



www.shutterstock.com · 261528794

We will continue the theme of legacy in our newsletter. Your thoughts on this topic are welcome.

Turning Toward John Hoff

Joan Valles

In the summer of 1998 I was diagnosed with endometrial cancer. Although I knew it was very treatable, it was still a shock when I heard about it. I would not know the extent of the problem or the kind of treatment it would take for several days—uncertainty. My first reaction was to tell the only co-worker in our office at that time; my second was to call John Hoff. I had forgotten that at that very moment John was likely giving the eulogy at his mother's funeral. We had a gathering that evening—a therapeutic group probably—and as I lay close to John, I was comforted. That weekend was the celebration of Pam and Elizabeth's first wedding at a beautiful, sunny place at the beach. I was registrar for that event. I needed to keep the diagnosis close, shared only with Phil and the Hoff's. It was a time of great feeling, also of heightened sensitivity to the day and all the people there. As I learned more in the days following about surgery and post-surgical treatment, I talked to John. His counsel was to stay with the feeling and the imagining that this could be a terminal illness. If it's not this time, there'll come a time when it will be. Take this as an opportunity to feel it. In other words: Turn toward it. I couldn't do that for very long at that time, at age 63.

About six years ago I became interested in learning about Buddhist practice with Bodhiheart Sangha in Seattle and from teachers Ven. Dhammadinna, a Tibetan nun, and Tenzin Jesse, a

The Village eView

September 14, 2016

Colette Hoff, Editor

Coming Up:

Third Age – Friday, September 23

Women's Saturday – September 24

Pathwork – Sunday, September 25

Council – Monday, September 26

On-Line News of the Goodenough Community System:
The American Association for the Furtherance of Community
Convocation: A Church and Ministry
Mandala Resource, Inc.
Sahale Learning Center
The EcoVillage at Sahale

teacher whom she met in Dharamsala. A motivation for this practice has been to come to better terms with my mortality. One of the first things I remember from Dhammadinna's teaching was: "Turn toward it"—turn toward difficulty, sit with it, feel it.

Now at age 81, I have encountered increasing health problems due to age and to the radiation for cancer I had 18 years ago. Once again, I've been facing the unknown and the realization that this may be the terminal illness. As I've worked with my doctor, I think this may not be it—quite yet. But if it's not quite yet, it will be some day—there's no turning away from aging.

So this is one among many lessons I've learned first from John Hoff. As I wrote in the eView some time ago: So many of the things I've needed to learn, I've learned from John. I celebrate his legacy.

"The songs of our ancestors are also the songs of our children"
— Philip Carr-Gomm

Thoughts on Legacy in the Goodenough Community

John L. Hoff with Kirsten Rohde

I do think that a community has legacy. A legacy comes from history. It has to do with what was the story that brought about the community; who was involved, for example. I think the meaning of a covenant is an important part of legacy – an understanding among a group of people about the meaning of their relationships and their intentions. For example at Sahale, we attempt to say what's here – a space in the universe. A place where people meet each other and are taking it seriously – the intention to meet each other well.

Where does it start? It starts with people who say, this is important, let's write it down. In 1993, our community wrote a book: "The Goodenough Community: An Experiment in Community Formation and Self-Governance." This book has been passed out to many people who are curious about the community. So part of our legacy are the records we keep, the written word. We honor and remember and tell others about what has made a difference in our lives together. We begin a process of valuing each other, the words that we say and the ideas that we bring out. We create value by talking about these ideas and recording them for those who come after us.

What, John, is the essential legacy that is in you? The essential set of values that you would want to have carried forward?

Well, I've always believed in community even while knowing that people don't really know what that is. We have to *experience it* to know what it is. Community has to be experienced for a while before it exists; until people actually say, I think we're a community; something

is happening here with us. I think that has literally happened among us in our community. It happens because we wanted it to happen.

So part of our legacy is that we have a community for everyone to experience. Not only written, talked about, taught, but also an actual community to experience in order to know what a community is like.

