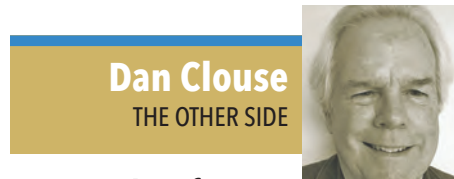


regulation. Overall, long Covid is revealing how the immune response varies among people. We have to drop the simple idea that all patients will respond exactly the same way to SARS-CoV-2 infection and the related myth that the human immune system is a well-organized and defined mechanism. It looks more like long Covid may be similar to other poorly understood chronic conditions such as Lyme disease or chronic fatigue syndrome.

The pandemic has dramatized the variability and complexity of the human host's response to a pathogen. The emerging hope is that ongoing studies on long Covid will help us understand the chronic problems that can follow infection.

Richard Gelinas, Ph.D., whose early work earned a Nobel prize, is a senior research scientist at the Institute for Systems Biology. He lives in Lakebay. Suggestions for further reading are at keypennews.org.



Dan Clouse
THE OTHER SIDE

De Gustibus for the Rest of Us

“There’s no accounting for taste” the saying goes. You could annoy someone with the Latin version, “de gustibus non disputandum est” (“In matters of taste, there can be no disputes”), but I won’t.

People just like weird food. I get the gag reflex just imagining the sawdust of coconut flakes on my tongue, while other people crave it on German chocolate cake.

I love kimchi, mild or spicy, but my family doesn’t, to put it mildly.

Kimchi does have a distinctive smell, which is why I am only allowed to have it outdoors. One July afternoon I was under the grape arbor savoring a delicious lunch of “Mother-in-Law’s Kimchi” imported from H-Mart on South Tacoma Way. My brother-in-law Andy walked by and said, “Say, have you had your propane tank checked lately? Smells like you have a leak.”

The Malaysian fruit durian is the ultimate love-hate food odor. One travel writer described it as “a rich custard highly flavored with almonds.” Another wrote that “its odor is best described as pig-excrement, turpentine and onions, garnished with a gym sock.”

The French, who have a cliché for everything, say “à chacun son goût” — everyone has their own taste.

“Gastro Obscura” exists on the internet to shock our provincial food preferences. They clickbait us with off-the-beaten-path combinations like marshmallow

hamburgers, rattlesnake au vin, levantón andino (a Venezuelan cocktail-hangover remedy with bull’s eyes, catfish roe, quail eggs, tree bark and lots of rum), and an exterminator’s job of insect garnishes from around the globe, all of which make a Burns Night Haggis sound like chicken nuggets from McDonald’s.

All South Sound clamdiggers like Manila clams, but some of us discard horse clams that we dig up alongside them. Some people are put off by the geoduck’s priapic appearance and won’t touch it, while other people get sunburns digging them up during the minus tides of July because they love eating them raw.

Every college student in the 1960s had heard about Alice B. Toklas hash brownies, even though those early edibles were really just mom’s brownie recipe with some seeds and stems thrown in. The real hashish fudge recipe by Gertrude Stein’s partner was for a nut loaf made with dried figs, dates, almonds and peanuts, mixed with some hash, granulated sugar, peppercorns, nutmeg, cinnamon and coriander. Some partook and the weirdness came later. For others, the anticipated taste was too weird to give it a try.

Making the hash fudge isn’t complicated. It doesn’t even involve cooking.

Weird foods, though, can employ equally weird cooking preparations.

I’ve always loved this guy Al’s recipe for cedar-planked rooster. Al was a neighbor of my pal Charlie Morgan when he had the flower greenhouse down in Onalaska. Once on a visit to see him, just as I was recovering sensation in my extremities from a polar bear plunge in the icy Newaukum, Al roared up in a clatter and a cloud of dust. He stumbled out of his WWII Army jeep and, as soon as he was steady on his feet, lurched headlong into what was obviously a well-rehearsed skit beginning with, “You know how to cook an old rooster?”

