

1994-Takilma Common Ground-2024

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Our Sage of the Siskiyous, Lou Gold, Has Walked On!

By ANNETTE McGEE RASCH

From his place of sanctuary in Hilo, Hawaii, our "Sage of the Siskiyous," Lou Gold, 86, left this world behind last November 15. Notably, Lou maintained a clean strong mind and his typical good humor right up to the end. Lou leaves behind a rich legacy of activism, spirituality, education and creativity. A storyteller at his core, he masterfully combined these values in ways that captured the imaginations of thousands of people, becoming a living legend. "Lou Gold was a spark that became a flame that ignited a surge of grassroots advocacy nationwide, while based in Takilma, Oregon," Julie Norman said. "He tapped into the wave of interest and energy within the ancient forest movement that was growing at that time,"

added another close friend, Marybeth Howell.

The Eugene Register Guard called Lou "a Johnny Appleseed of environmentalism, a hermit who comes down from his mountain every year to sow seeds of ecological idealism across the country," while the New York Times described Lou as a "practiced prophet."

To write this tribute I connected with some of the folks who worked with Lou at the Siskiyou Regional Educational Project, and a few others. There're many more people who possess noteworthy memories of Lou, thus I'll apologize ahead of time for leaving anyone out. There'll be another opportunity to send in recollections about Lou in the Spring issue of Common Ground.



And for those who might not read all this, check out "Lessons From the Ancient Forest" on YouTube. Lou's 54 minute presentation is wildly entertaining and his message remains timely. Plus, it's great to "see" Lou again...

Lou's story started on March 5, 1938 when he was born in Chicago, Illinois. As an only child, he was raised—and adored—by both his mother, and her father, and they clearly laid a solid foundation that helped Lou pave his unique and impactful trail in this world. Lou studied political science at Columbia University from 1961 to 1964, and then taught city politics at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. However by the time he hit his mid-forties Lou said, "I got tired of all that. I was done with teaching and I wanted to run away." Which he did. And like so many of us, he somewhat randomly landed in the Illinois Valley, stumbling upon Takilma.

Lou's pendulum had swung wide: from his role as a popular big city college professor, he morphed into a front

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"Unhoused in C.J. One" - 11" x 14" Oil on canvas - ALAN LAURIE



Events and Stuff

Southern Oregon Guild events at the Guild Gallery, 24353 Redwood Highway in Kerby:

December 21, 11 am-5 pm: Holiday Open House—Final Shopping Day at the Guild and Bench Raffle Drawing! Winner will be drawn at noon.

The Gallery will be closed Dec. 22 – Jan. 7. with winter hours Wed. – Sat. 12-4 pm.

January 26, 2-4 pm: "Thresholds", a winter 2025 Guild Member Exhibit Opening at The Guild. FREE admission includes appetizers, music, and refreshments.

Dome School is planning these fundraising events:

Tuesday, December 31: New Year's Eve party.

Saturday, January 25: Martin Luther King Celebration.

Saturday, March 1: Mardi Gras

Saturday, March 8: Women's Café, a Fine and Performing Arts Show on International Women's Day. Brunch and Art Show: Noon to 2 pm, Performances: 2-4:30 pm.

To perform or volunteer, contact Deb Murphy, 541-592-9593, or deborahcolettemurphy@gmail.com Small planning committee to meet twice prior to event. Dates TBD

With a smaller parent base, we will need lots of community support to make these events happen! If you can, please plug in to help keep the traditions going. Our beautiful Takilma Community Building needs you! Please let us know if you can help with planning, decorating, moving tables, working in the kitchen or donating

food to sell. Contact The Dome School, 9367 Takilma Road • 541-592-3911, thedomeschool@gmail.com

RVHS Spay and Neuter Clinic is now OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Currently our clinic is limited to feline spay and neuter appointments on Tuesdays and Wednesdays but we do plan on extending our services to K9 clients and offering public surgeries three days a week soon! Along with low cost spay and neuter services we can also provide additional services such as standard tests, vaccinations and microchipping. To make an appointment please email rvhscclinic@roguevalleyhumanesociety.org

Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance's Soup for the Souls at the Senior Center is coming up April 5!

We are beginning to gather donations and volunteers, so if you want to be part of the event, give us a call! You can also help survivors of domestic violence by making a donation, volunteering or joining our Board. Find us at 103 South Kerby Ave. (next to DMV), PO Box 2490 Cave Junction, Oregon 97523 and alliance@ivsha.org. Call 541-592-2515 for advocacy services, 541-592-5332 for general information.

Food Banks:

- Cave Junction Adventists Community Services, 265 Old Stage Road, Tues. 10 am-1 pm.
- Bridgeview Community Food Pantry. Thursdays 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm at Bridgeview Church.

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Takilma Common Ground

Issue #140 • Winter Solstice 2024

Created in 1994 to increase community communication and stimulate discussion, we publish seasonally more or less in conjunction with the solstices and equinoxes. We rely on you to tell our stories.

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Opinions expressed in TCG are not necessarily those of the editorial staff or publisher. We honor individual writers' styles and voices, but also have a responsibility to our readership that sometimes requires editing for length and/or clarity. While we don't question the truth of your writing, we do need to be sensitive to the issues of libel and slander.

Our dedicated staff needs you. Come and be a part of the process! Thanks to everyone who helped with the last issue, including but not necessarily limited to Rachel Goodman, Bill Gray, Donna Belle, Alberta Heagney, Patricia Mersman, Linda Corey, and Marty Bokow. Also thanks to all the writers, artists and photographers who contributed to this issue.

Rachel Goodman, Editor
Alan Laurie Assistant Editor.

Art Direction and pre-press production by Alan Laurie.

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Next issue's deadline is **March 1, 2025**. We welcome your submissions for the Spring Equinox. Email us at tcommonground@gmail.com.

We need your support! Please subscribe to TAKILMA COMMON GROUND • 9335 Takilma Rd. Cave Junction, OR 97523. (Make checks payable to "Takilma Community Association" or online at Takilma.org/CommonGround) 4 issues \$13 • 8 issues \$20.