Yes, we're a group of people who are building community together. Now we're becoming "self-conscious" about our history and our community as we think of others in the future and what we want to communicate. A community encourages relationships, points out where relationships are happening. This is where it starts: we learn that we need to honor these connections among a group of people. Then it becomes a place where people are willing to say they believe in it. A community gives people a social and cultural life to join and believe in beyond their personal lives.

Are there other key values that you have for this community into the future?

Mental wellness is one, growing people with the same intention we would have if we were growing good vegetables; community is an environment that grows good people. And we need to define what "good" is. One is to take each other seriously enough that we pay attention to each other's words and actions. We need to be clear about our relationship, and we work to be respectful of each other. We've recognized that we have roles that we play in each other's lives. All this leads to knowing that what we have is lasting, and can be trusted. We have needed to learn to rely on each other before we could share living spaces and property.

We build stamina together so that we can withstand ups and downs and still know that we are continuing.

And it's about intending for something to happen and believing in our intention. It has happened in this community that a group of us have talked as though there was a community that wanted to form, we've worked and played together, described what we are doing as we do it. We speak well of what is happening so others also feel encouraged about making their own contribution.

Our working on this writing right now is an illustration of the process of becoming a community. It begins as humbly as trying to articulate our own values and efforts. What I want to pass on is the knowledge that by intending something to happen we can create it. Then by believing in it we manifest our intention.

"Your story is the greatest legacy that you will leave to your friends. It's the longest-lasting legacy you will leave to your heirs."

— **Steve Saint**

Community and Legacy

Colette Hoff

Our community is a legacy that expands with each who participate. In this issue again with the theme of legacy, Joan provides her story of the encouragement to deal directly with what comes along in life. John and Kirsten write about some aspects of the legacy our community values. Mike lets us know the value of community to him each week including this one. Now is a good time for you to consider finding words to express what you consider the legacy of the Goodenough Community.

Notice the announcements in this issue for upcoming programs and cultural events as demonstrations of what this community values. Pathwork began in 1984 and has provided a spiritual home for many people over the years. At our recent gathering, the Pathwork group decided to pursue the model used for Lab 2016 and will focus on identifying some of the building blocks of mental health we have learned through teaching and experiences provided by Dr. John L. Hoff over many years. The Third Age is a supportive context for those of us in the later stages of life. The Women's Culture which provides a monthly time for women to reflect and often be provoked, began in 1983 and will gather on Saturday, September 24. These activities express what is valued in the community and what many of us hope live on to be valued by others who might chose it.

An article by Parker Palmer is included that expresses many of the values of community. He appreciates the importance of leadership and dispels many myths about community.

One of the activities we enjoy in this community is expressing practical friendship. We have had more moving parties in this community than I can count. I am still full of gratitude for all the help when John and I moved from 2007. So . . .

Our friend, **Claudia Fitch**, is **moving** over the next two weeks to a new home in Mt. Vernon. She is hiring movers for most of her things but also needs help packing and moving art. Please let Colette know if you can give a hand. Call or text your availability to 206 755 8404.



Pathwork, Sunday, September 25

On Sunday evenings for many years, John and Colette Hoff have invited individuals interested in personal growth and sharing their spiritual journeys to join in a process of "Pathwork." These evenings provide good opportunities for individual exploration in relationship to others. It is a process in which we coach and share insights with each other.

This fall our focus will be on what is happening in our lives in relation to the themes of sanity, maturity, proactivity and creativity. This is a good way to continue personal work begun at Lab, for example.

Pathwork is sponsored by Convocation: A Church and Ministry, which promotes an interfaith exploration of the journey of life. Individuals share practices that have worked for them and we often spend some time in meditation together.

Colette Hoff provides guiding leadership to the evenings and is joined by John in helping each person deepen their understandings. Email Colette at hoff@goodenough.org if you're coming. Pathwork meets at **7:00 p.m.** at the Community Center at 3610 SW Barton Street, typically every other Sunday evening--October 9 and October 21.