Charlie smiled sideways at us city folk as Al explained all the steps of cleaning the inedible barnyard reject, the part about soaking it in Thunderbird, then smearing it with bear grease, and fastening it with roofing nails spread-eagled to a cedar shake. The tipsy stand-up comic insisted on every detail of the wood fire in a pit and the three days of turning, and roasting.

“And when it’s done, you throw away the rooster and eat the damn shingle!”

On my next visit, he told the same story again, but because he kind of thought he might remember me from somewhere, switched up the old rooster for a “lice-infested cormorant.”

Alice B. Toklas’ hashish fudge recipe

made the inedible edible. Al’s recipe for roasted birds on the other hand, makes the inedible hilarious.

After all, we have an appetite for laughter, too.

Dan Clouse lives in Lakebay.



Carolyn Wiley
DEVIL’S HEAD DIARY

Vice vs. Age

It seems eons ago that the pool closed, but we were finally back in the water and relearning the water aerobics routine. I was huffing and puffing through the moves when Chris, the lifeguard, indicated that she had a question. I paddled over to the edge willing to impart any needed bits of knowledge in my possession.

Her question: “Carolyn, I heard someone say you are over 90. Is that true?”

I revealed that it wasn’t true. I may be on the far side of 80 but I have a few to go before the big 9-0.

Her reaction made me think that if I really were 90-plus, she would have been wildly impressed with my agility and energy. Admitting to being a decade younger was far less impressive.

This encounter had me giggling for a week, sparked some memories of bygone years, and got me thinking about my future.

One of my grandmother’s favorite quotes was Oliver Herford’s bon mot, “Only the good die young.” The statement took on new meaning as I blew past young. Upon reflection, I figure the brashness of youth and the tendency to push limits was a form of self-preservation. If there is truth in Herford’s words, it would be advisable to get deadly serious about physical preservation and goodness avoidance.

Currently my plan for future fitness includes another decade or so of water aerobics and some tai chi sword play. In addition, I do have genetics on my side since I come from a long line of very old women.

Documentation indicates that they were not just old women, but they also were good women who hung out with good men.

I have a photo of my maternal great-grandmother on her 93rd birthday and she still looked spry enough to go for a few more years. She was married to a Methodist circuit rider who covered the central Texas circuit out of Cuero — an area of small settlements bordering Comanche, Tonkawa and Lipan Apache territory.

Their daughter, Ethel, my grandmother, lived to be 98. She married Mr. Goforth and moved to Comfort, Texas. (There is a joke in that combo — my Uncle Morris

always claimed that he and his best friend, Adolph Stieler, were recruited by a fraternity at the University of Texas because they could be introduced as Goforth and Stieler from Comfort). Gram started the Sunday school in Comfort and after the church was built she was the church pianist for the next half century.

My mother, the youngest of the five Goforth children, lived to be 96. After my dad died, she became a master teacher and community leader who set a good example for all.

On the paternal side, my grandmother was wed in the Missouri Territory and followed her husband, a Presbyterian minister, to Texas. She lived to be 95. Their marriage only lasted about two years. The Rev. W.H. Brown died before my dad was born, but she persisted. She raised two boys, sent them to college, sold encyclopedias, dabbled in real estate and managed her 100-acre farm until shortly before her death.

My dad’s grandmother only lived to be 89. I don’t know much about her, but her husband, Hugh M. Cooper, was a master of understatement as evidenced in the recorded minutes of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, New Mt. Pleasant Congregation in Missouri. A page is left blank between March 10, 1861 to September 17, 1866. The next entry, penned by my great-grandfather, begins:

“Now about this time a National difficulty occurred and the church became somewhat scattered and in a disorganized state.”

So much for the Civil War.

Hence, based upon the “only-the-good-die-young” hypothesis, and the women who swam upstream from my gene pool, I can only surmise that these good women were snatched away in the prime of life.

I may have skittered along on the risky edge of appropriate as a teenager, but I made a conscious effort to observe the boundaries. Consequently, there are no glaring sins to mar my early goodness record.