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Jerry Allen: Finding Common Ground

By RACHEL GOODMAN

Rachel: *You've been stimulating discussion through conversation and writing. How's that going?*

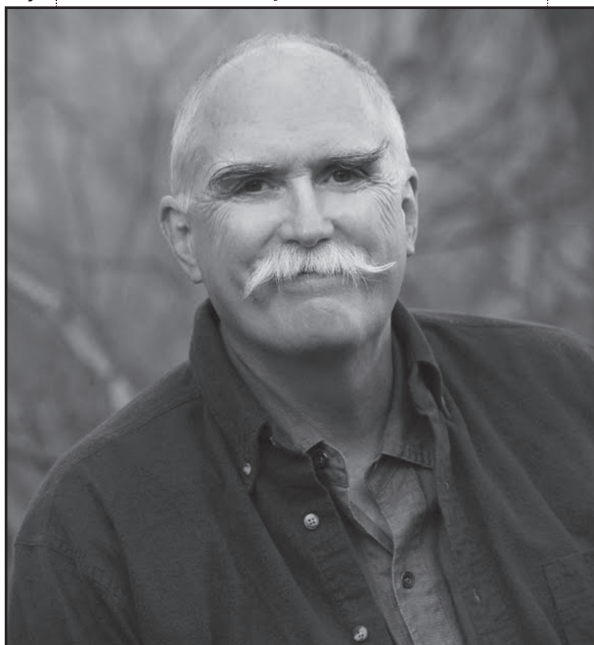
Jerry: I think one of the things I struggle with as a writer in our community is how to continue to evolve the way I talk with people. It's not useful to speak self-righteously or to put people down. That doesn't do the work of bridging the partisan divide and figuring out how we can work together.

Rachel: *So how do you talk to people you don't agree with?*

Jerry: When I talk with people who identify as conservatives and are angry at the government, mostly I listen in order to understand. I identify with people who are fed up with the lack of affordable housing, the lack of jobs. I bring up topics important to them, like affordable housing, crime, living wage jobs and situations where the government takes more than its share. Then I say, let's work together to solve problems. I like to use a metaphor from the fire district where I volunteer. When we get a 911 call about a bad wreck or a fire, do we turn to each other and say, "Is this a Democrat or a Republican?" No, that's irrelevant. What we want to do is to work together to get there as fast as we can to provide relief and save lives. I think that's a good metaphor for how we can work in community. I don't care how many Democrats or Republicans or whatever

persuasion are in office. We still all face the local issues.

Rachel: *Our county commissioners turned down state money to help with homelessness in Josephine County. So it does become a partisan issue.*



Jerry: It presents a challenge. I could spend time butting heads with the people who disagree with me but I keep coming back to trying to articulate what makes sense locally. Let's address homelessness. It's a crisis. What do we do? We have to build houses. Some people say, "Yeah, but you're selling to people who can make payments. That won't solve homelessness." That's true. Our business, Resilient Real Estate Investments LLC, where I'm a co-owner, is about to start a 24-unit affordable

ownership housing project in Talent. We're building it for people who qualify for a mortgage, so a lot of homeless people won't benefit. EXCEPT, when we find owners, we reduce the pressure on the market for rentals. I call that lowering the pressure on the housing market. That is not a Democrat or Republican issue. It is an issue of helping homeless people find shelter, and helping families find ownership housing.

The statistics are clear. Most homeless are not addicts. They are people who work and can't find housing they can afford. Is it true that there are a lot of mentally ill? Yes, and there are a lot of veterans who struggle with trauma. I'm a trauma therapist and I try to understand these people. They need health services. There are a lot of people who turned to drugs to medicate their pain. They need help to get clean. I don't want to minimize that but it's not the majority. The majority are people who can't find work that can support them to get a place to live. So I would submit that that is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It is a community issue.

And I say to my friends who are despondent about the election and feel they have lost everything, No, no, not at all! We have community issues that need to be solved. We must solve them no matter who's in office. We must do this.

Rachel: *And when you find some-*



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one who wants to argue with you, it sounds like you're good at defusing.

Jerry: I try to. I wouldn't say I'm an expert at it. We all can get caught in our material. Sometimes I have to step back and say, let's figure out how to talk about this. I don't want to spend time arguing but I have to state what's true. I try to speak clearly without demonizing anybody on either side of the discussion. And I don't need any merit badges for outtalking anybody. It's more important to keep bringing it up to the community here that we need to build these houses, build jobs and solve problems.

I want to support everyone to feel safe without being persecuted by the government or hurt by others. Everyone needs to feel safe. That's really, really important from a settled nervous system standpoint. Speaking as a trauma therapist, when we have an unsettled nervous system we lose 25 points of our IQ at that time. I don't know about you but I can't afford to lose any of my IQ. I need those 25 points every single day. I can't afford to be unsettled. When people feel safe then they are more settled. Then they make better decisions. If we want people to do their best and contribute to our community then they have to have a settled nervous system. They need to feel safe.

People say they don't want to have crime. Well, crime has gone down a lot. But if you look at crime, a huge piece is domestic violence. This is something I know a bit about because I spent 24 years as a supervising social worker in children's protective services. I've watched women having to face tough choices; being homeless with their kids rather than staying with a man who was mistreating them. Domestic violence doesn't have to be the way it is. It needs more effort, more work in community. Get social workers, traveling out there with the cops, to be there with families, to deal with things more skillfully. Help the families be better parents. So that's what I focus on. I don't focus on saying, Oh these people are bad by nature. No they aren't. Most people love their children. Most people want their children to be OK. Sometimes people get trapped in addiction or they have bad anger problems they

haven't gotten help with. So I focus on the things that we can fix. I'm not going to convince everybody.