Third Age: A context for exploring legacy

Joan Valles

Our first Third Age gathering of the Goodenough Community program year is **Friday, Sept. 23**. We enjoyed our last gathering in mid-July and look forward to get together again. Third Age gives us an opportunity to update each other on our lives and have a good conversation on topics related to aging. Third Age is for people about 60 and older and newcomers are always welcome.

Our gathering will start about **6 p.m.** at the Community Center in West Seattle (3610 SW Barton St.) with a potluck meal. Please bring a side dish or dessert and beverages to share; a main dish will be provided. An RSVP to Joan (joanvalles70@yahoo.com) or phone at 206 819 1089 would be helpful. (And if you forget, we'll be glad to see you anyway.)

Looking forward to seeing you and will be sending a reminder closer to the date.

Goodenough Community's Women's Culture

Hollis Ryan

The women of the Goodenough Community are gathering on **Saturday, September 24, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the Community Center (3610 Barton Street SW, Seattle)**. I truly hope that you will join us.

Whether you have participated in the Community's women's program for many years, or have not yet attended a gathering, please come! Our day together will give you opportunities for introspection, listening deeply, and sharing your own heart in a warm, welcoming, and stimulating environment.

Our day typically begins with a chance to mingle over coffee before our program begins, and we will serve lunch later in the day. Although our programs build on each other from September until our concluding weekend in early May, each day is a discreet event. Even if

you do not participate in other gatherings, you will find that the one(s) you do attend are valuable.

To help us plan, please send an **RSVP**. And ... please come, even if you do not send a response! We suggest a **contribution** of \$20 to the Goodenough Community for each Saturday gathering, and trust that you will give more or less, as is right for you.

I am eager to see you on Saturday the 24th! Warmly, Hollis

"We were born to unite with our fellow men, and to join in community with the human race." ~Cicero

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT COMMUNITY

(WITH A FOURTEENTH THROWN IN FOR FREE)

~by Parker J. Palmer, syndicated from couragerenewal.org

<<http://www.couragerenewal.org/parker/writings/13-ways-of-looking-at-community/>> , Aug 29, 2016

I. Whether we know it or not, like it or not, honor it or not, we are embedded in community. Whether we think of ourselves as biological creatures or spiritual beings or both, the truth remains: we were created in and for a complex ecology of relatedness, and without it we wither and die. This simple fact has critical implications: community is not a goal to be achieved but a gift to be received. When we treat community as a product that we must manufacture instead of a gift we have been given, it will elude us eternally. When we try to "make community happen," driven by desire, design, and determination-places within us where the ego often lurks-we can make a good guess at the outcome: we will exhaust ourselves and alienate each other, snapping the connections we yearn for. Too many relationships have been diminished or destroyed by a drive toward "community-building" which evokes a grasping that is the opposite of what we need to do: relax into our created condition and receive the gift we have been given.

II. Of course, in our culture-a culture premised on the notion that we must manufacture whatever we want or need-learning to relax and receive a gift requires hard work! But the work of becoming receptive is quite unlike the external work of building communal structures, or gathering endlessly to "share" and "solve problems": receptivity involves inner work. Community begins not externally but in the recesses of the human heart. Long before community can be manifest in outward relationships, it must be present in the individual as "a capacity for connectedness"-a capacity to resist the forces of disconnection with which our culture and our psyches are riddled, forces with names like narcissism, egotism, jealousy, competition, empire-building, nationalism, and related forms of madness in which psychopathology and political pathology become powerfully intertwined.

III. We cultivate a capacity for connectedness through contemplation. By this I do not necessarily mean sitting cross-legged and chanting a mantra, though that may work for some. By contemplation I mean any way one has of penetrating the illusion of separateness and touching the reality of interdependence. In my life the deepest forms of contemplation have been failure, suffering, and loss. When I flourish, it is easy to maintain the illusion of separateness, easy to imagine that I alone am responsible for my good fortune. But when I fall, I see a secret hidden in plain sight: I need other people for comfort, encouragement, and support, and for criticism, challenge, and collaboration. The self-sufficiency I feel in success is a mirage. I need community- and, if open my heart, I have it.