Actuarially, that put me at risk, so I have countered it by diligently obtaining right-of-way and paving a six-lane highway to you know where with innumerable sins of omission. So far, the strategy has paid off.

However, when wanting to wimp out on a workout, I remind myself that based on calculations of goodness, the highway that is still under construction and my gene pool, I’m facing another quarter century minimum, and I don’t want to face it sitting or lying down.

In the meantime, if I’m asked my age, I think I’ll add a decade because I much prefer a “Wow, that’s hard to believe!” response to “Meh, ya’ still look pretty good.”

Award-winning columnist Carolyn Wiley

Dan Clouse
THE OTHER SIDE



Moonshine Reflections

The night sky above the Key Peninsula isn't always clear.

We enjoy about 140 nights a year that are partly cloudy or better. The rest remind us that the KP isn't West Texas and you won't find a McDonald Observatory here, although there is a two-seat UFO boarding gate on a Lackey Road rooftop.

Not taking clear skies for granted, we look up and admire the stars and the moon on nights whenever we can see them.

In winter, snuggled under the familiar wet blanket of low clouds, there's nothing to see other than the garish colors of city lights reflected down off them. Winter stargazing is a treat you don't get to enjoy every night, so when the north breeze is cold and dry enough to clear away the clouds, the surprise of seeing Orion in the southern sky is something to stand still for.

Our distant ancestors, who followed the paleo diet (not because they were food faddists, but because they had no pizza, chicken tenders or Twinkies), were knowledgeable astronomers. There is regular news of yet another prehistoric ruin oriented toward the celestial paths of the sun, moon and stars.

Not long ago, Scottish archaeologists unearthed a 10,000-year-old moon tracking installation in an Aberdeenshire field. Until someone finds a site even earlier than the mesolithic lunar observatory, it has the best claim to being the oldest human calendar.

Mount Rainier is visible from so much of our almost-island Arcadia that we can't help but notice it — unless you watch TV or argue with strangers on Facebook all day.

“The Mountain” has its role in sky-watching here since the sun and moon rise and set before, behind and below it.

Take sunrise, for example.

In early November, the sun rolls up Rainier's north shoulder like a gravity-defying boulder on fire. People from elsewhere are surprised to hear that sunrise is visible even on cloudy winter mornings because the clouds that blow up from Chehalis are slightly higher than the summit's 14,000 feet. Thus, the eye-popping purple cone of shadow across the bottom of the orange and red clouds just before dawn. So often in winter, those first five minutes of sunlight are the only time you'll see the sun all day.

A few weeks later, the sun appears as a beacon shining straight from the blasted-out top of the sleeping volcano.

Just before Christmas, the sun comes up over the Cascades south of The Mountain. Then it stops because it's the winter solstice, turns back, and appears under the clouds a little further north every day. Finally, on the longest day in June, the 5:15 sunrise is way around to the northeast, having traced an arc of 70 degrees on the compass in six months.

I may be a boomer from the Age of Aquarius, but no matter what Gen Z thinks, that doesn't automatically mean I'm from the Stoned Age. Even so, after a decades-long Rip Van Winkle nap, I think I'd be as able as the paleolithic hunter-gatherers to recognize the month of the year if someone aimed me at Mount Rainier around dawn.

It's the geographic equivalent of a sundial's gnomon.

And then there's the moon.

Is there anything at all like the speechless ecstasy of viewing a full moon with someone you love?

Every full moon is spectacular, and their traditional names are poetry: Snow Moon, Flower Moon, Strawberry Moon, Harvest Moon.

No doubt you admired the Sturgeon Moon Aug. 22. Its name may have filled you too that evening with nostalgic regret for a time not so long ago when that enormous prehistoric fish thrived in the clean waters of the Puyallup and the Nisqually rivers.

As the full moon gets higher in the sky on a still evening, its light marks a wide path across the flat water of the Sound. Moonglade is an old name for the swath of light on the water that connects us moonstruck people to the moon. The quaint word, like Sturgeon Moon, makes you notice time's steady passage. The moon rises and sets, generations are born and pass, fish return to spawning rivers, and although the light is there again on the Puget Sound every month, old words like moonglade are forgotten.