Rachel: *Do you think people like to be combative and take sides? Is that a cultural thing? "This state is blue. This state is red. My team won."*

Jerry: Well, yes and no. My view is, that's a short-term victory. In the play *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye says that an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth leaves the world blind and toothless. If you exclude the absolutely fanatical on both sides then you have the large middle of the country. Those folks have reasoning capacity and can say, let's get something done. Let's not just spend the next four years fighting. How about a solution? Here is where we live. Here we can choose to learn how to work together on issues.

Let's talk about the climate. That's a tough one. When I see fires, hurricanes, tornados and floods getting worse all the time I know we have to do something. Fire insurance is becoming unaffordable. This affects a lot of people. You can't get a mortgage unless you can get fire insurance. I heard recently of a quote for 12,000 dollars a year for property insurance in Grants Pass. People can't afford that! So that's a ramification of the climate issue. Climate scientists say to stop cutting down the forests because they sequester carbon. Stop using coal and other fossil fuels; start using heat pumps. put less carbon into the atmosphere. Stop buying foreign oil which is hurting our economy. Switch to solar; save water; reduce outgassing of CO2 on the farmland. Those are some examples of things we can do that can help us.

I'm not just saying things. I put my money where my mouth is. We put solar on our house. It was costly but our electricity bill now is 14 dollars a month and we're making a lot of electricity for us and our neighbors. We got a heat pump. I got a 220 plug hooked on the electrical system and bought a used hybrid car. I plug it in every night and this morning when I went out to see you, my car had 49 miles worth of electrical charge on it. I had enough charge to get here and get home. The last time I filled up my gasoline tank I got 268 miles to the gallon. This helps

me financially but I'm also saying we need to do these things and not just talk about them. We can do these things. Solar and wind work. Oregon is a good place for them. We need to be doing it. If we do these things we have a chance to turn the climate crisis. We haven't lost yet. We can do it.

I do puppet volunteer work for children, to invite them in. I'll be doing that at the Illinois Valley library soon. I remodeled a lot of folk tales to talk about safety and boundary issues. Here's an example of one; the story of Henny Penny. When Henny Penny's other animals say, "Where are you going?" she says, "I'm going to see the queen. It's getting way too hot here. It's harder and harder for us animals to find water and food. Do you want to come along?" All the animals go to talk to the queen and tell her what their concerns are. And she says, "We all need to work together to solve this. I'm glad you came." The children are going to be running things in 20 years. You have to educate them, give a clear message why the climate issue is important. I've met very few children who aren't already clued into that. In fact they say, "What's the matter with the adults?" Children are concerned about it.

Rachel: *And they're at that stage of optimism, "I can do it," and all they have to do is not lose that. They're not yet cynical.*

Jerry: You have to have a sense of hope. When we do things to help care for the environment we need to show them to children. Then they can feel hope. We need to promise our children that we will not leave this earth desolate. Every day we need to work towards leaving our children hopeful. It's important for the children to feel like they're making a difference. That's why a group of us started Water League (waterleague.org). We're also going to be starting a program for children called Waterprotectors. We have to have children involved so that they feel we're really serious about this.

People ask me about getting certain books out of the hands of children. Here's the truth of it. Most children don't read books so much. They are on social media. Do you have any

idea how to control what kids see? So the question is, what do you really want to do with children? Is it just about wanting them to not see or hear things? No, there's a better answer. Teach them to think critically so they can be educated enough to know the difference between the truth and a lie. If we do that children are not going to be very susceptible to lies. When they hear, "Let's deport 11 million people," I want children who are smart enough and educated enough to say, "Is that a good idea? Who will pick the crops?"

Rachel: *What do you think about local tax levies?*

Jerry: People say, "I don't like to pay high taxes." I understand. I don't like high taxes either. But I have a partial solution for that. Suppose we don't raise taxes. Suppose we raise revenues by raising the number of jobs. If you put a large number of people to work they pay more taxes and that raises revenues without increasing taxes. If they can buy houses they pay property taxes. How about we change things by putting people to work and selling them houses? We'll have fewer tax levies because we'll be bringing in more revenue. I don't want to fight over the scraps. Let's figure out how to enlarge the pie.

People say it costs a lot of money to build all those houses. I spent nine years as an investment trustee. The investment community is very interested in infrastructure bonds. They're a hedge against the volatility of the stock market. They are one way to diversify. We can do that to jumpstart those housing investments. Bonds make a decent return. They're unlikely to lose money. And the other thing is,

building housing is lucrative. With our company, when we sell houses we'll just turn back that profit into building more. Eventually we won't need outside investment. Some people say we can never get the housing going because we need the federal government—no, no, no! Federal government is not going to do it. We are. We are going to do it here, locally. In Southern Oregon. We do not need to be an impoverished area any more. That's an old narrative and it's never been a good one.

Let's do it the right way; build from our own base here, build housing with solar and wind energy. People say, But sometimes the sun doesn't shine or the wind doesn't blow. Yes, you need baseline energy. Do you know about geothermal? We thought geothermal was only good in places with heat areas close to the surface. But now it turns out the people who know how to drill for oil or gas—they know how to drill deep. I don't want fracking—that's harmful for the environment. But it's not harmful when they drill down and put in a loop of fluid—it's sort of like water that goes down where it's super hot. At 5000 feet you'd get a lot of hot water and you run it through and when it comes back it spins turbines.

It's baseline energy that works whether or not the sun is shining or the wind is blowing. We don't need coal anymore for that. And here's another problem—batteries. You have to use a lot of pollutants to make those big storage batteries. Right here in Oregon, ESS Tech, Inc. is building iron flow batteries—giant batteries the size of shipping containers—made of water, iron and salt. No lithium, no cobalt, no nickel. You don't have to mine the Smith River for nickel. We will be using those batteries in our townhouses

in Talent.

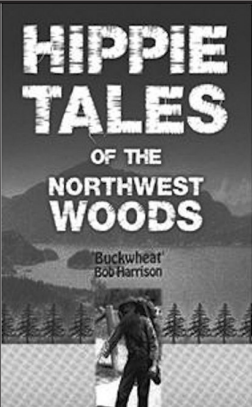
I choose to believe in science. If climate scientists they say we've got to stop using fossil fuels, well, there's a way to stop. And the other thing it does is put jobs in the community. Regionally, solar or wind installations can employ thousands of people in living wage jobs. When I do focus groups I talk about precast concrete homes. They have an ambient temperature of about 64 degrees so they don't take a lot of energy to heat up. They will not burn down.