IV. The most common connotation of the word "community" in our culture is "intimacy," but this is a trap. When community is reduced to intimacy, our world shrinks to a vanishing point: with how many people can one be genuinely intimate in a lifetime? My concept of community must be capacious enough to embrace everything from my relation to strangers I will never meet (e.g., the poor around the world to whom I am accountable), to people with whom I share local resources and must learn to get along (e.g., immediate neighbors), to people I am related to for the purpose of getting a job done (e.g., coworkers and colleagues). Intimacy is neither possible nor necessary across this entire range of relationships. But a capacity for connectedness is both possible and necessary if we are to inhabit the larger, and truer, community of our lives.

V. The concept of community must embrace even those we perceive as "enemy." In 1974, I set off on a fourteen-year journey of living in intentional communities. By 1975, I had come up with my definition of community: "Community is that place where the person you least want to live with always lives." By 1976, I had come up with my corollary to that definition: "And when that person moves away, someone else arises immediately to take his or her place." The reason is simple: relationships in community are so close and so intense that it is easy for us to project on another person that which we cannot abide in ourselves. As long as I am there, the person I least want to live with will be there as well: in the immortal words of Pogo, "We has met the enemy and it is us." That knowledge is one of the difficult but redeeming gifts community has to offer.

VI. Hard experiences-such as meeting the enemy within, or dealing with the conflict and betrayal that are an inevitable part of living closely with others-are not the death knell of community: they are the gateway into the real thing. But we will never walk through that gate if we cling to a romantic image of community as the Garden of Eden. After the first flush of romance, community is less like a garden and more like a crucible. One stays in the crucible only if one is committed to being refined by fire. If we seek community merely in order to be happy, the seeking will end at the gate. If we want community in order to confront the unhappiness we carry within ourselves, the experiment may go on, and happiness-or, better, a sense of at-homeness-may be its paradoxical outcome.

VII. It is tempting to think of hierarchy and community as opposites, as one more "either-or." But in mass society, with its inevitable complex organizations, our challenge is to think "both-and," to find ways of inviting the gift of community within those hierarchical structures. I am

not proposing the transformation of bureaucracies into communities, which I regard as an impossible dream. I am proposing "pockets of possibility" within bureaucratic structures, places where people can live and work differently than the way dictated by the organizational chart. The most creative of our institutions already do this: e.g., those high tech companies that must organize efficiently to protect the bottom line and get product out the door, but must also create spaces where people can collaborate in dreaming, playing, thinking wild thoughts, and taking outrageous risks, lest tomorrow's product never be imagined.

VIII. Contrary to popular opinion, community requires leadership, and it requires more leadership, not less, than bureaucracies. A hierarchical organization, with its well-defined roles, rules, and relationships, is better able to operate on automatic pilot than is a community, with its chaotic and unpredictable energy field. But leadership for community is not exercised through power (i.e., through the use of sanctions) that is the primary tool of bureaucratic leadership. Leadership for community requires authority, a form of power that is freely granted to the leader by his or her followers. Authority is granted to people who are perceived as authentic, as authoring their own words and actions rather than proceeding according to some organizational script. So the authority to lead toward community can emerge from anyone in an organization-and it may be more likely to emerge from people who do not hold positional power.

IX. Leadership for community consists in creating, holding, and guarding a trustworthy space in which human resourcefulness may be evoked. A critical assumption is hidden in that definition-the assumption that people are resourceful. Standard organizational models assume that people have deficits and scarcities rather than resources: people do not want to work, so the organization must surround them with threats; people would not know what to do with the unexpected, so organizational life must be routine; people will try to cheat if given half a chance, so the organization must build walls of security. When we act on the scarcity assumption it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy through a process called resentment (small wonder!), and people are rendered incapable of community, at least temporarily, sometimes permanently.



