



CRONE CONNECTION

2021 No.4/Fall

*"Growing old is a gift, not a curse.
Otherwise we'd all be babies
waiting to be fed."*

said by the character Queenie in the DVD series, "Lark Rise to Candleford"
Season 4, Episode 3

Writings by Crones



SOME GOOD NEWS TO CELEBRATE

by Marcia Sill

"Yes, age does make us more generous." Alison Gopnik writes in the Wall Street Journal on August 14, 2021 that numerous scientific studies suggest that we do indeed get more generous and altruistic as we get older. We older people donate more money to charity and grow to care more about others. As we age, there seems to be something about getting older that intrinsically makes us more generous. This fits with another discovery, that we seem to get happier as we grow older, despite increasingly creaky minds and bodies. As we age, we are more likely than younger people to cultivate positive feelings. Once we needed in our youth drive, ambition, and egocentrism to make our way in the world. Age releases us from these drivers and lets us appreciate how valuable other people are and how much happier we are than in the harder driving days of our youth.

Two Views of Being at Mt. Rainier

NINE ADVENTUROUS CRONES SPEND THE NIGHT IN PARADISE

by Moreah Vestan

Anne Boher's idea of a trip to Mt. Rainier came to pass Sept.12-13. Nine of us left Seattle around 9 a.m. in 3 cars, driven by Marcia Sill, Lynn Stanton, and Inge Thiesen.

Raining when we left on Sunday, the fog lifted as we all met for lunch in Eatonville at Bruno's, sharing good food and trip anticipations. We reached historic Paradise Inn around 2 and settled into four different rooms. A few walked trails--Skyline Trail to Myrtle Falls, Alta Vista, Nisqually and others.



photo by Marcia Sill

We took photos, and enjoyed the mountain--walking, resting, taking photos of the lone bear and scenery. We felt connected to that resting bear. Later, most of us played Scrabble or Pictionary in the huge lobby, evoking our artistic and thinking skills. The dining room was closed due to Covid, but we had brought food and purchased some at the café.

Monday, we matriarchs walked the Grove of the Patriarchs to be among the 1,000 year old trees. Younger folks on the trail were surprised to see we older gals, and happy to help us with our questions. It was a fun time for hanging out with old and new friends. We anticipate future trips, and hope you join us!



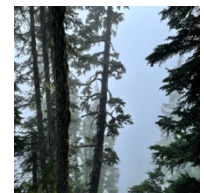
photo by Marcia Sill

Kathryn Nelsen and Anne Boher with patriarchs

MOUNTAIN HIGH

by Bea Sweeney

Nine Crones had our heads in the clouds on September 12th as we spent an overnight together at Mt. Rainier. Some of us had been there before but for others, it was the first time. We stayed at the rustic Paradise Inn, which first opened in 1917. The first thing we noted was that there are no elevators and all the rooms required going up and down stairs. And who needs TV and internet when we're in Paradise? Some of us ventured out for short hikes even though clouds covered us and obscured the mountain views. Marcia and I walked the Nisqually Vista trail, where we enjoyed the soft moist air and the smell of the evergreens all around us. We also saw a pond



of tadpoles (though I wonder if they are not behind the schedule of turning into frogs or toads), deer and two grouse (or ptarmigans?) one of which, sadly, had a wounded leg. It was nearing dark when we returned to the Inn.

Even after the drive, schlepping bags into our rooms, and a cool walk, some of us had the energy to play games of Scrabble and Pictionary in the lounge. And Kahlua! (thanks, Marcia). Crone know how to have fun!

Luckily, the clouds lifted the next day and we were able to walk the trails around the Inn with beautiful views of Mt. Rainier and Myrtle Falls. After check-out, we drove to the Grove of the Patriarchs, huge old trees on a small island in the Ohanapacosh River. We walked the short trail, over a suspension bridge, and boardwalk among trees over 1000 years old. It was almost a holy place.

Many thanks to our organizers, Anne Boher and Marcia Sill; our drivers, Inge Theisen, Lynn Stanton, and Marcia Sill, and good sports all, for a memorable trip.

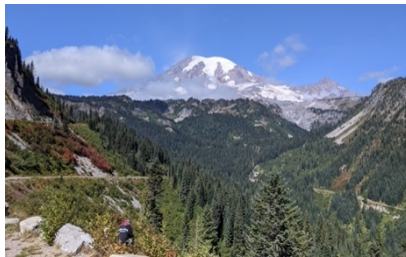


photo by Sonja Larson

NEW POEM

by Elizabeth Davis

I have been delightfully lazy,
lolling around comfortably
in an easy chair.
Reading interesting fiction
with happy endings to calm my soul:
romance, science fiction, and more.
Spreading out jigsaw puzzles, then
peacefully adding piece to piece
as the world vanished from my mind.
Or zooming now and then,
connecting with friends
in an interesting variety of conversations,
local gossip, new biological insights,
or novel new questions to pursue
in later conversations.