People say, but I already have a house and it's made out of wood. What can you do for me? We can clad the outside with 3x5 foot concrete panels and then just stucco the whole thing. You still have to do your defensible space, but it makes a home far, far more fire-resistant. It might cost \$25,000 to clad a house. But I think we're going to end up with a lot of people having to do that, because they won't be able to get fire insurance otherwise.

There's a lot that needs to get done and most of it involves jobs. Jobs are one of the most important things for us to fix. We need to employ thousands more people in the Illinois Valley and all over Southern Oregon. People don't have to be poor forever.

Rachel: *Some people have an ingrained attitude—nothing will ever happen here.*

Jerry: Fatalism. You know, I frankly don't have time to cry in my beer. I want to be careful though. I don't want to demonize anybody or put them down. Discouragement is a natural thing. But I want to keep pointing to solutions that can lead to common ground where we can work together. We don't have



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to agree about everything to agree on what's essential.

Rachel: *How do you take care of yourself amid all this?*

Jerry: I keep a little list of poems to lift me up. I particularly like "All the More" and "We Are a River" by the religious scholar Kaylene Asbo. Rebecca Solnit's piece on persevering resistance is also helpful.

I'm a medicine man from my tradition. I trained as that. I have five tribes in my ancestry and they basically say the same things as all the shamans do, show up, pay attention, speak the truth without blame or judgement and release attachment to the outcome. Those are hard to do; the last one really is. It's a rough life that we have ahead of us. We escaped the worst fires this year, We won't always. We have to rely on each other. Families, our friends, staying close to those we love, finding ways to be of service, looking for ways to feel grateful, and process our grief.

We're going to have a lot of trouble and it's going to be so incredibly important for us to be good at grief work. I spend a lot of time on that. Thinking about grief. How do we deal with these big feelings that come up. There's anger; denial, bargaining, all the stages of grief.

We need the combination of truth telling and meeting people where they are. That matters.

The urgency of our times now calls upon us to do absolutely everything we can to achieve this. As much as we can, taking care of ourselves so I can arrive showing up, paying attention, speaking the truth. And hopefully releasing attachment to the outcome. ■

About the author—JERRY ALLEN is a semi-retired trauma therapist, social work supervisor, hospital executive and pension fund trustee. He now tends a farm in Selma, does music and storytelling, environmental and community and affordable housing work, trauma health education, leads support groups and writes songs.

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[LOU GOLD Continued from Page 1]

line activist, linking arms with hippies and environmentalists united in taking a stand for our fast-disappearing old-growth forests.

"By 1983 Lou was living in a yurt in Cedar Gulch," said Romain Cooper, who remembered how Lou was "swept up" in the strong local tide of forest activism happening all around him.

Steve Marsden first met Lou "when we were driving to Eugene for an Earth First! rally in a decrepit old Winnebago, nicknamed the Lumbago. Back then, I never could have imagined the role he would portray in the forest conservation movement or the huge impact he would have on so many people. There really wasn't anyone like him. He was one of a kind."

"Lou first began devoting his life to defending our public forests by co-founding *Siskiyou Country Journal* which promoted decentralized community-building and environmental protection in the southwest Oregon bioregion," Julie Norman said. Lou, along with Pedro Tama, were the co-founders of the Siskiyou Regional Educational Project, which included the *Siskiyou Journal*, a conference and other initiatives. "Lou enlisted local timber sale trackers to write alerts about looming proposals by the Forest Service and BLM, which mobilized the growing opposition to logging and road-building in Siskiyou old-growth forests."

Several civil disobedience actions went down on Bald Mountain that spring to protest a road the U.S. Forest Service was building illegally into a roadless wild area. (Once a road goes in, an area is no longer eligible for protective wilderness status.) Dozens of people were arrested—along with Lou. The media took notice. This lured in an environment lawyer who brought the case before a federal court, where the judge ruled that the Forest Service had indeed ignored the laws.

In Lou's own words, "The larger significance was that it was here in the Siskiyou National Forest of Southern Oregon that local people took a stand for the trees and brought forth an incredibly vital grassroots movement to save the remnants of the Ancient Forests of the Pacific Northwest." This

was the birthplace of direct forest action.

By the mid-80's Lou had begun his annual summer sojourns, setting his camp up on Bald Mountain Ridge, overlooking the Kalmiopsis and Wild Rogue Wildernesses. During his first year, Lou said, "I told the trees I would stay as long as the forest was threatened." Indeed, he'd maintained his mountain campsites for months at a time.

"The top of Bald Mountain is a bald spot like Friar Tuck's head," Lou would tell audiences. "It's a round flat barren area about 30 feet in diameter. From there I can see the great expanse of the untouched north Kalmiopsis. From Chinaman's Hat past Silver Peak to Indigo drainage—it is a holy place; good for seeing the four directions, for touching the four winds, for sleeping under the stars, and for talking to God."

Julie explained that "Each morning Lou would go to his prayer circle seeking guidance in opposing new logging roads and drawing the nation's attention to the massive over-cutting all across westside forests between Mendocino County and the Canadian border."

This meditation led Lou—albeit reluctantly—back to the cities each winter. "For the next six years, my home office in Portland served as his home base away from the mountain," said Marybeth, whose graphic design capabilities helped with tour publicity. "I also helped organize his schedule so he could set out on speaking tours that brought him to college campuses and environmental conferences across the country. He went to D.C. as well; people there had to be educated."

