose serious risk to your pets. The ingestion of grapes and raisins, for instance, can cause toxicity that leads to development of kidney failure and lack of urine production.

The **alternative sweetener xylitol** can cause acute hypoglycemia, sometimes leading to internal bleeding and liver failure. Xylitol is extracted from corn fiber and other vegetable material and is used as a sugar substitute. Its use has grown in home kitchens, and some pet poison helplines have simultaneously reported **increased cases of xylitol toxicity in pets**. Sharing our delicious ham dinner with our pets can induce vomiting, diarrhea, or even pancreatitis, primarily because of the effects of high fat and salt content.

Dangerous decorations - Holiday decorations and gift wrapping also pose danger: Tinsel and holiday ribbon, if ingested, can cause serious intestinal damage. Many household plants, such as mistletoe and holly, can cause gastrointestinal upset if ingested. Lilies are highly poisonous, and it takes only a small taste of a leaf to kill a cat. Tree ornaments can be ingested and lead to blockage of the intestines. The water your Christmas tree is sitting in may contain substances from the tree that could make your pets sick.

Guest-related risks - Guests may also inadvertently introduce risks: With people coming in and out of your yard and home, doors and gates often

are left open – presenting the opportunity for pets to dash out and encounter traffic and other hazards. Guests might also have prescription medications that, if left unsecured, could be ingested and cause serious health problems.

Remember to share with guests that feeding pets “people food” can make animals sick, even if it seems like a nice gesture.

Even with all these potential dangers, the holidays are a wonderful time of year. With a little extra care and supervision, our pets will add to the joys of the season. *(Photo courtesy Bill Cotton-CSU.)*

Dr. Heather Weir is a veterinarian the Community Practice group at Colorado State University's James L. Voss Veterinary Teaching Hospital. The team provides general care, wellness services, and treatment of minor injuries and illnesses for pets.



18th Annual Tommyknocker Holiday Week Festivities in Historic Central City

Thursday Dec. 3rd Children's Parade 1:30 pm

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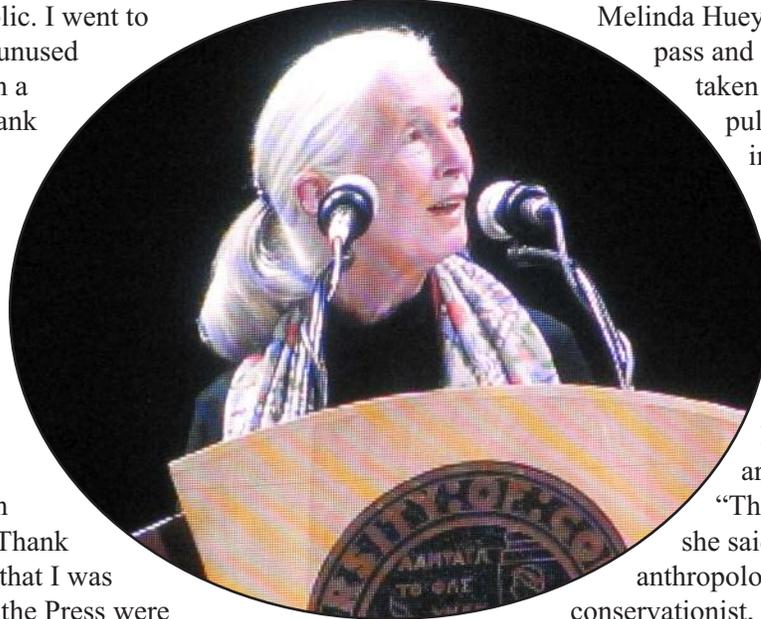
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Thank You, Dr. Goodall

Article and Photographs by Diane Bergstrom

On October 1st, I arrived at the CU Coors Event Center a bit late and without a ticket. But I knew I would get in. I had had a perfect day and knew it would end with listening to you. I would get to cover you, even ticketless. 8,700 ticket holders reserved all the free tickets shortly after being made available to the public. I went to the box office and asked if any unused tickets had been turned in. With a wink, I was slipped a ticket. Thank you. I was so happy! With notebook and camera in hand, I was told “no photos” by the gate security personnel. “Even if I’m doing an article on her for the Highlander Monthly?” I asked. They responded, “Oh, you’re Press.” I joked that I don’t draw that well and my editor wouldn’t approve. They joked back, “You aren’t a sketch artist?” Camera was approved. Thank you. They told the ticket takers that I was Press. I was quickly told where the Press were seated, but couldn’t decipher the directions. I asked numerous people. A diligent young event woman wasn’t going to give up until I had an exact location. Thank you. Three consultations later, I was sent to the back row of the floor seats. I knew you would be covered. Everything you have done, stand for, and lecture about is congruent with the mission of the Highlander. I know its readers will take



you in, at least the Four Fans will because I know they read my pieces. You are an amazing example of progressive thought, word and deed—saving animals, helping people, aiding the earth. I was honored to listen to you. And thank you, Autumn Jones, Digital Content Editor in the Office of Strategic Media Relations and Director

Melinda Huey-Miller, for my press pass and allowing a photo to be taken at the signing table. You pulled off a greatly inspiring event!

“I bring into this space the animal I have studied for so many years,” Dr. Jane Goodall started her lecture, then proceeded to let out an impressive litany of sounds which are too difficult to write.

“This is chimp for hello,” she said. The 81 year old anthropologist, primatologist, conservationist, and world’s foremost expert on chimpanzees, has spent more than 50 years studying chimps in their native habitats, primarily in the Gombe Stream National Park in now Tanzania. She was chosen by Louis Leakey, famed paleoanthropologist and archeologist, to be one of three researchers to help him in his primate research. The other two were Dian Fossey and Birute’ Galdikas. While being a devout Christian, Leakey

forwarded Charles Darwin’s theory that human evolution began in Africa. Dr. Goodall told the story of how her depth and passion for natural world knowledge impressed him while guiding him on a museum tour, resulting in a job offer and safari in Africa. “That’s how I got into the magic circle,” she offered. For her initial passion and education, she credits her mother. At age four, Jane brought earthworms into her bed. Her mother gently and wisely instructed, “If you leave them here, they’ll die because they need the earth.” At four?, her chore was to collect eggs in the noisy henhouse. One flew out when she crawled into the wooden box and she surmised that no hen would lay in the frightening place. So she hid in the straw of an empty henhouse for hours,

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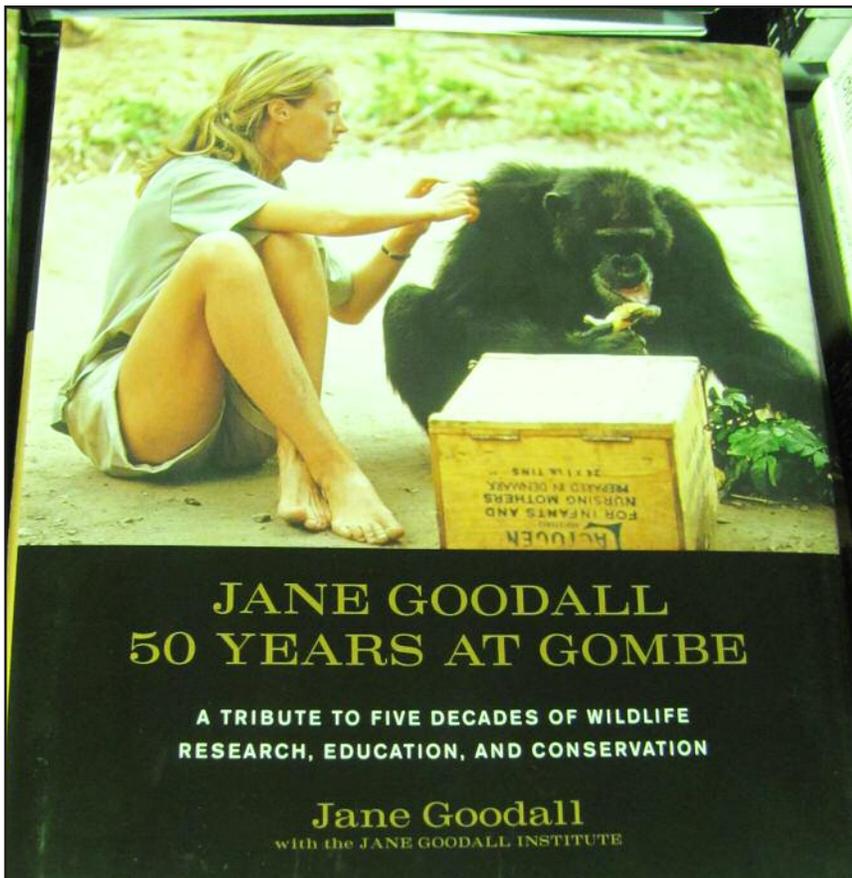
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waiting for chickens that would choose more peaceful quarters. She was not disappointed. And most importantly, her mother did not chide or dissuade her, when Jane came in covered in straw after dark. She had made her first observations of animals, and shown the makings of a scientist with her curiosity. Her mother fostered her curiosity with a constant flow of library books (no TV at the time) where she “met” Dr. Doolittle, along with other characters, when she was eight years old.

