April 2019

Letter From Your Editorperson 2
Welcome to The Woods & Birthdays 3
Did You Know & LEAG News 4
Transportation Committee 5
Birds of The Woods: Thomas's Paracowl - Rick Harris 6
If You Need... 7
Fishing Story - Vincent Flood 8
Top of the World - Charles Furey 11
Announcement from Management 11
Thanks to our Donors 12

Letter from your Editorperson

As many of you know, or are about to find out, our esteemed and beloved former editor of *Words from The Woods*, Rick Banker, has stepped down from his position after more than a decade. Rumor has it that he has retired to a South Sea island where he lounges on the beach all day sipping spiked mango juice cocktails while trailing his toes in the warm tropical waters of the Andaman Sea. You deserve it Rick. We salute you! Cheers!

Thus, I have agreed to temporarily fill the void by putting out some sort of newsletter in the interim until a proper editor steps forward to take over the job. I'm sure someone out there is chomping at the bit to take over the position. When it comes to compensation and benefits there are none. For applications, write to wordsfromthewoodseditor@gmail.com. No one will be turned away! Perks galore! Operators standing by!

Now as to the newsletter that follows; my apologies if I missed putting in your contribution or forgot to put something in that has always been there. Mistakes were made. As for typos, poor grammar and execrable punctuation, well, it happens. Note that I did not attach the calendar to the electronic version and it will come as a separate file. Also, due to formating issues there are no minutes from the last council meeting of the Woodlanders. If you would like to see the minutes contact Jim Kachik at jameskachik@gmail.com.

Your Editorperson

We Want Your Stuff!

Words from The Woods
Wants your personal recipes, poems, stories, whatever!
It's your NEWSLETTER!

Send to: Editor at wordsfromthewoodseditor@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month. Please, no material off the web. Be original!

Welcome to The Woods

Cornell DeJong and Carol Bishop - 65 Forest

Carol Bishop and Cornell DeJong just arrived from Brentwood. Cornell is recuperating from his 4th stroke at Oceanside. He and Grail often have dinner together with their wonderful view of the ocean. Carol drives down to visit him every other day.

They live midway between Carol's son in Fort Bragg and her daughter in Elk The newest addition to the family is Evie their first great grandchild , an adorable 6 month old who lives in Grant's Pass, Oregon and visits her grandparents often. Their dog, Pudge rounds out the family.

Carol loves playing bridge and enjoys her "bridge time" here. She was a professor at Modesto JC for three years. Her last employment lasted for thirty years as a Dean of Fine and Applied arts (and grant/contract writer) at Solano College. After she retired she worked part time. Cornell is originally from the Netherlands, and was a General Contractor in Palo Alto.

Carol has incredible energy, intelligence and abilities. You can't hold her down. We are lucky to have her living here at the Woods.

Birthdays

Cornelieus Delong	4/4
Eve Angelo	4/5
LAnn Westbrook	4/6
Dick Ahrens	4/7
Jim Hunter	4/8
Terri Bogue	4/10
Richard Banke	4/14
Nancy Chinn	4/18
Helen White	4/20

Did You Know?

Brought to you by Little River Environmental Action Group

Abalone, The Snail With The Rainbow Coat

You have probably seen the bits of shell with iridescent colors while walking along our beaches or the address signs covered in the oval shells. Or maybe one of your neighbors in The Woods was a member of the Abalone Watch Group.

Abalone, a one-footed mollusk that never travels far, will leave a huge economic foot print on our coast - an estimated loss of between $24 to $44 million dollars to our tourist industry in a year. The Abalone season has been closed until April 2021.

Not only is there the economic loss for our business and neighbors, but this is a cultural loss for our Pomo and other tribal neighbors. Since the US Congress refused to ratify the treaties negotiated with California tribes in 1851-'52, they lack subsistence rights and are subject to California wildlife and coastal management laws.

The gentle creature which has been facing so many threats, poaching by mankind in the past was the main threat. But now, their kelp diet has been threatened by massive explosions of purple sea urchins and their beautiful shell coats are becoming porous from the increasing high acidity of the ocean water. The recent storms are dislodging the weakened abalones from there rocks.

What can you do to help our Beautiful Abalone? Lots! When you shop at Harvest Market, bring your shopping bags in and place your bag tokens in the Noyo Funded Urchin Dive Container. When you walk the beach and find a beached abalone, take a photo of it, with the location, date, time and condition of the shell and animal to Reef Check's North Coast Manager, tmchugh@reefcheck.org. Please leave the shell and remains where you find them. Talk to your neighbors, friends, kids, and grandchildren. Spread the word and get people involved.