With his walking stick in hand, Lou's compelling "Slides and Stories of the Ancient Forest" presentation featured images of forest activists fighting off chainsaws and bulldozers on the front lines. It was dramatic stuff and Lou was that rare speaker who was both eloquent and relatable. He also displayed ethereal forest scenes that helped illustrate the intricate interdependent relationships between life forms—from the owls and the tree voles to the fungus and the trees themselves—and this organically led him to deliver concise criticism of public lands logging pol-

icy. Lou used ample good humor to weave it all together; and people loved his stories about encounters with bears and owls and mountaintop thunderstorms and his mad dash down to the river in 1987 to escape the Silver Fire!

"Lou was the messenger our forests needed so badly," Steve said. "I cannot think of anyone who had a bigger impact on so many in spreading the science and issues surrounding the destruction of our ancient forests."

"Dozens of Lou's visitors, including news reporters, filmmakers, elected officials and conservation group representatives, who'd hiked or rode horseback up to his camp, received one of his hand-carved walking sticks made from an old-growth Doug fir branch," Julie added.

"While the media liked to describe Lou as a wilderness hermit, he really loved to talk and visit with people," Marybeth said.

"If Lou especially wanted someone to visit him on Bald Mountain he'd give them my card," said Dave Willis, Chairman of the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council. "They'd call and I'd use my horses to haul these guests and their stuff up to see the 'hermit with the most frequent flyer miles.' I was Lou's 'Bald Mountain Express.'"

Dave said Lou's "straightforward slide show combined with his personal vigil had a powerful impact on many people who became – and still are – wildlands forest advocates because of Lou alerting them to what we continue to lose."

"One of the things I most appreciate about Lou was his ability to give us a language to talk about our feelings and connections to ancient forests that recognized both science and spirit," Kelpie Wilson said. "Ever since knowing Lou, that holistic approach has been part of my vocabulary."

Back when Lou's tours started bringing in money, Marybeth explained how he directed it to "be spent to help the local activists already doing the vital work." An office for the Siskiyou Project was rented, a telephone secured and money became available to pay for gas, printing and other expenses for Romain, Barbara Ullian, Shell Anderson and Cathy Hocker. Later, grant money started bringing in paychecks and Kelpie, Steve, Barry Snitkin and

others were hired.

Romain Cooper said another enormous benefit of the tours was how Lou collected the names and contact information from attendees all across America. "We did fundraising from those names—and Lou also secured some big donors." He also said the lists were used to get many hundreds of letters written in response to "Action Alerts" the Siskiyou Project generated about egregious logging sales and mining threats in the region.

Marybeth added how by the late 1980's that "the national environmental groups were getting excited and jumping in, because here's Lou, who's so well spoken, doing such a great job of educating people and getting a lot of attention. So there was a wave of tree sits, actions and activism."

"Lou's personal impact as a leader, fundraiser, organizer and inspirational storyteller grew the movement to a scale that I never dreamed possible," Julie said.

Longtime Dome school teacher Katherine Roncalio remembered how in the mid-nineties, "People were doing all kinds of different actions to protest the Sugarloaf logging sale, up behind the Caves, between us and Williams." A few hundred people (including Lou) were arrested. "It was a hike to get up there, but we did it, a group of kids, with me and Deb Murphy and Alison Gutshal. Robin Wren made masks for the kids to hide their identity. Lou talked to the kids through a story and the kids took him really seriously. It was a special time when Lou was active in our community."

"Lou was an interesting and jovial character," said Solomon Roncalio-Meyer. "He always supported the youth and had a fun way of talking to us. He made what was happening at Sugarloaf relevant to us. I have fond memories of that. He was a dear person and as my dad was passing we had contact with Lou. It made me wish I'd been able to spend more time with him. I'd always tried to call him 'uncle' but he'd say, 'No, call me brother.'"

"Lou Gold was a friend and mentor to me and an inspirational teacher to many," Kelpie Wilson said. "I was honored to work with Lou for many years. We helped direct the tremendous energy he raised into concrete action to

protect ancient forests. This work is without a doubt one of the most successful and fulfilling projects I have ever been a part of, thanks to Lou and his magic stories! Dear Lou, may you rest in peace in the arms of the Queen of the Forest."

A few years before he left for Brazil, Lou took a charming detour down another trail altogether and briefly changed his name to Luigi. He donned a beret and dove headlong into his art. Using a travel iron, he melted crayons and created remarkable pictures—he really had a lovely sense of color and design.

Soon after that chapter in his life Lou really embraced Santo Daime, a "forest religion" founded in Brazil. Santo Daime combines elements of various spiritual and religious traditions, preaching love for nature and our Mother Earth. The religion places high emphasis on community, which drew Lou to Brazil over 20 years ago. This was a rich and lovely time in his life, enhanced by new family and friends. He met a physician in Brazil, a fellow Santo Daime practitioner, whose home is in Hawaii. Thus when Lou's heart problems worsened around 2020, this physician kindly made a place for Lou in his home, where Lou remained until his death.

Many of us here in southern Oregon feel a great sense of gratitude toward all the wonderful people who surrounded Lou with love, compassion and care during his last years in Hawaii. The lovely pictures on Facebook of Lou with his Hawaiian family spoke volumes. We were also happy to learn that Lou had renewed his close friendship with his old friend Pedro Tama in Hawaii.

"When I think of Lou, I see him in an array of action poses," said Julie Norman. "On stage with his storytelling stick, arm-in-arm with Rep. Jim Jontz at the Sugarloaf Sale sit-in (before being arrested), entertaining guests around the campfire at Bald Mountain, packing summer supplies on Dave Willis' horse team, and joking around in the Siskiyou Project office. Lou knew how to live with purpose and have fun doing it. I am grateful to have worked by his side."

On a personal note, sometimes Lou noticed when I'd succumb to pain over

[Continued on Page 9]

Michael Spring: Poet, Martial Artist, Friend to All

By RYAN FORSYTHE

*the music leads me into the forest
I will not stop walking*

*the bodies of my future selves
sway with the shadows of cedars and
firs*

[Michael Spring, excerpt from "My Future Self Won't Give Up" (drift line)]

Many in the community know that we lost one of the great ones. Michael Spring, our beloved Poet Laureate of the Illinois Valley, passed away October 30 after complications from gallbladder cancer. Michael had so many talents: martial arts, drumming, natural building, mushroom harvesting. And, of course, his award-winning poetry. Michael was one of my best friends, and I was lucky to work with him for the past 11 years, publishing 43 books together for Left Fork and Flowstone Press. (See more regarding our writing/editing life at LeftForkBooks.com/Michael).