“I fell passionately in love with Tarzan. What did he do? He married the wrong Jane!” She stressed the quality awareness needed for, “...the importance of early experiences, family life and the kind of adults children are surrounded by in life in their formative years.” Before the lecture, Dr. Goodall had helped children from a Boulder charter school plant trees, and shared with them advice her mother had given her, “If you really want something, work really hard, take advantage of all opportunities, and never give up.”

After personally following the advice, Dr. Goodall accompanied Louis Leakey to meet her first chimpanzees, who disappeared upon seeing her. She explained they had never seen a “white

ape” before. She explained Louis’ knowledge of a bridge of behavior of a common ancestor between humans and chimpanzees, that behaviors had been brought forward, and summarized, “Behavior doesn’t fossilize.” Her groundbreaking observation of chimps breaking grass stems to use as tools to extract termites from underground nests led to Leakey’s telegraph announcement to the world, “We must now redefine man, redefine tool, or accept chimpanzees as human.” National Geographic stepped forward and funded further research. Over years of studies, the similarities between chimpanzees and humans have been discovered, including blood chemistry, immune systems, and the anatomy of the brain. She explained these similarities led to exploitation of the chimps too, as they were kept in 5’x 5’ cages and injected with scientific diseases to study the potential effects on humans. Their physical similitudes were valued, but their possibility of having emotions was dismissed. Dr. Goodall told the crowd, of mostly University students, that she envies young people who can currently study animal behavior, because in the ‘60’s, the aspects of

animal emotions, animal morality, and intellectual capacity didn’t exist. While earning her degree at Cambridge, she was instructed to label chimps with numbers, not names, surmising they had no emotions. But Dr. Goodall had witnessed their emotional expressiveness. They kiss, pat and greet each other with physical contact. When they groom each other, they get along (Continued next page.)

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better. Their physical attention improves their relationships. They can be violent too, and simulate warfare when an intruder invades their territory, threatening their resources, and they will brutally attack, leaving them to die. "Chimps, like us, have a dark side," Dr. Goodall reflected, "I personally think human beings are the only ones truly capable of evil," referencing our ability to plan torture. "Fortunately, like us," she continued, "they have an altruistic, compassionate and loving side." She stated that those with supportive mothers have better opportunities later in life, and that orphaned chimps are often adopted by young males and older siblings. The young males make very good adoptive parents, protecting the young orphans from the dominant males.

Now traveling 300 days a years, she is often asked why she doesn't spend more time in Gombe. Her answer is she left to give something back to the chimps. A 1986 conference brought people together to study chimps in their various ranges, the decrease in populations, issues of hunting for the bush meat trade, forests being razed, chimps captured for the entertainment industry, chimps purchased for pets, and their use in scientific research. She learned more of the orphans' plight whose mothers had been shot for bush meat consumption, but also about the African people and their resources. As multi-nationals steal resources all over the world and threaten habitats, she



theorized, "We can't save chimps unless we take care of people." A pilot project was developed forming a team of local Tanzanians, not arrogant white people, she explained, who went in to twelve villages, listened to the people, and asked them what they needed. They responded clearly: the ability to grow more food, restore the fertility of the land without using chemicals, healthcare facilities, and education for their children. All of these requests were responded to, offering additional help with water programs, hygienic latrines, micro business loans for women, scholarships for girls to keep them in school, family planning enthusiastically received by both women and men, land use management planning utilizing spatial technology, and her Roots & Shoots program was introduced. The chimps now have three times more forest than when the program began, with genetically unrelated females entering the territory. Trees are coming back in Tanzania and there's an emphasis to protect the forest. She explained, as she travels she learns more about what we humans are doing to the planet, spurring her to want to help other communities. Through her international Roots & Shoots program, now in 140 countries, three tenets are encouraged: help people, help animals, and help the environment we share. Her main message being every single one of us matters and we have a choice of what kind of difference we will make. Go to www.rootsandshoots.org for more information on her youth-focused community

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action programs, where young people concerned about the environment can learn about creating and participating in local and global-based service projects.

“We have explosive intellect. If we’re the most intellectual being to walk on planet earth, how come we are destroying it?” Her global concerns ran wide and deep as she mentioned numerous issues: the planet’s shrinking surface water; ocean dead spots that cannot absorb any more CO2; climate change hitting the poorest people (“I don’t suppose Donald Trump is in the room” she mused.); chemicals sprayed onto lands, leeching into streams and oceans; the GMO companies depriving Americans of the right to know what is in our food; Monsanto knowing for thirty years that the main ingredient in Round Up, Glyphosate, causes cancer and the headline of the day read they were poisoning Argentina; millions of more cows and pigs are being eaten and the environmental implications. She had 8,701 people laughing during her demonstration with a toy cow to explain which end produces methane gas. Her thoughts of GMOs, injecting foreign genes into living plants, “To me, this is a violation of the sanctity of life. We need your help.” She mentioned we should all know about *The Dark Act*, which keeps Americans in the dark about the toxic ingredients of our food. Vermont passed laws to make Monsanto list GMOs on labels. Now Monsanto is frantic about the possibility of this kind of legislation passing through the Senate. She encouraged each of us to write our congress people.

Dr. Goodall expressed her concern for a disconnect between the human brain and the human heart, fostered by an emphasis on making money, benefitting the bottom line. “These are the things taking over—it’s frightening!” But she has hope. “Is it too late? Lots of scientists say yes. I think there’s a window of time but the window of time is not very big. We must all do our part.” Her biggest reason for hope is Roots & Shoots and how young empowered people are changing the world. Her hope encompasses our amazing brains, which have developed clean energy using



wind, rain, sun, and the “extraordinary inventions scientists are coming up with as we face the crunch of climate change.” She cited the resilience of nature, where so much as been destroyed yet, “Animals on the very brink of extinction can be given another chance due to groups of dedicated and passionate people.” Social media also gives her hope! At a New York event where 80,000 attendees were expected, she witnessed the power of social media connection as people took out their “gadgets,” and encouraged their peers to join them. She even overheard one young woman on a call state, “Jane Goodall is here!” and was thrilled to be one of the magnet attractions. 400,000 people showed up.

She asked if we had all heard of the phrase, “Think globally, act locally.” Of course. She advised, “Don’t do that because you’ll get depressed with the global. It needs to be the other way around.” Sage advice, delivered with gentleness and 80 years of life experience. “How can I slow down when there’s so much to do? I know my days on earth are numbered,” she told the crowd. She encouraged us to think about the choices we make every day, so we can make a better world for our children and their children.

Thank you, Dr. Goodall.



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Super El Niño?

By Gloria Dickie

The last major El Niño to hit California was catastrophic: Throughout the winter of 1997 and 1998, rain, snow and powerful winds battered the state's interior, while towering waves hammered the coast. In the wake of the storms, mudslides lurched down slick mountainsides and floodwaters rampaged through homes. Clear Lake, in Northern California's Lake County, saw its highest water level since 1909, flooding portions of Lakeport, 90 miles north of San Francisco. That El Niño brought one of the wettest winters in state history, caused more than \$550 million in damages, and claimed 17 lives. This year's El Niño may very well follow in its footsteps.

"The 2015 El Niño has quickly built up its strength," says Jeff Lukas, a researcher with the Western Water Assessment arm of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences. Overall, "this year looks like the third strongest since 1950."