X. Ironically, we often resist leaders who call upon our resourcefulness. We find it threatening when leaders say, "I am not going to tell you how to do this, let alone do it for you, but I am going to create a space in which you can do it for yourselves." Why threatening? Because many of us have been persuaded by institutions ranging from educational to industrial to religious that we do not have the resources it takes to do things, or even think things, for ourselves (which, to the extent that we believe it, expands an institution's power over our lives). Many people have been convinced of their own inadequacy, and any leader who wants to invite them into a community of mutual resourcefulness must see this invisible wound and try to heal it.

XI. Seeing and treating that wound takes courage and tenacity: while the leader is calling followers to fullness, the followers are accusing the leader of not doing his or her job. Every teacher who has tried to create a space for a self-sustaining learning community knows this story: students resist on the grounds that "we are not paying tuition to listen to John and Susie talk, but to take notes from you, the person with the Ph.D." It takes a deeply grounded leader—a leader with a source of identity independent of how popular he or she is with the group being led—to hold a space in which people can discover their resources while those same people resist, angrily accusing the leader of not earning his or her keep.

XII. In the face of resistance, an ungrounded leader will revert to bureaucratic mode: the teacher will revert to lecturing rather than inviting inquiry, the manager will revert to rule-making rather than inviting creativity. In the face of resistance, leaders will do what they are taught to do: not create space for others, but fill the space themselves—fill it with their own words, their own skills, their own deeds, their own egos. This, of course, is precisely what followers expect from leaders, and that expectation prolongs the period during which leaders of community must hold the space—hold it in trust until people trust the leader, and themselves, enough to enter in.

XIII. There is a name for what leaders experience during this prolonged period of patient waiting. It is called "suffering" (which is the root meaning of the word "patience"). Suffering is what happens when you see the possibilities in others while they deny those same possibilities in themselves. Suffering is what happens when you hold in trust a space for community to emerge but others lack the trust to enter the space and receive the gift. Suffering is what happens while you wait out their resistance believing that people have more resources than they themselves believe they have. But leaders do not want to suffer. So we create and maintain institutional arrangements that protect leaders from suffering by assuming the worst of followers and encouraging leaders to dominate them by means of power.

XIV. I have yet to see a seminar in suffering as part of a leadership training program. I can think of three reasons why. One, we train leaders for bureaucracy rather than community, no matter what we say we are doing. Two, the idea of leadership is still so steeped in machismo that we do not want to acknowledge a "weakness" like suffering. Three, suffering is a spiritual problem, and we want to keep leadership training in the orderly realm of theory and technique rather than engage the raw messiness of the human heart.

But leadership for community will always break our hearts. So if we want to lead this way, we must help each other deal with that fact. We might begin by viewing the problem through the lens of paradox, that spiritual way of seeing that turns conventional wisdom upside down. Here, "breaking your heart" (which we normally understand as a destructive process that leaves one's heart in fragments), is reframed as the breaking open of one's heart into larger, more generous forms—a process that goes on and on until the heart is spacious enough to hold both a vision of hope and the reality of resistance without tightening like a fist.

If we are willing to embrace the spiritual potentials of suffering, then both community and

leadership, human resourcefulness and the capacity to hold it in trust, will prove to be abundant among us-gifts we have been given from the beginning but are still learning how to receive.

Old Thinking

New Thinking

Community is a goal.

Community is a gift.

We achieve community through desire, design and determination.

We receive community by cultivating a capacity for connect-
edness.

Community requires a feeling of intimacy.

Community does not depend on intimacy and must expand to embrace strangers, even enemies, as well as friends.

Community is a romantic Garden of Eden.

Community that can withstand hard times and conflict can help us become not just happy but "at home."

Leadership is not needed in communities.

Leadership and the authority to lead toward community can emerge from anyone in an organization.

Suffering is bad and should be avoided.