Michael was a lover of jazz music, art, soccer, djembe drumming and a tireless advocate for the power of poetry, teaching classes and creating reading series everywhere he moved, from Corvallis to CJ's Blue Moon Cafe, to Forecastle Books in Brookings. He was a poetry editor with *The Pedestal Magazine* for 15+ years, and founding editor of Flowstone Press.

His own poetry appeared in hundreds of publications. His awards include the James Tate Prize for *Kahlo's Window*, the Turtle Island Poetry Award for *Blue Wolf*, an Eric Hoffer



Book Award for *Root of Lightning*, and the Robert Graves Award for selections from *Mudsong*, as well as two Pushcart Prize nominations.

Michael was awarded a Luso-American Fellowship from Disquiet International. With the fellowship, Michael was able to explore his Azorean heritage in Portugal, visiting Faial and Pico islands where his grandparents and great-grandparents were born, and meeting some of his favorite poets. One of his most recent books, *dento do som/inside the sound*, was published in the Azores, including a Portuguese translation by Maria João Marques.

Locally he was known as Sifu for Tai Yuan Tao Kung Fu at Rising Dragon Martial Arts, which began at Treesong, the permaculture/natural building homestead Michael built and shared

with his longtime partner Hazel Danene.

He was humble but always willing to fight for what was right. Before moving to the IV, he worked as a residential counselor for abused children and a community transition specialist for adults with mental and physical disabilities. "No one was better than Michael at striking a balance between making a stand and remaining flexible," wrote John Amen, *Pedestal* editor.

Recently Michael found love with Jazmine. Michael and his Jazzy were married last October by Joe Armstrong at the Shire. They first met way back when, when her son was one of his martial arts students. In November 2020, they began a romance that included the adventure of a 33 foot Nauticat bluewater motorsailer and a new life in Brookings.

Michael is survived by his wife Jazmine; children Taisen Spring, Sierra Muñoz, and Max Spring; mom Rose; dad Dean; sisters Cindy Zachman and Cheri Schiro and their partners, as well as grandchildren Gabriel, Leonardo, and Josanna, stepchildren Sarah, Jennifer, Stephanie, Jesse, David, Zephany, Tazmarus, Scarlet, and Kazzie, plus numerous in-laws, and all of his many friends.

His family held a memorial in Vancouver, WA, in early December. I heard so many stories of his wide impact and how he befriended just about everyone. In high school, he was a champion wrestler and even briefly flirted with a modeling career. With sisters Cindy and Cheri, they were the "three musketeers." He was closest to his mother,



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who sat by his side in childhood as he recovered from open heart surgery, and who was there for him at the end as he neared his last breaths.

*when I was five
I climbed the winding step
of blue light*

*Into that room behind the clock
the surgeons watched*

*and there was my body—
a child supine
on the operating table*

*my heart sat in its cavern
exposed to light*

[Excerpt from "1968" (Blue Wolf)]

The community is invited to a Celebration of Life, tentatively planned for April 12 at the Takilma Community Building. Please join us for story-telling, poetry-sharing, and drum-drumming. When he became ill, Michael had been working on a poetry collection, which will be published as the final book from his Flowstone Press. It will be available at the celebration.

Much love and light to you as you cross over, Michael. ■

[LOU GOLD Continued from Page 7]

what humanity is wreaking upon our dear Mother Earth and more than once he grabbed me by the shoulders and said, "You've got to dance in the eye of the storm!" We're navigating hard times and dark waters these days and remembering Lou's intelligent commitment to levity in the face of difficulty is like a balm. The intro on Lou's Facebook page reads: "Be calm - Be clear - See the faults - See the suffering - Give your love."

Finally, while Lou never had children and left this plane without blood relatives, he was a brave and gentle warrior whose teachings transcended nations and boundaries and brought hope, guidance and edification to so many. What a fine mark he made upon the world. And perhaps best, there're these big ancient trees still standing in the Pacific Northwest because Lou stood up for them—and surely, they call him brother. One of Lou's favorite quotes is from Rumi: "May the beauty we love be what we do." ■

Events and Stuff

[Continued from Page 2]

•Spiral Living Center hosts Pop-Up Food Pantries third Wednesdays 3:30-5:30 pm at the Holland Grange. This is a shopping-style experience for those in need, incorporating both perishable and non-perishable foods. Line up early and please bring your own bags if possible. To volunteer, please fill out our volunteer intake form at spiralliving.org or email your inquiry to food@spiralliving.org.

•IV Family Coalition , 535 East River St.) Drop-off Location for food donations: 535 E River St, Cave Junction. Hours: M - F, 9 - 5. Call 541-592-6139 or email info@ivfc.org

The Motherline, women moving together to heal body and planet: Classes resume Jan. 3, 2025 and continue Fridays at the Takilma Community Building, 9367 Takilma Rd. Come 9:15 am for tea; dance 10-11:30. More info at TheMotherline.org, where you can also register for Riverstars afternoon classes.

Illinois River Valley Arts Council (IRVAC) has sponsored Learning Through Art, a program that brings art instruction into local public schools, for 22 years. Grant funding is down and this much needed program is struggling. You can donate at Zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/donate-to-make-a-difference-1645? or send IRVAC a check to P.O. Box 522, Cave Junction, OR 97523. For more information, Judy Hoyle, 541-592-4444 or Kris Wildman, 541-592-9738.

Spiral Living Center Library Needs YOU!

more than a good read...