An intermittent weather event that begins in the Pacific Ocean's warm equatorial waters, El Niño tends to skew weather patterns across the West whenever it hits. And even though this year's is predicted to be one of the most severe in the last century, each El Niño manifests differently, Lukas says.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released its winter weather outlook in mid-October, providing a glimpse of what's to come. Southern California may see torrential rains, while the Pacific Northwest's drought could worsen, if warm and dry conditions persist

there. The Southwest may see a wetter, cooler winter, and the Rocky Mountain region may see a bit of everything, depending on topography.

"California is on pins and needles," says Klaus Wolter, a scientist with NOAA's Earth System Research Laboratory. While above-average precipitation could help ease the four-year drought, the anticipated rainfall will likely only affect Southern California. But the state relies on the northern Sierra Nevada snowpack for more than 60 percent of its water supply. "There's the question of how they're going to get most of their moisture," Wolter says. All the region really needs is one or two big precipitation events. "There is the potential this could make a positive difference," he says. "Except for the people who have to deal with mudslides."



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**The Golden Chamber of Commerce Presents Holiday Parades
Saturday December 5th, 12th and 19th**

At 11:00am the Holiday Parade starts from 10th Street in Historic Downtown Golden and goes up Washington Street. Featuring Santa Claus and Victorian Christmas Carolers, these parades are great family fun.

From Noon until 3:00pm you can ride with the Newfoundland Dogs, where the tips you donate go directly to the Golden Volunteer Fire Department.

When evening arrives, enjoy the Holiday Lights all around Golden and around Clear Creek History Park. We invite you to make a day of it and Shop & Dine in beautiful Historic Downtown Golden.

The Love That Never Stops

By Elena Johnston

“Thwap, thwap, thwap.” Comes the morning’s first greeting from Sundancer as he lays stretched out on the floor next to the bed. “How does he know when I’m back” I wonder as my soul slips into my body after being gone all night. I have witnessed dogs dreaming, like humans dream, their legs twitching as they chase dream rabbits. Do they just dream, or do they leave their bodies at night too? I ponder. I stretch my whole body straight, delighted with the warm cocoon of the sheets and blankets. I start to nestle into the pillow, thinking I’ll have just a few more moments of mind peace before I start the review of what the day is to bring. “Thwap, thwap, thwap, thwap” brings me back to waking consciousness. Sundancer is insistent. “Oh Momma, please, just a few rubs to wake me up all the way. You know I love to start my day this way.” I move over to the side of the bed and reach down to see where he is. There he is, right where I expect him to be, warm and soft, breathing deeply, his mind still soft and fuzzy from sleep. I started to stroke his sleek body, from his shoulder down to his leg. Long slow stroke after long slow stroke seems to put him back to sleep.

I have treasured these moments, knowing that in the cycles of life, there will come a morning where he will not



be there to greet me. The overwhelming sadness that comes with this thought brings a memory of a conversation



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I had with my cat before she died. I had just found out that she had kitty diabetes and was sad at the thought of losing her. She turned her head and looked at me and told me “Momma, don’t waste the precious moments we have left by being sad. Come over here and love me now, so that when I am gone, you have a happy memory to remember instead of a sad one.” She was right, and since then I have followed her advice with many creatures, two legged and four legged.

I hear the sound of my other dog, Windy, coming into the room, her tail hitting the side of the bed as she comes closer. “Good morning, Momma” she thwaps. I’m not moving out of bed fast enough for her. She comes over to where I am stroking Sundancer, and steps between us, nosing my hand off of him and on to her head. She starts to purr as I pet her, breathing in as if she were snoring, a trick she learned from the cat while the cat was still alive. At that time, Windy could see the increase in pleasure for all if at least one of the creatures involved in the petting was purring. This morning, she has been awake for a while, looking out the glass kitchen door to see the sun rise and the birds fly by with her head resting on her front paws. Now, she brings her cold, wet nose close to my face and gives me the weather report. “It’s beautiful out there, Momma. There is fog in the valley of Boulder, but up here the sun is sparkling off the little snowflakes that have not yet been burned off by the sun.” I give her a few strokes on her beautiful soft head. She has to pee and gets impatient with the

rubs. With a little bark she flips my hand off her head and tries to turn around. I realize that my sleeping time is over and that it is time to start the day. I try to get out of bed, but there is a tangle of dog body parts and my legs as I swing them over the side of the bed to stand. Sundancer is trying to get out from under Windy, and she is just standing there, making sure I’m getting out of bed. Finally, we sort ourselves out and start moving down the hall to the stairs. Down they gallop ahead of me, and on their way to the kitchen door they look at their dog bowls to see, if by chance, the over-night dog-food fairy has been by to fill their bowls. Then Sundancer glances to his left to see if there are any stray toys on the

shelf that he can take outside with him to start the day filled with retrieving. “Nothing there” he mutters to himself as he passes by and goes out to start his dog day. After a quick pee, they both come in and watch me as I go through my routine of making coffee. If I am moving too slowly for her, Windy gives me a little bark in happy anticipation of puppy breakfast and treats. “Hurry up, Momma. And don’t forget the little liver treats,” she yips for good measure, as if I would forget.



Saws & Slaws needs your support!

Did you know it costs \$7,000 every year for liability & volunteer medical insurance to enable Saws & Slaws to protect volunteers while they help our community?

Please donate to the first annual Saws & Slaws silent auction to raise money for insurance, the appreciation dinner and administrative expenses.

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Save the Date for Saws & Slaws Appreciation Dinner and Silent Auction: Saturday, January 16

Let us know what you are interested in learning more about (or teaching) on our 4-question mountain living survey:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/99X3ZJH>

Buffalo Field Update ~ buffalofieldcampaign.org



The buffalo death toll has risen to nearly forty. Thirty-two buffalo have been killed by treaty and state hunters in the Hebgen Basin, west of Yellowstone, and another five (all bulls) were killed by state hunters in the Gardiner Basin, along the park's northern boundary. Two buffalo were struck and killed by vehicles along US Highway 191. As we've been stating for many months, Yellowstone, Montana, and other Interagency Bison Management Plan affiliates intend — through hunting and slaughter — to kill 1,000 of America's last wild buffalo this year, and they are well on their way.

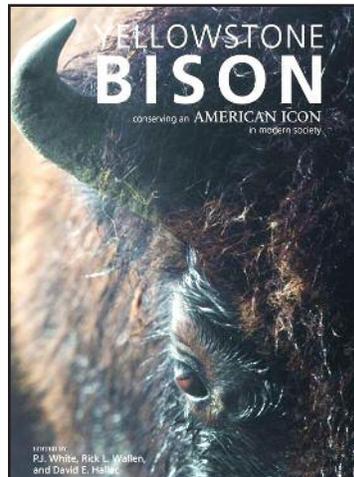
Both BFC camps are in full operation and we have a strong need for volunteers. If you have ever considered joining BFC in the field or if you've spent time with us in the past and want to return, now is the perfect time. New and experienced volunteers are needed and always welcome.

If you are unable to join in person, please help protect the buffalo by taking action, keeping us on the front lines, spreading the word, and staying in touch. You are the reason we are able to be here, and hearing about your love for the buffalo means so much to us, especially in these difficult times when our hearts break nearly every day. Just as the buffalo lend us strength, so do you! Thank you for giving us the honor of being here.

Wild is the Way ~ Roam Free!~Stephany

Celebrate wild buffalo every day of the year! This is our sixth annual Wild Bison of Yellowstone Country calendar, and it is another wonderful exploration of this country's largest land mammal. Featuring stunning photos from generous professional photographers such as Sandy Sisti, Tom Mangelsen, and Ric Kessler, along with photos from Buffalo Field Campaign, this calendar also includes incredible artwork, interesting facts, and beautiful poetry and quotes. **BFC's 2016 calendar** is also dedicated to BFC co-founder Rosalie Little Thunder, our friend and teacher who passed away in August 2014. All proceeds from the calendar go directly to BFC's front lines work in defense of

America's last wild buffalo. Support our work to help these gentle giants as you celebrate wild buffalo every day! Fall in love with the buffalo and strengthen your resolve to help protect them! **Order at our website.**



New book on Yellowstone bison—the best available science on brucellosis—exposes Montana's intolerance toward buffalo, as having no basis in fact.