Suffering lets our "hearts break open" enough to hold both a vi
of hope and the reality of resistance without tightening like a fist.

Parker J. Palmer, founder and Senior Partner of the Center for Courage and Renewal, is a writer, speaker and activist who focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality and social change. He has nine books, including *Let Your Life Speak*, *The Courage to Teach*, *A Hidden Wholeness*, and *Healing the Heart of Democracy*. [The entire original message is not included.]



WE ALL DIE.
THE GOAL
ISN'T TO LIVE
FOREVER.
THE GOAL IS
TO CREATE
SOMETHING
THAT WILL.
PHRESHQUOTES*INSTAGRAM



The deAnguera Blog: The Legacy of Community Life



We have had Sahale for 15 years now and have done many things. We have hosted everything from weddings to chickens.

The most recent wedding we hosted had over 150 attendees. You can see them gathering around one of our trees. Irene Perler had transformed this tree by clearing all the brush around its base. Then she invited people to place memorials to their departed loved ones. Is it possible that the energy and attention we gave this tree attracted the wedding group to it? We certainly believe so.

I photographed the procession from the lawn in front of the Kloshe sunroom where I sat with John and Colette Hoff enjoying the fall sun. We agreed it was the most impressive one we had ever seen.

We also host chickens. Irene has lovingly raised a rooster and 9 hens. The rooster's name is Tarzan and he crows to boss the hens around. I have to admit as a guy I envied Tarzan having a harem of his own. Irene informed me that the hens can make life rough for him.

Irene brought all the chickens down to the vegetable patch by Kopet WaWa and they had a great time exploring and scratching their way around. I knew they were in the patch when I could hear Tarzan crowing from **down there** instead of above. You can see Tarzan and one of his mates in the right hand photo.

In the evening I helped Irene get the chickens back into their two cages to be transported back to their coop. Irene had to catch them one at a time and quickly throw them into a cage. I slammed the door shut. They all squawked and flapped their wings. One hen ended up high in a tree and Irene had to climb a ladder to catch her. Others ended up squawking in the underbrush and thorny blackberry bushes.

Finally we caught all the chickens and Irene drove them back in the blue truck. We carried each cage back to the coop in the darkness with my flashlight on. I made sure to shine my light into the coop so the chickens would walk up the ramp and go inside. We waited until they were all in their roosts before leaving. Irene made the door close with an electronic humming sound. She told me the birds got to like this sound as it meant they were safe for the night.

This experience of transporting the chickens down to the Kopet WaWa patch was a first for us. Like a lot of other things we do for the first time it was awkward and challenging. We will know better what to do when we bring them back here. I understand a coop will be built for them under Kopet so they can be left here overnight.

Over the years of living here at Sahale we have all experienced many things. Our reactions to our experiences are what mold us and our relationship to Sahale as home. Sahale represents our shared life together and has given us much to think about. Every day we practice community here. For me community practice is mostly in the routine chores I do such as watering flower pots around our courtyard and taking out the garbage.



Those deery creatures with the really big brown eyes. How could I resist such a stare! They can also pivot their large ears to whatever they want to listen to. A relationship with our deer population is part of our legacy.





A Facebook Posting from Norm Peck:

Today's unexpected adventure: one of my volunteer opportunities as a member of the Kittitas Audubon Society, is to transport or coordinate transport of injured or ailing birds to either the local vet or the larger network Dr. Fuller is a part of, Blue Mountain Rehab Center. A couple in Cle Elum (about 30 mi. west) had found a distressed Bald Eagle yesterday (as found at the base of a tree below). I went up and got it out of the laundry basket in a children's play tent they had it in, transferred it to a transport cage and delivered it to Dr. Fuller's office for observation and/or treatment. We're hoping for a full recovery, but won't know for a while. The (probably male based on small size/light weight) mature bald eagle was very weak and lethargic, though he became attentive when being moved, but didn't struggle much. Send good thought to/for him, please.