Spiral Living Center is seeking 5 volunteers who have at least 5 hours a month to volunteer, in order to open the Takilma SLC tool and book library one day a week. The library is heated/cooled, and contains a wide assortment of books, games, and puzzles. Our neighbor Eliot Feenstra has organized and labeled the shelves, and we have sewing machines, a wifi network, projector, large screen, dry erase board on wheels, and other resources thanks to a grant from the Four Way Com-

munity Foundation. Volunteers are needed for cataloging—scanning and labeling items, building bookshelves, assisting patrons, cleaning, and organizing programs. The SLC library has hosted a poetry open mic, salon discussion groups, game nights, classes and skillshares, music events and a yoga class. Join us in co-creating the future! Contact Lindsay spiral@spiralliving.org or Deb 541-415-1822, or stop by Frog Farm store, 9044 Takilma Road in downtown Takilma. ■

bluegreen

(for Michael) [Spring]

I see you now

as though unmasked

in your latest transformation

wizard or sage or magician -

the voice the same one I first heard

when I wandered the hallways of lost words

on the sunny porch of the octagon house

where we shared tiramisu and tea

you didn't tell me

you had invited another guest

her name was possibility

and she tentatively crossed the threshold

on delicate paws

like a semi-feral cat

first, tranquil, lounging in the sun

and then restless, pacing in her season

we heard the river then

through the open door

and turned in her direction

caught the scent of overripe figs

heard a sapsucker knocking in the woods

on the bank we watched a bluegreen language,

flowing at once wild and serene -

water over stone -

a voice in the current,

just waiting to be found

- Barbara Parchim - Oct 13, 2024

RENEWAL: FROM EMPIRE & COLONIALISM TO OPPORTUNITY & HEALING

By JERRY ALLEN

The United States was founded on the dream of the end of empire and colonialism and the birth of freedom. But for whom? Only landowner men could vote. Poor people and women couldn't vote, black people were enslaved, many poor whites were indentured servants, and Native Americans were still being slaughtered and their land confiscated. Mexican-Americans were being deprived of rights and Asians were legally excluded from immigration. While we've ended slavery and enfranchised women, we still face threats that are like a new colonialism. The Doctrine of Discovery, which established the right of Christian explorers to claim land inhabited by non-Christians, is still intact. Here are some examples and ideas of how to fix it and stop the fighting:

- Jobs. Automation, robotics, shifting manufacturing overseas and most recently deployment of AI, have eliminated vast numbers of manufacturing and skilled labor jobs. Who benefits from that? The colonialism of the giant corporations and billionaires—not the working people. Working people are angry about this loss of good jobs, and voting patterns reflect that. What to do about it
- Change tax laws to remove business deductions for foreign labor and manufacturing plants and other expenses. Force them to choose. Are they American companies or foreign companies? Where does their loyalty lie? Embrace employment as a value, not just an expense to be avoided. The Investment Tax Credit needs to re-orient to incentivize employment and penalize eliminating of employment.
- Outlaw companies relocating overseas and capital flight. Heavily tax those that have done so.
- Raise tariffs high enough to end exploitation by countries that unfairly subsidize their exporters. Some of this is being done. We need to reinvigorate it. Stop the scams of offshoring labor and domiciling companies offshore to cut taxes.
- Put tariffs on all food imported that is also grown in America to equalize the playing field.

- Incentivize growing our skilled-job base by increasing the building of fire-resistant housing, especially owner-occupied housing. Increase skilled jobs by installing more solar, wind and enhanced geothermal energy. Incentivize intermediate technology that will still be needed. Incentivize business incubator programs to foster entrepreneurship and encourage innovation. Two thirds of new jobs are created by small businesses.

- Launch a major rebuilding of worn-out schools, sewer, water, lead pipe removal, bridges and rail lines. Investors can make a reasonable profit from this infrastructure building so that the government doesn't have to fund it up front. Infrastructure investments are a good hedge sought by pension plans. Green infrastructure bonds are a way for pension funds to help by investing in the bonds.

- Another key living wage job area is that in order to provide healthcare and eldercare services for our population, we need to train hundreds of thousands of nurse practitioners, nurses, ancillary medical personnel and eldercare specialists. Develop reasonably priced long-term care insurance for all elderly through Social Security, with governmental backing. Find a pathway to healthcare as a human right, not a road to bankruptcy.

- Agriculture in the U.S. must also be ramped up to provide more locally sourced foods. The most climate-friendly methods require more people working in agriculture. Incentivize "growing locally" by ramping up training programs for a new generation of farmers and farmers' markets. Provide loans and more extension services and certificate programs. This is a job creation program.

- Access to higher education and trade schools needs to be truly accessible. Expand community colleges in tandem with trade schools. Fund more non-profit, online, low-cost four-year education so young people aren't indentured for life by getting an education. Develop more pay-for-college by years of service programs for schoolteachers, medical and other essential workers. Training the next generation of workers is in all our interest.

Housing. There is a huge shortage of housing in many areas of the country. Fires, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods threaten many areas. This is a crisis and an opportunity. We have the new pre-cast concrete technology to build disaster-proof housing; it costs less than wood and it saves the forests. Investors are willing to build ownership multifamily housing with the government only providing help on down payments to buyers. Hundreds of thousands of skilled jobs go along with the housing work. We can build multifamily, multistory ownership housing that won't "sprawl-out" our communities; will fit with space, water, and sewer limits; and will be disaster-safe. Resist the push of hedge funds to turn more housing into rentals for their permanent benefit. That's empire and colonialism. Rental housing should only be a halfway house, leading to ownership housing and true family wealth accumulation for working families.

Financial Usury. Mandate financial education in high schools to train young people to be smart financially. Provide coverage for all catastrophic illnesses and end medical bankruptcy.

How Do We Pay for It All?

During a time of exploding federal debt, large deficits and looming Social Security funding problems, it is fair to ask the question. Selective austerity is one answer.

1. Taxation. The giant tax cuts that have been given to the ultra-wealthy need to sunset. Everyone needs to pay their fair share. Remove the income level cap on Social Security contributions.