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Restoring Western Watersheds

By Ben Goldfarb - HCN

Unlocking the secrets of rodent scent glands could help restore Western watersheds.

Pop quiz for all you amateur wildlife biologists: How do you determine the sex of a beaver? That question might sound like the set-up to a raunchy punchline, but for the Methow Valley Beaver Project, it's a pressing concern. The Methow Project, as I reported recently for High Country News, captures tree-felling, ditch-clogging nuisance beavers in eastern Washington and relocates them to public lands in the Cascades. There, the buck-toothed engineers construct salmon-sheltering wetlands, recharge groundwater and create habitat for wildlife from salamanders to moose.

In between live-trapping and release, the Project houses its wards at the Winthrop National Fish Hatchery, where males and females form pair-bonds that help them better survive in the wild. Of course, to set up Harry with Sally, you have to know who's Harry and who's Sally. That's where the critters make matters difficult.

Beavers, you see, lack familiar mammalian plug-and-socket genitalia. Instead, the creatures possess cloacas — fleshy vents, analogous to the anatomy of birds and reptiles, that do triple duty in the departments of waste disposal, scent secretion, and, yes, reproduction. A male beaver's cloaca looks almost exactly like a female's. Not even the sharpest-eyed matchmaker can reliably tell the sexes apart — at least not visually.

This, in a roundabout way, is how I ended up kneeling on the concrete floor of the Winthrop hatchery — one hand pressed against the damp fur of a beaver's belly, another swabbing its hindquarters with a tissue, nostrils puckered by the potent odors rising from below its leathery tail. Harry or Sally? My nose, in theory, would know.

Katie Weber, Methow Project biologist and beaver-sexing coach, peered over my shoulder at the rodent writhing in my uncertain grasp. "Once you get the anal gland expressed, put some pressure on it, and you'll see oil," she offered, like a cornerman urging a boxer to lead with a left jab. Biologist Catherine Means had wrestled the beaver, a weathered male named Half-Tail Dale, into a blue cloth sack, leaving only his nether regions exposed. The bag's darkness had calmed Dale, though he still occasionally kicked out with his clawed feet. I didn't blame him — the experience must have been like *(Continued next page.)*

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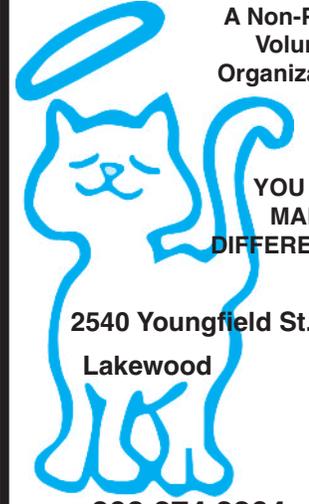
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visiting a very clumsy proctologist.

Beneath my fumbling, Latex-wrapped fingers, the scent glands — angry twin volcanos of pinkish flesh — popped from the cloaca. A drop of amber liquid glistened on one tip, and I dabbed at it gingerly. Weber encouraged me to squeeze a bit harder. “Be careful where you position yourself,” called Torre Stockard, another scientist, from behind the safety of a fence. “You’re in the splash zone!”

The scientists seemed to think they were offering me a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. To me the experience seemed more akin to a hazing ritual. With a whispered apology to Dale, I applied additional pressure on his glands, which poured forth a viscous stream of caramel beaver juice. (From the Beaver Restoration Guidebook: “Obviously this procedure should be done with your face a reasonable distance from the cloaca, with your mouth shut.”) Weber swooped in to wipe up the mess. Dale’s ordeal at the inexperienced hands of a journalist had, mercifully, concluded.



Weber held up the tissue, blotched with hard-won scent secretion. Males, she explained, excreted darker, thicker fluid than females. The odor provided another diagnostic key. A hint of motor oil indicated a Harry. If you smelled old cheese, you had a Sally on your hands. “Once you’ve done five, you can pretty well tell,” Weber assured me. According to a recent genetic analysis, the Methow Project has misidentified the gender of just one beaver since it began using the glandular technique. I took the tissue and, against my better judgment, inhaled deeply. Motor oil? Maybe. But the bouquet also contained notes of overripe fruit, pet store interior, dead muskrat, paint, and countless other olfactory sensations. Indeed, a single anal secretion may contain upwards of 100 different chemical compounds. It wasn’t

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Further unraveling the animals' aromatic mysteries, therefore, could help advance *C. canadensis*' restoration. And that, Weber told me once we were safely removed from the line of fire, would be a very good thing.

"It's amazing how many people start out saying, 'Hmm, beavers, I don't like those guys,'" Weber said as we watched Dale, now free and reconfirmed as male, cruise the waters of his concrete-walled enclosure. "And then you show them the benefits, and they say, 'Oh — I didn't think of it that way.'" The best smell of all, perhaps, is that of success.

Hendrix, a 44-pound male, surveys his human captors from his enclosure at the Winthrop National Fish Hatchery
by Ben Goldfarb.

Ben Goldfarb is a correspondent for High Country News. Follow @ben_a_goldfarb

unpleasant, but it was powerful. I felt a touch lightheaded, and wondered if the Food and Drug Administration had ever seen reason to ban the use of beaver glands as a narcotic.

While glandular discharges aid the efforts of beaver relocators like Weber, they're also fundamental to the lives of the rodents themselves. Beavers have poor eyesight, which means they experience the world primarily through their noses (their hearing is excellent, too). Each beaver has a distinct, fingerprint-like scent, which the animals use to identify relatives — three generations typically share a single lodge — and mark "scent mounds," piles of leaves, mud and sticks that delineate the domain of individual colonies. (Incidentally, don't confuse beavers' anal glands with their castor sacs, oil-producing organs that beavers use to map their territory and waterproof their fur. Castoreum has some applications in the world of humans, though contrary to the claims of the Food Babe, there is virtually no chance that "beaver butt" flavors your vanilla ice cream. Your perfume? That's another story.)

Understanding the creatures' sensory abilities isn't just an academic question: In one 1990 study, scientists in upstate New York used manmade scent mounds to manipulate the establishment of wild beaver families. For their part, the Methow Project's scientists use scent lures — gloppy brown paste concocted from beaver secretions and other substances — to lure the creatures into live traps.



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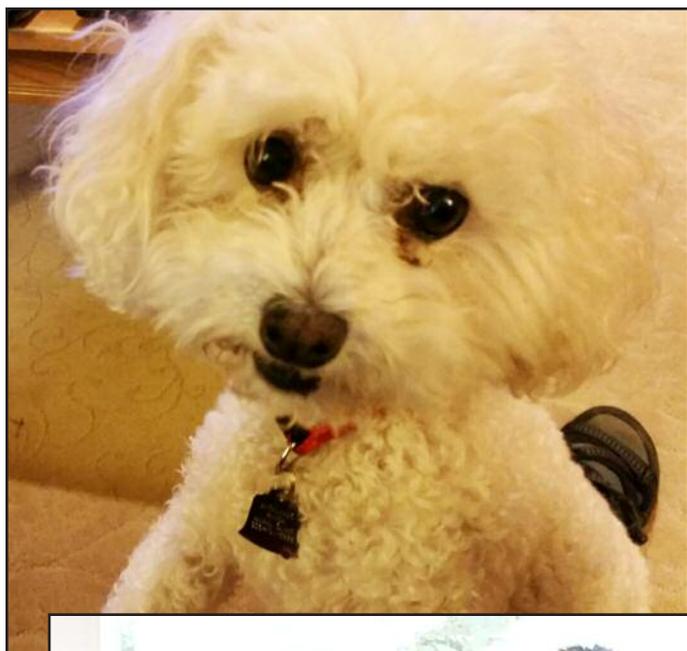
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Animals & Their Companions

*Previous Page: Top left, Poodle pup.
Below: Claire cat from Mtn Man Outdoor Store. Right: Ryder gently inspects Cerra's paw. Cover horses.
This page, Top - Chloe with garden hose.
Below: Squirrel on birdfeeder and two Golden Retrievers from D. Bergstrom.*



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A Guide To Safe Tweeting

From Jim Plane – State Farm Insurance

Twitter is one of the most popular social networking sites

in the U.S. With its popularity come some potential risks if you aren't careful about how you use it. Learn how to protect yourself and your family in the Twitter world –



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Think Before You Tweet

You'd be surprised how much you can divulge in 140 characters, so be mindful of what you're saying. Rude, inappropriate and harmful comments can easily come back to hurt you — especially in the professional world.