Little River Environmental Action Group (LEAG) NEWS

LEAG is starting our third year at the Woods. That means our third year of beach cleanups at Van Damme Beach under the California Coastal Commission's Adopt-A-Beach Program. LEAG recently placed posters within Van Damme State Park inviting campers and visitors to help us keep the beach clean. Look for them when visiting the park. They will also be used at the Woods mailboxes to let you know when our cleanups are scheduled. Hope to see you on the beach!!

WHERE THERE'S A WILL…THERE'S A WAY

The members of the Transportation Committee would like to give a big "Holler Out" of thanks to all those who participated in our Transportation Workshop. "THANK YOU!" It may interest you to know that a thoughtful former resident of The Woods left a sum of money in her will to the Woods Account at Senior Services for Northern California (SSNC). This sum was undesignated. As a result we were able to use it to begin out transportation initiative.

A HUGE THANKS TO OUR THOUGHTFUL FORMER RESIDENT!!

If you are thinking of making a charitable donation or if you are executing or changing your will, why not give a sum (large or small) to benefit the Woods? Be sure and designate where you want your money placed. Transportation is a suggestion, but there are many other worthwhile initiatives as well.

Contact Woods Management or Senior Services for Northern California for more information.

Thanks again.
The Transportation Committee

IMPORTANT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE NOTICE

We were planning to start our transportation initiative in March. Due to driver availability and vendor requirements that still need to be worked out it appears that we won't be starting until the end of April. We apologize for the delay. Keep an eye out for further information at your mailbox kiosk and in future newsletters.

Thomas's Paracowl

By Rick Harris

One of our most interesting birds here in The Woods is probably the least seen and certainly the most misunderstood. The elusive Thomas's paracowl appears to combine both the traits and habits of a parrot with the body of an owl. Active only during the dark of night generally between the hours of midnight and an hour or so before dawn, the Thomas's paracowl is only occasionally heard and only very rarely seen.

In earlier, less scientific times back in the 1800's when first described by naturalist Seth Thomas, it was thought that the paracowl was a hybrid between a parrot and an owl because of the parrot like head and beak and the obvious broadwinged brown body of an owl. We now know this is utter nonsense and through sophisticated genetic DNA studies, it has been shown that the paracowl (Psittiotus bovideficus) is not a hybrid at all but is in fact a unique bird belonging to its own unique family, the Psittistigidae or parrot owls.

A medium sized owl shaped bird, the Thomas's paracowl has a length of about 15 inches with a wingspan of 38 inches and weighs upwards of two pounds. Most striking is the narrow parrot-like head and eye. The beak is parrot-like as befits a bird that subsists almost exclusively on large fruits and occasional vegetative matter. The rest of the body resembles a typical owl with streaked brown and white feathers and a spotted chest and back. Note the large, owl-like feet tipped with sharp talons. Only occurring along a narrow strip of habitat stretching from Mexico through California into southern Oregon, the Thomas's paracowl lives and nests in mountainous, Mediterranean type climates and is only found along the Western Coast of North America. It is thought to be extinct in the East.

The nesting habits of Thomas's paracowls are almost as interesting and unique as their bizarre appearance. Typically, a large nest is constructed high in a redwood tree consisting almost entirely of hair and resembling a giant beehive hairdo a couple of feet in diameter. Thus, the old-fashioned common name for this bird; the "hair owl". During nesting season (around the 1st of April), when the paracowl is gathering hair for its nest, is the most likely time this shy and retiring bird is seen. Hair for the nest is procured from a variety of sources including sheep, deer, even black bears and in some rare cases humans! Consider this report from the "Old Time Notes" section of the Mendocino Beacon back in 1885:

125 Years Ago
April 1, 1885

On Sunday night, Mrs. C.R. Johasson, daughter of the late E.P. Thurston of Ukiah and wife of Ollie "Timber" Johasson of Ten Mile, whilst riding in her carriage to a dance at the Grange at Fort Bragg was accosted by a bird who swooped down out of the dark and made off with Mrs. Johasson's hair piece much to the consternation and amazement of all those present. The hair piece was last seen winging off into the moonlit night no doubt to be used as nesting material by that scandalous and much despised local bird, the hair owl.

As befitting its parrot like nature and appearance, the Thomas's paracowl is an expert mimic and gives a variety of vocalizations including owl-like hoot-calls and even on rare occasions, the sound of human speech. Reports abound of hikers believing that they are hearing strange human voices in the woods mistaking Thomas's paracowls imitating the human voice. It has been theorized that these birds may have been reared near remote campsites where they were exposed to human speech. Other ornithologists dispute this contention and assert that such a small-brained bird would be incapable of constructing complete sentences. Regardless of the truth, the next time you are in the woods and hear a voice high in the trees say, "hey toots, wanna dance?", it could be a Thomas's paracowl. Then again, you might just be hearing things.