2. Cost-cutting will help make more thrifty use of tax revenues. The U.S. cost of healthcare is ripe for change. Remove Big Pharma's monopoly on medicines. Train hundreds of thousands of nurse-practitioners and other health care providers and get everyone on healthcare coverage. We're already paying for that through the cost of using ER departments for primary care.

- 2.1 More cost cutting. We waste billions of dollars on the military/Congressional industrial complex building weapons designed to fight the previ-

ous wars and prop up jobs in Congressional districts. Learn from Ukraine. We can cut 50% out of the war budget. Negotiation and working on fairness between nations must be the alternative to wars.

2.2 Another area. The bloated Farm Bill is largely a giveaway to Big Agra. That needs to shift to focus on organic, sustainable family and cooperative farming, and outlaw large corporate agriculture. Using food crops to make fuel is environmentally harmful and wasteful of tax dollars.

3. Invest in our People—Our Future—and Raise Revenues. Here are some examples: By training thousands of people in construction trades as we build disaster-proof ownership housing; by training others in health care professional jobs; by training others in green energy jobs, we enable people to have living-wage jobs and they will pay income taxes and social security taxes. By providing townhomes to buy, buyers will pay property taxes. Repatriating manufacturing and energy jobs to re-home them in the U.S. will build jobs here, reduce our balance-of-payments problem, and raise tax revenues. Investing in our people “up-stream” pays for itself “down-stream.”

Invest in Our Environment and in Equal Rights for Our People. A favorite tactic of empire is pitting groups against each other in order to divide and conquer. Women get paid less than men. Women’s bodies are controlled by men. Redlining and job discrimination has favored some ethnic groups and still exist under the radar. Demonizing immigrants is a favorite ruse and an ill-informed trope. Economists recognize that immigrants are a net plus to our economy. Fighting over whose rights should be protected is part of the divide and conquer strategy. Failing to embrace all people as having equal worth is hurtful and deprives us of the full skills and value of all people as contributing members. Failure to give full worth, value and rights to all people, wildlife, forests, & rivers has led empire to destroying the Earth and waging perpetual wars. True Earth restoration is related to the end of empire and colonialism. Throw off our thrall collars and build the big tent. We’ve got work to do, and true peace and freedom awaits us. ■

Heart Beat

A wild mustang stands over the mesa, looking towards the sunset.

The Golden eagle soars over the tall trees and glances around all it surveys.

The drum sits patiently waiting in an old blanket,

passed down from Grandfather to grandson.

Bells with colored ribbons, shawls and moccasins.

Thunder shakes the ground as buffalo pass by.

Drumming begins by singing to the creator, as a

loud heart beat is felt all around the world.

Processions with dance, willow branches cradled into a sweat lodge.

Salmon swimming down deep, as they begin to jump over

the falls heading towards home.

Looking for the runners, watching the elders.

Just sitting and beading.

Waiting for a story, as the drum beat gets louder

and that heart beat of traditions is passed along.

Kelly Waldin

WINTERING

Retreat...Restore...Dormancy

Silenced shelter

Awaiting the bud

TO BLOOM

Out of the darkness...

~ Deborah Colette Murphy

The Octagon

By ELIOT FEENSTRA

The directions she gave on the phone: the second right after the road goes close to the river, the trees open wide and you can see the water rushing white-blue. Over the swinging bridge to the right, a quarter mile along the path to the house with the whale skeleton on the porch.

It was high hot summer and the leaves obscured the river...I got lost on the way and I was, obviously, a stranger. So they asked: Do you listen to music? What kind of music? Is it canned? How loudly? When do you wake up? What were you doing before this? We had a very nice tenant before, Ashley, quiet, creative. (They did not ask: Who are your people? I wondered, anyway.)

I lived close enough to stumble into the river in the night, close enough that if this was the year of the once-in-100-years flood, that would be that: and, naked familiarity with a madrone’s smooth neck; and, curling red bark on wet wood; and, full song of the rain; and, phone number carved on windowsill, ghost-cries of birthing mothers, yesterday’s dead mice tucked into the slick leaves.

I was afraid of living by myself. It was all true: my mid-twenties ending, I felt myself peeling away from myself like the madrone bark. Alongside my quiet dance parties and car that wouldn’t start and existential questions, the river was always leaving: endless, hopeful rain and then endless gasping sun. I drove away singing “bless this land, bless this land, bless this land.”

Still, salmon spawn here

(Is home time or place?)—today

it is not yet fall.

WOOL ART

By KAT ALLEN

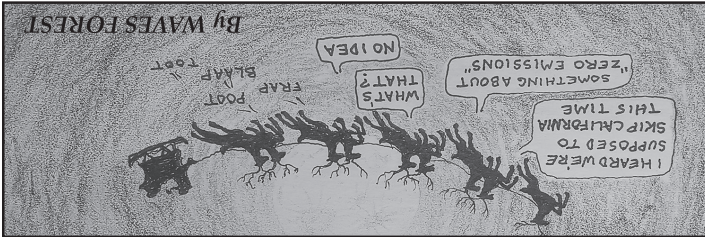
My dad painted and mom did needlepoint, so I guess it was inevitable that I would eventually create needle-felted landscapes. I truly enjoy playing with the colors and textures to bring a scene to life.

Wool has fibers that will lock together –think velcro–and the needles I use to drive the bits of wool into the piece of white felt fabric that serves as my canvas have barbs on their shafts to help those fiber bind together. Some needles have barbs higher up the shaft to attach wool fibers more deeply and other needles only have barbs at the tips to work the top and smooth the fibers. I buy my wool online, already

dyed, and select by colors and textures available. Different colors of wool, of course, cannot be blended like paint, but can be blended somewhat through a process called carding, which in my case involves taking small bits of wool and mixing them by combing them on a dog brush for a tiny dog (thanks, Kate Dwyer).

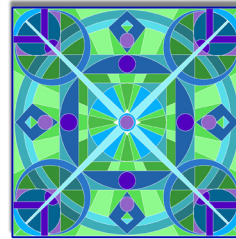
Left: "Shoreline Reflections"

Right: "View from Kitchen Window"



"In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer." ~Albert Camus

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