Don't Get Too Personal

Twitter encourages the use of your real name, but draw the line there. Don't post your phone number or information about where you live. This can make it much easier for someone to track down personal information and steal your identity.

Protect Your Account

It's important to understand Twitter's security features. Many users leave their setting on public, meaning anyone can read their posts. Set yours to private so only people you allow can see your tweets. Also choose a strong password and keep it a secret. If you use Twitter on your smartphone, never leave it where someone else can access it.

Block Unwanted Tweets

If you are getting tweets that make you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, block the user. You can do this by going to their profile page, clicking the person icon next to the "Follow" button and selecting "Block" from the options.

Be Skeptical

If something seems not quite right, be wary. Be careful about clicking on shortened links that conceal the website destination — especially if you aren't familiar with the user. Remember that anyone can create an account under any name. If the profile picture doesn't look like the person they claim to be or of there isn't a photo of the person at all, be cautious about what you share.

When in Doubt, Report

Report any Twitter activity that seems inappropriate, harmful or false. Giving Twitter a heads up about potential problems helps keep Twitter safe. Learn what incidents warrant a report and how to report them.

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Quitting Tobacco - Generators - Coal Money

Dear Readers, Have you been thinking about quitting tobacco? Even if you're not quite ready... and you're just starting to think about quitting tobacco, "Getting Ready to Quit" can help you build confidence to take on a healthy, tobacco-free lifestyle. This FREE workshop will be offered on Tuesday, **December 8, 2015** from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm in the Community Kitchen at Loaves & Fishes located at 545 Chicago Creek Road, Idaho Springs, CO 80452.

Join us for information, resources and support that can help you get started on a quitting journey that is tailored to your individual needs. Discover that with a plan and the right tools, quitting is possible and worth it! "Getting Ready to Quit" can also provide support for those who are interested in quitting as part of a New Year's resolution. Whether you use cigarettes, chew tobacco, or e-cigarettes, it is NEVER too late to quit tobacco.

For more information or to sign up for the workshop, call Clear Creek County Public Health Educator, Laura Robertson at 303-670-7539 or register online at bit.ly/GettingReadyToQuit.

Dear Readers,

When winter storms hit, many can be left without power. The use of portable generators can help families and

communities to regain normalcy. However, the Portable Generator Manufacturers' Association (PGMA) reminds users to **Take It Outside** during unexpected power outages. "Engine exhaust from portable generators contains carbon monoxide – an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that can kill if portable generators are used incorrectly," said Susan Orenga, PGMA representative. "Taking the generator outside is absolutely mandatory to keep your family safe from carbon monoxide."

To protect against carbon monoxide poisoning, users should always take the portable generator outside, away from windows and doors. That means never running your portable generator inside your home, garage, shed or basement, where emissions can build up and linger for hours – even after the generator has been shut off.

Additional facts on portable generator safety include:

Always read the operator's manual first and follow the manufacturer's recommended precautions and procedures. To prevent emissions from drifting indoors, always place a portable generator as far away from doors and windows as possible. Place your generator downwind and point the engine exhaust away from occupied spaces.

Stay alert with carbon monoxide *(Continued next page.)*

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detectors. Install a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector according to manufacturer's instructions and check the battery regularly. If you feel sick, dizzy or weak while using your portable generator, get to fresh air immediately and call 911 for emergency medical attention. "When you take it outside, you distance yourself and your family from the dangers of carbon monoxide," said Orenge. For more information about portable generator safety and winter weather preparation, visit

www.TakeYourGeneratorOutside.com

Dear Readers,

On November 17, 2015, the Senate passed joint resolutions S.J.Res.23 and S.J.Res.24, each by an identical vote of 52-46. These resolutions block Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules designed to address climate change: S.J.Res.23 strikes an EPA rule on greenhouse gas emissions, while S.J.Res.24 strikes an EPA rule on carbon pollution emission guidelines. The votes come ahead of an international climate change summit that will begin in Paris on November 30.

Data: According to a MapLight analysis:

- Senators voting for the EPA rule-blocking resolutions received, on average, 17 times as much money (\$75,802) from the coal mining industry compared to senators voting against them (\$4,464) between April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2015.
- Thirteen senators received more than \$100,000 from the coal mining industry between April 1, 2009 and March 31, 2015. All voted YES on both resolutions: S.J.Res.23 and S.J.Res.24.

Methodology: MapLight analysis of campaign contributions from PACs and employees of the coal mining industry to members of the U.S. Senate from April 1, 2009 through March 31, 2015. Contributions and interest group data source: OpenSecrets.org.

A link to this report can be found at maplight.org

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Satellite Nightglow Observations

Researchers led by the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere (CIRA) at Colorado State University have shed light on detailed properties of upper-atmospheric motions, using low-light satellite imagery from the Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (Suomi NPP) mission. The research has been published online Nov. 16 in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

At altitudes between 50 and 60 miles (about 90 kilometers), various photochemical processes create a faint emission of light called “nightglow.”

An initial discovery that the Day/Night Band instrument on Suomi NPP held an unexpected sensitivity to this faint light source enabled the first visible detection of clouds on moonless nights.

The researchers have since discovered that the instrument can detect signals from atmospheric gravity waves, which impact the structure of the nightglow layer itself. The imagery details these structures at a resolution of 742 meters, which is unprecedented from space-based observations.

Gravity waves are created by a variety of phenomena in the lower atmosphere, including weather systems, tropical

storms, strong thunderstorms, the flow of air over mountain ranges, and even volcanic eruptions (the first documented example of which is included in the article).

The wave structures, sometimes appearing as ripples reminiscent of a stone dropped into a pond, provide detailed insights on the processes that drive the circulation of the upper atmosphere. The new measurements could be significant for their ability to improve basic understanding of these processes, and potentially to improve long-term climate forecasts.

Led by CIRA Deputy Director and Senior Research Scientist Steve Miller, the research team includes other CIRA scientists as well as partners from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Hampton University, Boston University, the North Western Research Associates, the Jülich Supercomputing Centre in Germany, and the Czech Hydrometeorological Institute. The international team draws together leaders in satellite remote sensing and upper atmospheric dynamics to address a new frontier of interdisciplinary research.

CIRA was established in 1980 as an interdisciplinary partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Colorado State University.

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Love - Man Or Beast

By Elliot Silberberg

Hiking the Mad Creek Trail north of Steamboat, Colorado, one day this fall, I glanced back at another hiker, who was accompanied by two yelping dogs. I was taken aback to see the man wore a pistol in a holster on his hip.

He fell into step for a while with my daughter, Greta, who's 28. She didn't notice the pistol until they'd parted ways, but his words made it clear why he was packing. He said he searched for antlers on hikes and occasionally encountered bears. So far, they'd always scattered. The man also mentioned seeing a mountain lion that tore off into the woods, and its size frightened him. He was also worried about "part-wild" cows grazing in the area because they made his dogs go berserk.

Perhaps these are decent reasons to carry a gun. While it's rare, wild animals do attack people. But I think he should leave the hardware home and take his chances on the trail. I don't see myself as an adversary in the wild; I see humans as guests inside a wilderness area, with the Mad Creek Trail a gateway.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines the wild as "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." If we respect this idea of wilderness, we acknowledge that it's not our turf to control. It's a protected area, and stacking the odds by carrying a deadly weapon seems like the wrong approach.

I've had my own hairy encounters with bears, always in the Steamboat Springs area. Yet the confrontations were also thrilling, and I can't remember ever wishing that I had a gun. I did have some comic insights - wishing I could dash up a hill faster than ever before. On one occasion, I discovered something about bravery when I stood my ground. On another, I showed cowardice, beating feet when others didn't. Each encounter reminded me what it means to feel unique and totally insignificant, both at once.

During our hike, our group of five pulled ahead of the man with the gun. On one stretch of the trail, we spotted a mound of fresh, dark, berry-laced bear scat. I scanned the high grass all around, thinking how great it would be to see a bear — and how scary.

Then, on the top of a small hill, smack in the middle of the trail, we glimpsed a big black beast. But it wasn't a bear; it was a rambunctious cow. We got closer, but she didn't budge.