If You Need – In The Woods

Weekly Food Distribution

If you live alone and your income is $1,459 dollars per month or less (or less than $1,966 per month for a household with two people), you qualify for our weekly food program. You can pick up food once a weeks on Monday, Wednesday or Friday. There is a special food distribution time just for seniors from 10:45 to 11:15 am. Or you can come for our general food distribution from noon to 3 pm.

You Can Send Someone to Pick Up Food For You

If you are unable to get to the Food Bank yourself, you may send another person with a note authorizing them to pick up food for you.

(above) Volunteers sorting food at the Fort Bragg Food Bank

Monthly Senior Box Program

You may also qualify for an additional monthly "Senior Box" of food. Please inquire about this program at either the Fort Bragg Food Bank (964.9404) or the Redwood Coast Senior Center (964.0443)

"Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."
— Michael Pollan

Transportation

Call The Woods office to pre-arrange at 937-0294

Available 8:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday - Friday

Driver wait time available. Courier service available (pick up medications, drop off mail etc.).

Cost: $10.00 per 20 minutes of driver time ($30.00/hr). Same hourly rate applies to wait time and courier services

Charged to your monthly Woods statement.

Miscellaneous Services

Services including housekeeping, yard work, landscaping, handyman help, care giving, etc. are posted on the bulletin board in the restroom alcove of the Clubhouse.

Neither the Woods nor Sequoia Living endorses or promotes anyone who posts their services and are not responsible for the content of anything posted.

A FISHING STORY

By Vincent Flood

(a splinter of pride)

If you do not know me personally or have never heard stories about me, you are unaware that I hold a dubious honor. The last time I checked, back in 2014, I was still the worst fisherman in North America. I lived in Berkeley then. I asked everyone that I met the same question “Who is the worst fisherman in North America?” I called friends and family to ask the same question. For some, the answer was obvious, me. Others told stories of fishing trips gone horribly wrong or related hugely entertaining yarns and classic high sea misadventures.

While the title holds no merit I have a small, painful and annoying splinter of pride embedded in my soul. I am aware where pride goeth still; I am compelled to maintain my status. To wear this moniker I must be a miserable failure every time, in every location employing, every piece of gear and using any fishing technique. Not with a pole or a net or a trap, a spear or, for that matter, by hand. Never in streams or lakes or the ocean. Not while surf casting, fly fishing, ice fishing or deep sea fishing. I’ve trawled in a launch, stood in a row boat, floated in a canoe and stood at the pier.

Failure can be as quiet as a raccoon in the night stealing through an open window to eat all of the bait, (and the eggs and the bacon the bread, the cheese. They even ate up the tea bags). Sometimes it is as loud as a fishing boat tumbling off of its trailer at 60 miles per hour,

There are scars. Some physical; a fishhook in the cheek. Others emotional; a humiliating climb from a frigid stream, soaked to the bone, the fishing gear hopelessly beyond rescue.

Why then do I subject myself to a sport for which I have no talent at all and no hope for success? I do it for the exact same reason that causes some to drive for hours far into the wilderness. Or wade deep into frigid water during a howling storm in hope of landing a record breaking silver salmon. Then there are those who spend thousands of dollars on boats with a sonar fish finder and carry sport poles costing up to $15000 each just to try and catch a Marlin. It is certainly not, as some claim, the succulent flavor of a freshly caught rainbow trout spit roasted over an open fire. Is it the serene beauty of a cascading stream? No. It is the story.

Barracuda

(hook line and sinker)

My very first experience with fishing took place on the island of my birth. Key West Florida is a coral atoll in the Caribbean Sea. It is the southernmost point in the continental United States. Today it is a trendy vacation playground with wall-to-wall tee shirt shops and Cuba Libre bars. There is a conch train to the sunset and beach volleyball tournaments.

The restaurants crank out Key Lime Pie as a gourmet treats. In the middle of the last century however, the village was a scroungy, sun seared collection fishing shacks, hastily built off base housing and a notorious red light district. My engineer dad, Bern, was there on loan to the Navy. He was designing improved guidance systems for underwater torpedoes. This meant he was often floating around in dirigible balloons tracking the latest test firing through binoculars from above.

My mom, Joan, corralled four sibling and a sickly child, me, and tried to keep us entertained and fed. Raised by Suffragist women and graduated from Hunter College in NYC, she could not turn away from the influx of refugees fleeing Castro's Cuban Revolution. Throughout it all, she struggled to turn nasty little green limes into the local delicacy. Key Lime Pie is a horrid example of regional baking gone terribly wrong.