Life has been good.

But guilt has wormed its way in
All those active writers

in our writing group.
And then lazy me

Time to write something.
But what?

I know a man who writes peaceful stories
Of his small-town childhood. Full
of vivid descriptions and metaphors.

Shall I do this?
No. My childhood was spent
with a crazy mother in a big city.
Much uncertainty, loneliness, raising myself.
Interesting maybe, but not restful -
and I have already written these
in years gone past.

But still I want to write a poem.

OK

Will it come to me
But to me?
Don't I wish.

One little idea peaks out.
Quick, quick, catch that timid
mouse before it hides in its hole.

Maybe another pandemic piece?

No. Done that already. Dead boring now.
Another excited feeling
that something new is rising.
But damn, it never comes
all the way.
Then another, maybe
about flapping butterflies
gliding flower to flower?
Boring.
Oh, maybe skittery, nibbling mice?
How trite.

All those ideas going nowhere

Damnation
No easy way for me.



\$MOVING MONEY\$

BY MARY COWGER

Six hundred dollars - in cash?! Yeah. Cash or debit card, if you want to relay money by Western Union.

So I drive to my bank, get six hundred dollar bills (don't flash that around) and belly up to the bar at Safeway Customer Services ready to go. But the fee is \$30 cash and I have \$29.50 in my wallet. So I did a little shopping, wrote a check for more than the items and went back to the Customer Services desk and completed the transaction. However, it was sent to the wrong country.

Well, back to the store. But their computer was down. Go to another store. And they did it: backed out of the wrong and into the right. At last: success. Not quite. I sent the wrong transaction number - and then the correct one.

In his book "Successful Aging" Daniel Levitin suggests learning new things to keep your brain in working order.

So - I learned how to do something new.

The Angst of August

by Mel McConnell

My dictionary says “angst” means anxiety, which is probably too strong a word, but I do get a little worked up in August when the new bulb catalogs arrive in the mail.

Every October I plant about twenty pots of tulip bulbs that live on my deck through the winter. For this to happen, I must make decisions in August. I have to pick and discard, embrace, and reject. I have to Choose - - - hence the angst.

The catalogs show hundreds of color photos of gorgeous tulips - - ruffled and striped and fringed, tall and short, early and late, single and double. They come in shades of pale lemon, bright orange, old-fashioned rose, purple, and crimson and lime. They’re named Antoinette and Angelique, Charming Beauty, Princess Irene, Queen of the Night.



Mel’s tulips on her deck

I cannot decide. Shouldn’t I try something new? What about Whispering Dream? How can I not have a Whispering Dream in my life? Or a Sensual Touch. Can a garden exist without Sensual Touch? But I must be firm. I must be disciplined. I only have twenty pots. I will stiffen my lip, print out the labels and wait, keeping faith that each little bulb that I drop in the dirt is a promise of beauty to come.



FROM THE BOARD

BY ANNE BOHER

We are excited and feel energized! Crones have voted 32 in favor, 4 against our resolution to aid an Afghan family under the auspices of the Lutheran Immigrant Refugee Service. We will have our first Zoom meeting on Afghan culture and aid on Oct. 16 at 1:00 as the Scholarship luncheon has been postponed until Jan. The speaker will be Enayatullah Hassany, a native of Afghanistan, and a member of R.E.W.A, an organization that helps immigrant women.

Four woman have agreed to be on the Afghan Steering Committee: Carol Roach, Bea Sweeney, Mary Beth MacCauley, and our newest member, Salamah O’Brien. Thank you. I look forward to working with you.

Another committee has been filled : the Nominating Committee for next year’s Board that will start in March: Barbara Stilson, Sonja Larson. Fran Campbell, Mary Cowger and Bea Sweeney. We still need volunteers to archive, be Membership Chair, and Program Chair. Call Marcia Sill for more info on those jobs.

Humor Corner

Time for something Halloweeny



Why was Cinderella bad at football? Because she had a pumpkin for a coach.

What's a pumpkin's favorite literature genre? Pulp fiction.

Why did the pumpkin take a detour? To avoid a seedy part of town.

How do you mend a jack-o'-lantern? With a pumpkin patch.