Suddenly, my friend Becca started flapping her arms, spouting loud gibberish and doing a hoochie-coochie dance. It worked wonders: The cow bolted.

I thought, yes, that's what you need in the woods, a woman ready to let it all hang out and go wild in the wild. As it turned out, Becca's antics made the passage easy for

the guy with the pistol coming up from behind. He and his dogs trotted over the hill at peace with the world. They knew nothing about our showdown with a cow.

The man told Greta he was a recent transplant to the West from New Jersey. If you come from a densely populated city, Colorado's wide-open spaces must seem intimidating. Certainly his dogs were hyperactive, roaming off trail, barking at nothing.

Meeting him made me remember a bear story that Mark, a Steamboat friend, told me. The bear stormed into his yard early one morning, chased up a tree by a pack of barking dogs. When Mark saw the treed bear, he screamed at the dogs, "Now you cut that out!" They instantly obeyed and scampered away, whimpering. Then the bear thudded down and ran off.

How wonderful, I thought. Mark treated the bear like a neighbor that needed protection. His reaction had none of the anxiety the New Jersey guy emanated. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Mark was born and bred in the Rockies. I hope the hiker from back East learns to leave his sidearm and paranoia on the shelf as he acclimates to the West. That will make his forays into the wilderness more relaxing and enjoyable for all concerned. Plus, it could save him the embarrassment of shooting a cow.

Elliot Silberberg is a contributor to Writers on the Range, a column service of High Country News (hcn.org). He is a writer with roots in Colorado but currently lives in Italy.

Editor's Note: While I agree with Elliot in this article I can still believe in our constitutional right to bear arms. If we do live in a civilized society there are the proper and common sense times and places to use that right. In recent

events some folks have not used good common sense and broken the law to shoot bear cubs, etc. simply because they didn't take careful precautions with their trash storage. This action is against the law. When faced with wildlife issues it is the law that you must contact the Division of Wildlife so they can do their jobs. Vigilante actions are unlawful.

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Wildlife Protections No Match-State Predator Control

By Krista Langlois

In 2012, more than 60 wolves roamed the rolling valleys and boreal forest of Yukon-Charley Rivers, a national preserve just below the Arctic Circle in Alaska's eastern interior. The wolves did what wolves do: formed

family-based packs, retreated to dens to raise pups in the spring, and wandered great distances in pursuit of their main prey, the caribou of the Fortymile herd.

Unfortunately for the wolves, the Fortymile caribou herd is also an important food source for thousands of Alaskans. And because it's widely accepted that fewer wolves equals more caribou, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in recent years has targeted Yukon-Charley's wolves as part of a statewide effort to reduce predator numbers and bolster game. Over the past three years, nearly every wolf that preys on Fortymile caribou — including those with radio collars — were killed by aerial gunners in helicopters when they wandered outside the park's boundaries. Just one male was spared.

To further reduce predation, Alaska also made it easier for hunters to kill wolves and bears. Over the past five years, the state eliminated a 122-square-mile protective buffer abutting Denali National Park, extended wolf seasons to months when the animals have pups in tow, and increased bag limits from five to 20 per season. It also legalized baiting brown bears and using artificial lights to rouse hibernating black bears from their dens so hunters can shoot them as they emerge. And because Alaska sets hunting regulations on federal land as well as state, the regulations would have been extended to Alaska's 20 million acres of national preserves — had the National Park Service not issued temporary bans every year.

Now, changes are afoot. Wolves are recolonizing Yukon-Charley and a new federal rule may offer them some relief. Recently, the federal government finalized a rule permanently banning hunting practices meant to manipulate predator populations in national parks and preserves. That includes taking wolves or coyotes when they have pups, and using bait, dogs or artificial light at den sites while hunting bears. The rule is founded on the 1916 Organic Act, which requires that the National Park Service maintain healthy populations of all animals — not just those people eat. "We're managing parks not as a game farm that produces high numbers of prey species, but as an ecosystem where you see natural gains and losses in predator and prey populations," NPS spokesman John Quinley told me last fall. The new rule will go into effect in January.

Groups like the National Parks Conservation Association celebrated



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growing — immediately jumped by 40%. But in Yukon-Charley, despite a significant reduction in wolf populations over the past six years, cow-calf ratios have remained largely unchanged. “Obviously,” Burch says, “there’s something else going on besides wolf predation.”

A wolf carries a meal in its mouth. Extended wolf hunting seasons have depleted some packs, but now, a new federal rule permanently bans hunting practices meant to manipulate predator populations in national parks and preserves. Photo - National Park Service. Krista Langlois is a correspondent at High Country News.

the decision as a win, but NPS wolf biologist John Burch says that although new wolf packs are moving into Yukon-Charley, the rule won’t do them much good. That’s because no pack stays within the boundaries of the preserve all the time. As soon as the wolves lope out of Yukon-Charley, they’re toast.

But new data may call into question the efficacy of killing wolves to bolster the Fortymile caribou herd to begin with. When asked whether predator control works, proponents often point to an experiment in a different part of Alaska, in which wolves preying on a struggling herd of less than a thousand caribou were killed. Cow-calf ratios — the most important yardstick to measure whether caribou herds are

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The Self In Perpetual Motion

By Michelle Newby Lancaster

The Spirit Bird: Stories

Kent Nelson

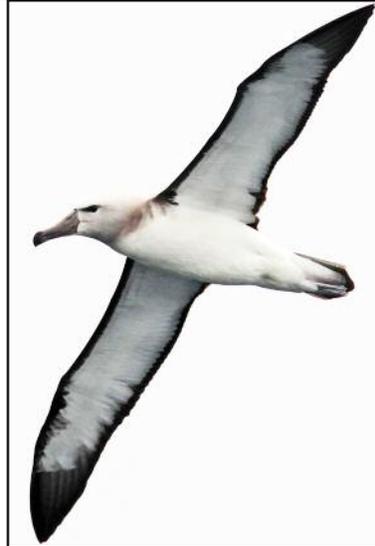
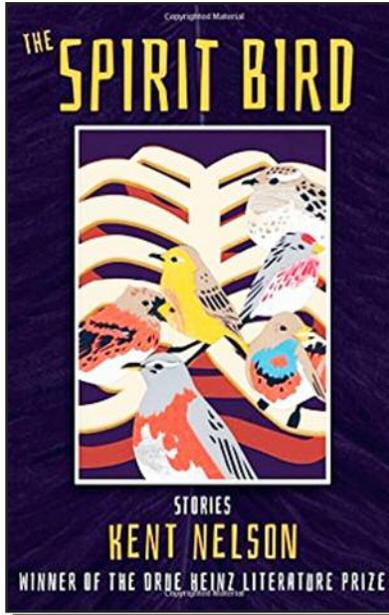
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University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014.

The Spirit Bird: Stories, winner of the Drue Heinz Literature Prize, is Kent Nelson’s latest collection of short fiction. Nelson’s stories feature diverse protagonists — a young single mother, a rabble-rousing Southern lawyer, a restless empty-nester — as well as an unusually vivid sense of place — the chile fields of New Mexico, the resort towns of Colorado, suburban Seattle — that establishes the land as an essential character in the stories. The people in *Spirit Bird* are trying to break out of their lives, and they share one major trait: dissatisfaction.

They’re exploring, pushing boundaries, looking seriously at their own lives and asking, “Really? What now, *In Race*, Hakim, a Kansan of Egyptian heritage, is a glassblower living in Colorado. He is middle-aged, divorced, misses his daughter, uses his talent to make tourist baubles, and is viewed with suspicion by many locals even though he’s been a member in good standing of the local chamber of commerce for 15 years. After Hakim collapses during a half-marathon and is revived, strangers seek him out — what did he see? What did he learn? “I learned how easy it was to die, but how hard it was to go back to the beginning,” he tells them.

In *La Mer de l’Ouest*, Scott Atherton is a white South



Carolina lawyer whose new clients, a black couple, want a straw buyer for a house in an exclusive white enclave.

Atherton is a liberal in a town where he’s tolerated by the local conservative establishment — until he crosses a line and becomes an activist. His wife accuses him of “glamorizing criminal behavior” but he defends himself by replying, “The Boston Tea Party was a crime. So was Rosa Parks’s getting on that bus. ... Did we not have an obligation to resist what we thought was evil?”