Key Limes may appear again in this story. You need to know that they are horrid little green fruit are the size and weight of a river rock. The peel is as tough as dried rhinoceros hide. It is best to use a small ax to cleave them. Inside you'll find a mass of pith with a few slim slivers of green flesh yielding barely a toothful of very, very sour juice.

It was hot, day and night, winter and summer. Relentless sun immeasurable humidity interrupted by almost daily showers of rain... Except for the clanking of our one GE oscillating fan, the only relief occasionally came at sunset. Then a cooling onshore breeze would rise and you could steal a glorious moment of sanity from the mind-bending sun. It usually lasted only an hour or so.

The greatest danger in Barracuda fishing is from falling coconuts. Worldwide more people are killed by falling coconuts than by any other. A slightly ridiculous and random way to die. That is not to say. "don't come without your baseball bat". Here is a list of essentials.

1. Baseball bat
2. Another baseball bat
3. Yahoo or Pepsi
4. Hook, line and sinker
5. 2 ½ year old baby brother
6. Two bikes, two wagons and a Coca Cola ice chest
7. Tobacco, fireworks, dirty pictures or new athletic feats

We lived on South Street, a crushed coral tract that just beyond our house crossed an expanse of low, impenetrable red rat snake infested bramble. Here and there grew higher bushes of nasty looking berries and plants showing scads of large durable flowers just right for giant daisy chains.

In the first wagon you load the baby brother. He has a huge ugly red surgery scar on his belly and a bewildered look on his face. Everything else goes in sister's wagon. That's Joanie's.

Just before the bramble field stands an original old two story house. It is home to a wild-eyed, pistol waving English pirate. He had voices in his head and the only team of mules on the island, six monsters.

Brothers Bernie and Jerry stopped to talk to Captain Curious. He could not be avoided. Between admonishments for shooting slingshot at the mules and roars of laughter at jokes only heard in his own head, we got the latest overnight story. Shortly after sunset last night, more Cuban refugees had come ashore and abandoned their open boat in the surf. During the night it had drifted and came to rest, full of water at our beach. With his team he intended to salvage the boat and likely sell it to the Navy for torpedo practice.

We headed for the beach. He went back to hitching his mules.

Tommy and Jerry on the Huffy and the Schwinn bikes raced each other toward the line of palms that define the beach. Joanie tugged the baby wagon while Bernie labored to pull everything else. Just shy of beach fall brother and sister turned at the sound.

The twenty-four hooves of the mule team at full gallop were pounding and kicking up a cloud of coral dust. Behind them an empty skid pitched and yawed as it swung wildly from side to side. The metal clad runners were throwing out sparks and churning more dust higher into the air. The Englishman stood, one foot on the buckboard, heavy leather reins in his fists. His head was thrown back, mouth wide open, eyes red and wide. He was laughing. Or maybe singing. Possibly crying.

The children turned and ran. The baby bounced in the wagon, giggling as hysterically as the mule driver. Tommy and Jerry yelled “RUN!”. The Juggernaut reached a crescendo just as the two children veered behind a tumbled down wall of the abandoned dry-dock.

The ice chest tumbled out of the cart and came to rest upright in the middle of the road where it widens to the beach. Pure luck prevented it from being trampled to ruin as the Englishman swung the team and skid around a tight turn and headed down the beach. He slowed down not at all.

Actual fishing is not even remotely this exciting.

Four kids gathered around the ice chest. Is that a dent on the corner? Is it big enough for Dad to notice? What about the stuff inside? They dared Tommy to open one of the Pepsi bottles. He should not have. The surprising force of the cola jet from the neck of the bottle sent up a brown sticky geyser of soda that spared no one. The Yahoo on the other hand was perfect; the tumbling chest had shaken the contents to frothy foam. Never before or since has it been so achieved.

In the next moment an unmistakable sound. Thud! A falling coconut. They turn to see a bowling ball sized coconut rolling and bouncing toward the waterline. The Maxwell House coffee can of bait followed, spilling its content as it rolled. From nowhere a swoop of seagulls arrived to gobble it up. There, turned up on its side, the baby wagon.

Jerry, always first to react, slammed down his bike and charged up the beach. The others followed. The sand is fluffier at the top of the beach much harder to run in. It slowed them all down. More time to panic. They needn’t have. The baby, naked now save one shoe, was dragging a palm frond and waddle jogging toward the barracuda infested and flesh tearing coral tidal wash. They could relax. Things were once again back to normal.

To be continued...