Traditional Japanese aesthetics teaches the appreciation of impermanence. Full moons come and go, and they can be overwhelming in the perfection of their circles. But on nights when the moon passes in and out of clouds or is viewed through a bough of cherry blossoms, we are invited to contemplate the beauty of visions that last only for a moment.

The 14th-century monk Kenkō asked pointedly: “Are we to look at cherry blossoms only in full bloom, the moon only when it is cloudless?”

From our vantage point here on the Key Peninsula, we nod in agreement at his response, “How incomparably lovely is the moon when seen through the tops of cedars or when it hides for a moment behind clustering clouds.”

Dan Clouse lives in Lakebay.

Carolyn Wiley
DEVIL'S HEAD DIARY



Waiting

Recently I rediscovered a forgotten pleasure.

I have come to believe that waiting is one of life's under appreciated treasures. Unfortunately, societal norms have created the impression that waiting should be a source of frustration. Competition is rampant and “doing” and recognition for task completion are the gold standards. Wait-time is regarded as wasted time and a barrier to progress and personal fulfillment.

Looking back to times when there were children to shepherd through the day, wait-time was built in. As a parent, I waited for the end-times of swim team practice or piano lessons, track meets or dance rehearsals, and endless hours for the return of vehicles that carried our young charges off to out-of-town games, concerts and dances. Without these culturally imposed wait-times, I had forgotten the pleasure afforded by being too early.

In retrospect, I realize that I was deliberately eliminating wait-time. I loath to admit it but limiting wait-time seems to feed my egomaniacal tendencies. This is how it works. I cram a load of annoying little tasks (stuff that could be done anytime) into the pre-departure moments so that I can race in at the last minute — or a wee bit later — to meet friends at appointed times with hair-on-fire urgency. It is probably a subconscious desire to send the message that I am a very busy person with many important things to do and yet I am graciously and magnanimously making time just for you. “Now, don't you feel special?”

However, thanks to my current infatuation with the tai chi sword form I am on the road to recovery from this delusion of self-importance.

During the summer, a small group of practitioners have the opportunity to meet in a Tacoma waterfront park for sword practice with the teacher of teachers. Well, it is that travel time that spurred me to inaction. From my house to the Gig Harbor YMCA is a jaunt of about 40 minutes, and the foray over the Narrows bridge adds another 15 to 20. That two-hour round trip is one that I can almost make on one full charge of my hybrid vehicle and use virtually no gas. It simply does not make sense to go home after a session at the Y and contribute to carbon pollution problems by making a third and fourth trip the length of the Key Peninsula, so I hang around in Gig Harbor for several hours before heading over the

bridge. It is this period of idle, unstructured time that led me to rekindle my interest in and appreciation for wait-time.

This new indulgence created a quiet wait-time interval before the demand of doing. Yes, I could attend to those courtesy tasks of answering email and otherwise connecting with the world at large, but I find that I can very well fill that time with less reactive thought and engage in some proactive thinking. It took some doing to break the hold of the handheld message control demon that blinks and jangles and insidiously demands attention. My electronic responses may affirm my existence to the outside world but they do little to nurture my inner soul and creative instincts. Now I travel with notepad, sketchbook, pencils, pens, bits of fabric and needles and thread, and find delight in using these primitive tools.

I've also had time to think about the meaning of time and consider the possible positive benefits if people could just plan for more wait-time. Why not delve into the selfish realm of personal thought rather than scanning the latest electronic message and forwarding it without taking time to ponder, assess, explore balancing arguments, and commit brain power to observational analysis of that message. If the message is worthy, forward it but add personal reflective comments to justify filling another's mailbox.

Think of wait-time as the height of multi-tasking efficiency. Wait and read a book, write an essay, compose a poem, sketch a delicate leaf, drink in the colors of spring, feel the gentle pressure of a summer breeze, savor the crisp air of autumn, study the movement of light upon an incoming tide, listen to the world around you and to your innermost thoughts.