A juvenile Salvin’s albatross in a rare sighting west of Half Moon Bay, California. Courtesy Ron Wolf

Adult siblings with childhood grievances spend a weekend divvying up their father’s possessions in *Seeing Desirable Things*, a scenario guaranteed to end in catastrophe. Allen, contemplating birds on the beach in the aftermath, stares at one and wonders: “How did it know of danger? ... How did it know where to go in winter, when to leave, how to navigate?” Would that we humans could know those things, too.

Birds in this collection represent the self in perpetual motion, forever seeking. Lauren, the birder in the title story, asks what might be the question that underlies the volume: “When the spirit is always on the move, how can it settle?” Nelson seems to suggest that the answer is found in

seeking dignity and a measure of social justice — doing your part to create an even field on which to play the game.

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Part 14 - Overpopulation

By Frosty Wooldridge

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.” Chief Seattle

Twenty-nine months after Fukushima’s nuclear power plants exploded and started leaking millions or possibly billions of gallons of radioactive toxic waste into the Pacific Ocean, the contaminated liquid circulated into all of the oceans of the world. Fact: that radioactive waste enters into every living creature in the Earth’s oceans and contaminates their flesh. If you ate salmon, tuna, shrimp and other marine creatures in 2013, you cannot help but absorb, to some degree, the radioactive contamination.

(Worker walks through crippled reactors at Fukushima where millions of gallons of radioactive liquids poured into the oceans.)Photo- IrishTimes.com

That single catastrophe may spell greater disasters for humans and all living creatures in the seas around the planet—for decades to come. As one writer said, “We’re all standing on the beach for this one.”

“Radiation readings around tanks holding contaminated water at the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant have spiked by more than a fifth to their highest levels, Japan’s nuclear regulator said, heightening concerns about the clean-up of the worst atomic disaster in almost three decades,” according to Alan Sheldrik, Tokyo, Japan.

The NRA later raised the severity of the initial leak from a level 1 “anomaly” to a level 3 “serious incident” on an international scale of 1-7 for radiation releases.

“There’s a strong possibility these tanks also leaked, or had leaked previously,” said Hiroaki Koide, Assistant Professor at Kyoto University Research Reactor Institute. “We have to worry about the impact on nearby groundwater...These tanks are not sturdy and have been a problem since they were constructed two years ago.”

What bothers me as a food eating, water drinking and air breathing human being on this planet stems from the reality that we humans continue our mass contamination of our planet at breakneck speed. If you look at the swirling

radioactive plumes flying out of Japan on every ocean current—you see that Fukushima’s radioactive waters spread to every nook and cranny of every ocean in the world.

Numerous reports tell us not to eat any more fish from the oceans. “Radiation levels around Japan’s Fukushima nuclear plant are 18 times higher than previously thought, Japanese authorities have warned,” reported the BBC September 1, 2013.

(Plastic and chemicals overflow in rivers around the world, yet humans continue polluting them at breakneck speeds. Notice that no one picks up the plastic trash or containers. They walk through it, avoid it, drink the water, but never think to take responsibility to pick it up or stop it.) Photography by www.theelefant.com

As to Fukushima, when the entire story comes to light and countless thousands and even millions of humans suffer from radiation

poisoning, cancers and heaven knows what else—we must ask ourselves how much further we humans want to ride this planet down into a hell-hole of consequences.

(Google photograph depiction of Fukushima radioactive waste (Continued next page.)





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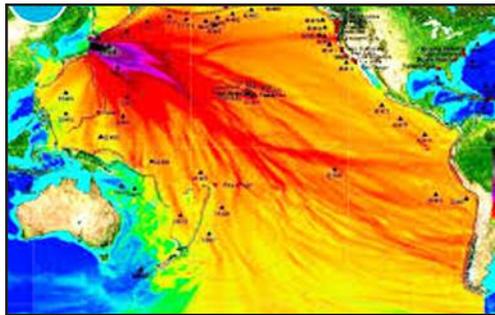
Highlander Worldview

spreading throughout the Pacific and eventually to everywhere on the planet.)

(Notice the Taj Mahal, India looks so beautiful in the distance and we admire its beauty around the world. But look what India does to its natural world. Many of the world's oceans and rivers look like this picture. What sinks to the bottom of the oceans causes death and destruction to ecosystems. Why haven't the world leaders come together to form a 25 cent deposit/return law for all plastic, glass and metal containers to insure such pollution stops? Answer: they don't care and neither do the people of the world.) Photo by www.admeru.com

Every single day of the year, we burn 84 million barrels of oil that ultimately exhausts into our oceans—to acidify them—which makes them more and more uninhabitable for all living marine creatures and planetary life.

We spray billions of tons of pesticides and insecticides onto our plants 24/7 here in the USA and abroad.



Ironically, we outlawed DDT in the USA, but Chevron Company still makes it and sells it to people around the world. I know because I smelled it in my bicycle travels in Asia and South America. We know it kills all life and destroys ecological systems, but for the love of money, we keep selling that DDT crap abroad.

Unfortunately, like the Fukushima disaster, 80,000 chemical poisons that we created also spread around the world 24/7.

Consequently, cancers affect 1 in 3 people here in the United States and cancers grow worldwide as we continue our quest to soak the planet with chemicals. Cancer escalates as the number one cause of death in the world. The more we continue our plundering and polluting of this

miraculous globe, the more we shall face the wrath of Mother Nature in various forms: tornadoes caused in

Illinois or massive killer tornadoes in Oklahoma that kill and destroy anyone in their paths. All because of massive carbon footprint unbalancing of our weather patterns. Loss



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If you could see what I saw as to raw sewage-chemicals injected into the Yangtze River in China, Ganges River in India, Hudson and Potomac Rivers in the USA, and many other rivers in South America—it would cause you to mentally vomit. We humans created upwards of 27,000 square mile dead zones at the mouths of these major rivers because of the enormous amount of chemicals we inject into them before they reach the oceans.



of the rain forests and positive weather systems they generated. (Notice how nice the sky scrapers look and the high speed traffic bridges leading into a major city. Notice the trash and garbage running in the river and notice the brown water carrying every kind of chemical to poison the marine life, plant life and ocean life once it reaches the sea.) Photo by www.gaytejada.blogspot.com

Loss of over 100 species every single day of the year because of human encroachment. (Source: Norman Myers, Oxford University) Acidified oceans that continue their death spiral with radioactive wastes from Fukushima. Not known by most Americans, we dumped billions of pounds of mustard gas and Lewisite gas into the oceans after WWII. We dumped over 500 barrels of radioactive waste 20 miles off San Francisco, California in the 50s. Today, all those drums rusted open and spewed their contents into the Pacific waters. We continue to draw down aquifers and contaminate ground water at the same time here in the USA with massive pig farms, cattle farms and industrial waste. For example: the toxic and polluted Mississippi River blooms into a 10,000 square mile dead zone at its mouth because of so many chemicals from farm and industrial run-off.

Now, we vomit our radioactive waste from Fukushima to all oceans of the world, which will take centuries to neutralize, if ever. At some point, we human beings, whether Americans or planetary citizens from other countries must take stock of what we are doing to the planet and doing to ourselves.

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The View From The Top

By Pepper Trail

Today I hiked along a forest trail near my home. Squirrels scolded, a raven croaked. I moved steadily on. Startled at my approach, a deer bounded away, labored up the loose soil of the steep little canyon, and disappeared. I barely paused. There was nothing there for me to fear, nothing for me to attend other than what I chose.

Such as this late afternoon light, striking golden against the eastern slope of the canyon, bringing the polished trunks of the madrones to a fine glow. I stop to savor the aesthetic thrill of a harmonious landscape. How wonderful to be carefree in nature!

Around the end of a log hops a small bird. It does not react to my motionless form, less than 20 feet away. I cautiously raise binoculars to satisfy my curiosity, and see it is a young hermit thrush in ragged late-summer plumage, its patchy face wearing the naïve and slightly desperate

expression of a college freshman trying to make his way across an unfamiliar campus.

Obscurely moved by the bird, I impulsively decide to renounce, for this one encounter, my position as the dominant species. I will wait, motionless and silent, for the thrush to do what it wishes until it leaves the scene on its own terms, and in its own time. It is 5:59 p.m.