TOP OF THE WORLD

by Charles Furey

Our drum major, she of the flashing eyes and tasseled white boots has given us her notice. “I’m forsaking this mundane existence here at The Woods. I’m off to the Big Apple, to a penthouse apartment atop one of those new skyscrapers in Manhattan where you can see for miles in any direction. To a half billion-dollar yacht berthed where the old Queen Mary used to dock. I’ll sail in her to the Seven Seas. Bimini. Monte Carlo. Polynesia. Shanghai.”

“How will you pay for all this?” we ask. “I’m going to be an investment banker,” she says. “International cartels. Russian oligarchs. Saudi Arabian princes. Monarchs of the military industrial complex. Why should I waste any more of my life in this backwater?” she says. “I was meant for better things. Money marketing. Commodities trading. Early mornings on Wall Street. Seize the bulls by the horns, the bears by the scruff of their necks. Make my mark, before it’s too late. Watch my dust,” she says. She pauses. “But I’m starting out from scratch and I’ve got a long way to go.”

We get the picture. When she passes her old drum major’s hat around, we fill it with dollar bills and pocket change. The sixty-three dollars and fourteen cents won’t even get her as far as Denver on Amtrak these days. She looks at the accumulated wealth, looks around at us, then laughs. Then holds the hatful of money and says, “What do you say to going up to Mountain Mike’s for pizza?”

We’re happy to have her back with us after her dreams of palaces and kings and queens and knights in shining armor. We all get these flights of fancy from time to time, wandering away from the real world into the world of might have been

Announcement from Management

A meeting was held on Thursday, March 14, during which Park Manager Sarah Peters provided information on matters related to budgeting processes and how rent increases are determined. As a follow up to this meeting, a set of Frequently Asked Questions has been assembled in response to several questions that have arisen, and Sequoia Living President and CEO David Berg will attend a Town Hall on April 19, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. to answer additional resident questions. By now, you may have already received the FAQ document in the mail. The Town Hall notice should arrive in your mailboxes shortly.

MANY THANKS TO ALL OUR July 4, 2018 RAFFLE DONORS

Albion River Inn
3790 Shoreline Hwy.
Albion, CA 95410
937-1919

Angeline Dahl
208 S. Main Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
813-0453

Anna Rathbun
Corners of the Mouth
45015 Ukiah St
Mendocino, CA 95460
397-0003

Paul Caldwell
PO Box 258
Little River, CA 95456
357-6243

Canclini
636 So. Franklin St.
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-5611

Carol Ann Walton
345 Cypress St.
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-5532

Chernoff Jewelers
401 N Main St
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-2224

Cirino's Sandwich Shop
131 E Laurel St.
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-5493

Corners of the Mouth
45015 Ukiah St.
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-5345

E & B Auto Repair
160 E Fir
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-0522

Fancy That
10483 Lansing St.
Mendocino, CA 95460
9377-0448

Frankies' Pizza & Ice Cream
P.O. Box 231
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-2436

Gallery Books
Main & Kasten
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-2665

Glo Skincare
350 S Franklin St
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
962-3121

Harvest Market
Hwy 1 at 20
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-7000

Laurel Deli
401 N. Main Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-7812

LEAG
Richard Hubacek
123 Forest Drive
Little River, CA

Little River Inn
7901No. Hwy 1
Little River, CA 95456
937-5942

MacCallum House
45020 Albion St.
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-0289

Mendocino Hotel
PO Box 587
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-0511

North Star Nursery
17901 N. Highway One
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
961-1074

Mendocino Sports Club
401 Cypress Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-6290

Out of This World
45100 Main St.
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-3335

Pippi's Longstocking
123 E Laurel St.
Fort Bragg, CA 95460
964-8071

Queenie's Roadhouse
6061 South Highway 1
Elk, CA 95432
877-3285

Rossi's
Owner/Manager
835 Stewart St
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-4086

Rubaiyat Bead Shop
45070 Main St
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-2323

Safari
45070 Main St
Mendocino, CA 95460
357-5013

Sallie Mac
10540 Lansing St
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-5357

Skunk Train
100 W Laurel St
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-6371

Splendiferous
115 E Laurel St
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-8880

Tara Dawn, Inc.
Tom Estes
22560 N Hwy 1
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-4665

The Chair
Attn: Lynn
425 N McPherson
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
357-7795

The Front Porch
700 N Main St
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
962-0584

The Great Put On
10450 Lansing St,
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-5161

Thanksgiving Coffee
P.O. Box 1918
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-0118

Whistlestop
45000 Main St
Mendocino, CA 95460
937-3750

Zappa's Coffee
301 N Main St
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
964-0282