While mastering the art of waiting, watch people moving on their way to their next appointment. You may find yourself hoping they arrive with time to spare so they too can snatch a jeweled moment of wait-time.

It's there for the taking. Why waste it?

Award-winning humorist Carolyn Wiley lives in Longbranch.

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Did you spend enough time with your children when they were little?

Did you run that marathon or climb Mount Rainier?

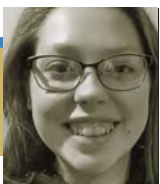
Looking back at the forks in the road you did take and at all the other forks you didn't, it's obvious there was plenty of life that just got missed. The key word is an old one: regret. The roads you took are always fewer than the infinite number of diverging roads not taken in Robert Frost's yellow wood. And that has made all the difference.

"Tell me what you regret, and I'll tell you who you are" is a wake-up call for drowsy septuagenarians. We understand all too well the line in Randall Jarrell's poem, "the ways we miss our lives is life."

But wait. Before you go, just a second. Let me show you a picture of my grandson Jack on Instagram. Let's see ... where is it? I know it's here somewhere. You should see how many likes he has.

Dan Clouse is an award-winning columnist. He lives in Lakebay.

Grace Nesbit
GUEST COLUMNIST



Learning Prejudice

At the Holocaust Center for Humanity in Seattle there is a student leadership board for students from all over Washington who learn about the Holocaust and related issues, such as genocide, antisemitism and prejudice. I am proud to say that this is my second year on the board.

What I have learned there suggests our society is moving backward.

One of the common themes in Holocaust education is preventing mass genocide from happening again. However, all around the world genocides have recently occurred or are occurring: Xinjiang, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Syria, Myanmar and in many other places.

How many of those have you heard of? Maybe one or two?

We in America have tunnel vision, which filters out every problem that doesn't affect us.

A recent lesson presented to the student leadership board was based on antisemitism and anti-Judaism. You may wonder what the difference is between the two. Anti-Judaism is the opposition to Judaism as a religion and to those who practice it. Antisemitism is the prejudice against, or hatred of Jews.

It's also part of the false narrative that Judaism, like Islam, is a race rather than a religion.

A common theme in all history educa-

tion is that history repeats itself. That is exactly what happened in Jewish history. It all began in 587 BCE when Judaea fell to the Babylonians and the Jews became stateless. They lived in exile wandering from state to state but nobody wanted them. And whenever something bad would happen, the Jews would be blamed.

Who else would you blame besides people that had no home?

For example, Jesus was a Jew killed by Romans, giving birth to Christianity. In the sixth century, laws were enacted protecting Christians from Jewish contamination, excluding Jews from most occupations. At various times from the 1100s to the 1500s, Jews had to wear yellow ribbons to signify they were Jewish and had to live in separate areas that became known as ghettos.

Lies were also spread about blood libels, the false allegation that Jews used the blood of non-Jewish (Christian) children for ritual purposes. And that Jews caused the plague or Black Death.

Sound familiar?

When Hitler came to power in the 20th century, Jews wore yellow stars, were again forced to live in ghettos, and a mass genocide killed over six million of them and five million more innocents in what we now call the Holocaust.

What about this proves that history doesn't repeat?

Let's examine the social media influence that plagues society today. Misinformation, fearmongering, and preying on the uneducated and the inexperienced still rules the day. Who is one to believe? Cable news? Facebook? Twitter? What responsible news outlet would repeat a statement about COVID-19 being the "China virus"?

What responsible person would believe it?

It blows my mind that people still say the Holocaust wasn't real. But I have met survivors, heard them tell their stories, and witnessed their passing and how it affects the community. And that is why it is so important to continue to listen for the lost voices of history.

Recently, people have worn yellow Stars of David to express their opposition to coronavirus vaccines. Jim Walsh, one of our state representatives (R-Aberdeen), was seen wearing one, saying, "In the current context, we're all Jews."