White, male, American, and by any rational standard rich, I perch atop a global pinnacle of privilege. It is both very comfortable and very uncomfortable, though mostly comfortable. The privilege I enjoy, though, is just in relation to my fellow humans. Beyond white privilege, male privilege, or the privilege inherent in being born in America, is an even deeper and less acknowledged boon — human privilege.

The thrush hops about in the scurf of Douglas-fir needles and dust at the edge of the trail, scratching with both feet and twice lunging forward to seize something I can't see. At 6:04, it crosses the path, and settles beneath that arching cover of a snowberry bush. It fluffs its feathers for comfort and falls into motionlessness. The canyon is silent, but for a slight trickle of water from the drying creek and the southing of wind through the trees. Time passes.

At 6:08, the thrush gives a small shake and leaps up into the snowberry. It gives its first call, a single chup, and then at 6:10 flies back to the path, where it resumes its quiet foraging. It finds nothing, and at 6:12 flies about 20 feet upslope into a small dogwood, where it gives a series of calls, accompanied by wing-flips. I risk a look with my binoculars; the thrush shows no reaction to my slight movement, but continues to call and flip his wings. The

motions resemble food begging by a fledgling. Perhaps this youth, hungry and alone, is calling to his parents, nowhere to be found.

At 6:14, the thrush flies to the path behind me, less than 15 feet away. It shows no awareness of my presence, and after a minute of foraging, flies out of sight down the creek. For 16 minutes, I had put aside human privilege. It felt like a long time. It wasn't. But it gave me a more intimate encounter with another species than I have had for a very long time.

Years ago, I lived in the South American rainforest, doing graduate research. The remote reserve was still home to all its wild beasts, including jaguars. Attacks by jaguars on humans are almost unheard-of, and yet jaguars are definitely capable of killing a

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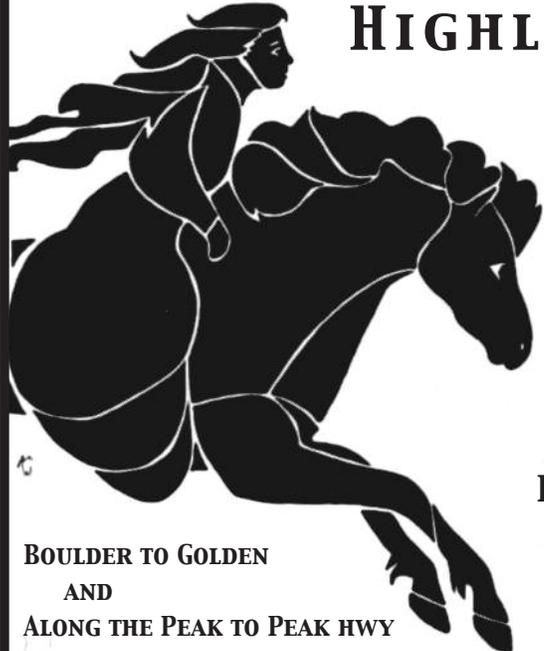


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person. I encountered the animals eight times. One of those encounters was face-to-face. For those few seconds I lived utterly without human privilege, forever changing my place in the world.

Most of us have never lived in a landscape with large predators. Most have never experienced nature as anything worse than an inconvenient blizzard, a drought that killed the landscaping, a windstorm that knocked out the power. We have lived like kings, and like kings, we never questioned the justice of our privileges.

Monarchies are overthrown, and empires fall. No single species can forever appropriate all the resources of the world for its own. It is likely that climate chaos, acting through epidemics, agricultural collapse, or migration-fueled wars, will end human privilege, if not planetary domination, by the end of this century. As individuals, there is only so much we can do to prepare.

But here's one thing I'm going to try — to practice living without human privilege for a few minutes a week. Let the world be. Watch what happens. Repeat.



Pepper Trail is a contributor to Writers on the Range, a column service of High Country News (hcn.org). He lives and writes in Oregon. (Istock Photo of a Hermit Thrush.)

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DECEMBER
2015

POWER UPDATE



Give a Powerful Present with Watt Matters Electricity Gift Certificates

Giving the gift of electricity is easy with United Power's Watt Matters gift program. Whether you give to someone struggling to make ends meet, or to mark a special occasion, Watt Matters gives the electricity we all need to power our lives.

The gift of electricity is the perfect gift for anyone and can be given year-round.

Visit www.unitedpower.com or call 303-637-1300 to give.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Space Heater Safety

As temperatures drop this winter, many will look for supplemental heating sources for their homes. Space heaters can be a good alternative for those who want to warm one area of their home, however, space heaters are also responsible for 32 percent of house fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. If you are planning to use a space heater in your home this winter, review these tips to keep you, your family and your property safe.



Materials: What are the components of your space heater made of? Parts like metal grating can be hot to the touch and may burn anyone who gets too close.

Placement: While it can be tempting to place a small heater on a shelf so it is not in the way of pets and children, it is safest to leave the heater on a level floor on a nonflammable surface. The most important rule about space heater placement is the three-foot rule. Whether you are using the heater in the bedroom, living room or kitchen, space heaters should always be kept three feet away from flammable materials and out of the way of children and pets.

Special Features: Does your space heater have an auto shutoff function if tipped over? Auto shutoff can be a lifesaver.

Cords: You should never use an extension cord when plugging in a space heater as it can cause overheating. The space heater should be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and should be the only thing plugged in to the wall outlet.

Use: Never leave a heater unattended while in use. If you are leaving your home or going to bed, make sure to unplug the heater.

Following these tips and making sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions can keep you safe this winter.

Cooperative Youth Camp

United Power is now accepting applications for the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp to be held July 22-17, 2016 just north of Steamboat Springs, Colo. The primary objective of this camp is to provide an educational experience for young people on the organization and operation of a cooperative. Students also participate in activities to build self-esteem and confidence, and activities that teach leadership and teamwork skills. Interested students must complete an application, be 16 years of age or older, and have their primary residence in United Power's service territory.

Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp
Steamboat Springs, Colo.
July 17-22, 2016

Applications can be found at www.unitedpower.com under the 'My Community' tab. **Applications must be postmarked by January 29, 2016.**

Customer Service: 303-637-1300

Coal Creek Office: 303-642-7921

www.unitedpower.com

During this Christmas Holiday Season of giving, let us take time to slow down & enjoy the simple things. May this wonderful time of the year touch all of our hearts in a special way. Wishing you much Happiness & Wonderful Holidays! Kathy & Susan



95 Lewark Avenue
On Top of the World
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,579 sq. ft. **\$264,000**



11760 Lillis Drive
Remodeled Home with Barn
4 BD/ 3 BA 2,796 sq. ft. **\$409,000**



11846 Crescent Park Drive
Main Floor Living, Gorgeous Remodel
3 BD/ 2 BA 1,925 sq. ft. **\$392,000**



11568 Overlook Road
Beautiful Updates
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,258 sq. ft. **\$287,500**



33566 Coal Creek Canyon Drive
Beautiful Updated Log Home + Cabin
4 BD/ 4 BA 4,236 sq. ft. **\$394,000**



1210 Indian Peak Road
Beautiful Executive Home
4 BD/ 3 BA 3,544 sq. ft. **\$559,000**



11944 Vonnie Claire Road
Complete Remodel!
4 BD/ 2 BA 1,872 sq. ft. **\$349,000**



11673 Hillcrest Road
Great Getaway Cabin
1 BD/ 1 BA 846 sq. ft. **\$164,000**



242 Black Bear Trail
Complete Remodel - Stunning Views!
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,556 sq. ft. **\$449,000**



TBD Rudy Lane West
.73 Ac. **\$30,000**



33966 Nadm Drive
1.08 Ac. **\$75,000**



11547 Shimley Road
1.15 Ac. **\$29,000**



0 Lillis Lane
Two building sites and much more!
5.04 Acres **\$79,000**



69 Aspen Drive
Remodeled
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,056 sq. ft. **\$274,000**



601 Camp Eden Road
Amazing City & Mountain Views!
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,013 sq. ft. **\$369,000**



33901 Skyline Drive
Private Wooded Lot
3 BD/ 2 BA 3,174 sq. ft.



Kathy Keating,
CRS, ABR, GRI
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