What's the best thing to put into a pumpkin pie? Your teeth.



And for Thanksgiving

What did the turkey say to the turkey hunter on Thanksgiving Day? "Quack, Quack!"

If you call a big turkey a gobbler, what do you call a small one? A goblet.

Why did the turkey cross the road? He wanted people to think he was a chicken.

Why did the cranberries turn red? Because they saw the turkey dressing.

My family told me to stop telling Thanksgiving jokes, but I said I couldn't quit cold turkey.

What did the turkey say to the computer? "Google, google."

GET TO KNOW OUR STAFF ASSISTANT, NANCY HOM

from an interview by Sonja Larson

Nancy Hom started working for our organization in April of 2020 which is why her email address is CroneofPugetSound2020@gmail.com. She came recommended by our former Assistant, Susan Forhan. Nancy said she has always liked the model of learning from older women. In fact, in high school she adopted a grandmother and had many interesting conversations with her. Presently, she would love to read stories of members' experiences.



She was born in New York City and educated at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York by 1978. She's worked as a fashion designer with Garanimals, Pacific Trail, Union Bay, and ExOfficio and has traveled for work all over the world. Since 2004 she's worked for a company called Insect Shield, as a garment analyst for outdoor clothing made with insect repellent. But she also designs her own jewelry line that she sells at local craft shows like the Phinney Ridge Winter Fest.

Although she still has family in San Francisco, she moved to Seattle in 1982. She and her husband have been married 27 years and their two daughters are grown, one working in Mexico City and the other just graduated from the UW.

About working with Crones on technology such as getting on zoom, she has found many to be savvy but some have hardware that may be keeping them back. Her job description doesn't specify training Crones but she's willing to help us in any way she can. She has already been of great help to some of us in doing our work for Crone and we're most grateful. The best way to contact her is by email at croneofpugetsound2020@gmail.com.

NEWS ABOUT CRONES

Fran Campbell - Long-time member, Fran and her husband Bruce have decided to move to a retirement home in Rhode Island near a daughter who has recently located to the area. Fran, as Program Chair, is willing to complete plans for the Nov. Crone program. She also was in charge of Packets for interested and new members which Betsey Page has agreed to handle. We're hoping to get her to continue the Current Affairs group on Zoom.

Rita Bresnahan - a long-time member since 2002, Rita feels she can't continue with Crone because she's been diagnosed with giant cell arteritis. Although she had recently joined a Crone walking group she can't walk anymore because she's lost the sight of one eye. In the past she read from one or two of her humorous books for Crone meetings, but her principal involvement was with Crones Counsel which she attended each year until her diagnosis 3 years ago. Books she has written include, "Moments of Grace and Possibility in the Midst of Alzheimer's" and "Listening to the Corn."

Mary Ann Douglas

GOODBYE TO MY FRIEND MARY ANN

by

Marge Hampton

I am saddened to write that longtime Crone member, and my longtime friend Mary Ann Douglas, died on September 3 at the age of 90. She was living at Northaven Assisted Living and had been under the care of Hospice.

Mary Ann was one of the early members of Crone of Puget Sound and served in many ways during the formative years of our organization. We got to know each other well when she came on the Board in the early 1990s. Those were busy years for Crone, with a membership of close to 200. Mary Ann worked on the committee that developed the Crone by-laws and was also involved in membership outreach as well as several of the "Ourselves Growing Older" classes that we presented at Lifetime Learning. Since she had retired as Director of the Nursing Education Program at Bellevue Community College, her expertise was invaluable.

When Rolling Crones was started in 1999, Mary Ann was one of the first members. She was a great choral singer and could "scat" with the best of them on several of our jazz numbers. Her musicianship added strength to the chorus for many years.

Mary Ann was a supporter of Crones' Counsel for the many years that Crone of Puget Sound had large groups attending. She was on the committee that planned and facilitated the second Crones Counsel, sponsored by Crone of Puget Sound and held in Silverdale, WA. Mary Ann and I were in the same Crone Conversation Group for many years. She holds a place in my heart and I shall miss her. She exemplified the role of a Crone in the last chapters of her life.

Coming Monthly Meetings

Sat. Oct. 16 1:00 on Zoom
Afghan Culture with speaker Enayatullah Hassany; he'll also speak about getting family members out of Afghanistan

Sat. Nov. 13 1:00 Program on zoom
Program on *Improvisation*, a fun and imaginative event where we will enjoy activities on the spot.

Sat. Dec. 18 12:00 or 1:00 Holiday Party

Connection Staff: Sonja Larson, Moreah Vestan
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