First, Judaism is a religion, not a race. The Jews of Nazi Germany were forced to wear yellow stars to show that they were beneath the "pure blooded Germans," and they were slaughtered for it.

Walsh also wrote, "It's an echo from history." So, does that mean everyone who thinks wearing a yellow star is acceptable believes they're going to be victims

of genocide?

A civilized people cannot allow history to be falsified for any reason. The history of the Holocaust is real, and it is an insult to the millions of lives lost and to every survivor, and to all of us who care about the Holocaust, about history, about each other.

But what can we do? There's not much that a 16-year-old posts on her Instagram that adults are going to believe.

"Your facts are wrong," I'm told.

"You don't know what you're saying."

"You're too young to understand."

As we grow up, we're told to act like adults, but we're treated like children. Listening to each other has become a lost art. Young people have something to say. We are aware. Let's learn from each other. How can my generation be "the future" when nobody wants to listen now?

Grace Nesbit is a junior at Peninsula High School. She lives in Lakebay.

Carolyn Wiley
DEVIL'S HEAD DIARY



My 2022 New Year's Resolution

I, Carolyn Wiley, being of questionably sound mind, resolve to make no New Year's Resolutions — not this year, next year or ever again.

If I don't have the time or energy to make the change in 24 hours, why prolong the agonizing effort? I have better things to do than take guilt trips about unmet expectations inspired by a rash of empty promises made to myself.

I do acknowledge areas of deficiency. But if self-improvement was easy, do you think I would still be fretting about those ingrained, sloppy, inconsiderate habits that were the target of resolutions made 50 years ago?

Yes, I oughta get back to the weight loss regimen, but there are still several pounds of gift chocolates that need to be consumed. Plus, a recent article reported that the average adult American has added a bit more than 20 pounds during the homebound and close-to-kitchen COVID-19 era. Having attained that average, I may as well go with the flow until there is better info about the extent of distancing due to the Omicron variant. Weight loss is relegated to the back burner.

Yes, I oughta get and keep my house in order, but I indulge in amusements that are time consuming, messy and create clutter. I like cooking, quilting and crafting, and I may want to break out the paints and silkscreens again. And, according to my-one-and-only, my housekeeping is better than any burglar

alarm. If anyone breaks in, they will say, "Jeeze, I'm too late! The place has already been ransacked."

Yes, I oughta restore my neglected garden, but there are 1,001 excuses for "not today, maybe tomorrow." Wouldn't it be an act of futility to turn over a new leaf before raking up the carpet of leaves that smothers lawns and flowerbeds?

Yes, I oughta resolve to be kinder in general, less caustic in my comments, and more polite, but I am too old, crabby and pragmatic to tackle the impossible. That type of resolution is just too grandiose to be realistic. Some people regard resolutions as serious promises, but so often within weeks the promise is too mundane to be remembered, or the individual decides they have already attained sainthood by trying, so there is no need for further improvement.

For the rest of us, the process of identifying character flaws isn't a bad exercise, but do you really need to make a public announcement and produce a list? How about just recognizing that self-improvement can be disruptive and is a long, slow process best achieved through baby steps?

One of my near and dear daughters shared a bit of wisdom on the subject: "Be like the I-5 and never stop working on yourself no matter how inconvenient it is for everyone else."

Since few people have mastered the art of keeping New Year's Resolutions, why not avoid adding one more step on the "I oughta (fill-in-the-blank)" aspirational flight of stairs to self-improvement?

However, now that I have finally figured it out and have a handle on the resolution conundrum, I'm ready to offer my services and start making New Year's Resolutions for other people.

It is a bit late to help you out this year, but by the end of 2022 I will be up and running and ready to assist you in identifying your quirks, shortcomings, and areas needing improvement so you can most effectively make and publicize your New Year's Resolutions. (This service includes no supportive follow-up once resolutions are codified. Further, all secrets will be published in full in my future columns.)

Award-winning humorist Carolyn Wiley lives in Longbranch.

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