Eagle update: Dr. Fuller (the local rehab vet) says the eagle is much recovered, but not ready for release, so we'll (Kittitas Audubon Society) will be transporting it to the Blue Mountain Rehab Center today or tomorrow. Dr. Fuller says prospects for full recovery are very good, and the bird apparently responded most to thiamine supplementation. Thanks for your good thoughts and support!

Jami Sieber in Concert with Nancy Rumbel

An event sponsored by the Women's Way Red Lodge

Friday, October 14, 2016 at 7:30 pm

Vashon High School Theater, Vashon Island, WA

Electric cellist and vocalist Jami Sieber reaches inside the soul with compositions that are contemporary, timeless, lush, and powerfully evocative. Jami will be performing with Grammy Award winning multi-instrumentalist, Nancy Rumbel. Purchase tickets online [here](#), or locally from Vashon Intuitive Arts and Vashon Bookstore.

www.jamisieber.com

I knew Jami decades ago when we were both nurses on the same floor at a Seattle hospital. I knew she played cello then but imagine my surprise to hear her on the radio recently! I look forward to seeing and hearing her at this event on Vashon. Always great when someone realizes their dream to do what they really want to do. Kirsten Rohde



- **Happy birthday, Bruce Perler – September 22**
- **Happy birthday, Mike DeAnguera September 23**

Thank you Sheila for this wonderful letter!

Hello from Uganda – from Sheila Hosner

August 30, 2016

Hello all,

It has been awhile. I have been in Uganda almost 14 months! It doesn't seem possible.

What a difference a year makes. The other evening I was walking with a Ugandan friend in Bwindi National Park visiting lodges and as we were walking I reflected on how different it felt from when I arrived a year ago. It is just so normal now.

A year ago when I walked in the park by myself, I felt a sense of apprehension and awkwardness. Did I belong there? Was I safe? Where did that stairway go? What will happen if I walk up it? Am I allowed to walk up it? Now I am just walking in my neighborhood (which happens to contain mountain gorillas!). Everyone knows my name. I belong. I am safe. It is such a big psychological and emotional difference. (BTW, the stairway goes to Gorilla Forest Camp, one of the most expensive lodges in the area.)

“You’ve been lost” and other Ugandan greetings. Unlike fast-paced America, in my experience Ugandans put great store in gracious, unhurried greetings. One thing they say when they haven't seen you in a while is “you’ve been lost”. When I first heard it, my reaction was “I’m not lost!” with a slight sense of indignation. “You’ve been lost” means “I haven't seen you in a while and I have been missing you”. Greeting and visiting with people is a big part of the social fabric here. People want you to stop in and say hello and are disappointed if you don't. And greetings are quite ritualized with people often holding hands while they are talking. No one “gets right to the point” even if they are really just wanting to ask for something.

As an introvert (yes, I know some of you from Ecology don't think of me that way because my job required me to be in front of people a lot, but I really am!), “small talk” doesn't come naturally to me. It never really occurred to me that people would want me to stop in and say hello just because. At the hospital when I go to check on patients, I often jump right to the point – “how is the patient and when will they be released?” – and have



found myself sometimes gently reminded of my bad manners by someone first asking me “How was your night?” and “Are you fine?” and I must backtrack and start over properly. So, I am training myself in new social skills! It’s never too late! And, even though it feels a bit awkward or contrived at times, I am beginning to understand and enjoy it. It creates a network of connectedness.

Ankole cows. Elephants, lions, zebras, and giraffes are great, but have you ever seen Ankole cows? (Full name: “Ankole-Watusi”). They are REALLY cool! Sort of the African version of Texas Long Horns.

I first saw these beauties with giant horns in Rwanda and my inner cowgirl fell in love!

Ankole cows are an ancient breed native to Africa and are adapted to harsh, dry environments. Their horns actually function as temperature regulators, dispersing heat, because they are honeycombed with blood vessels. They are very common in Southwestern Uganda and Rwanda.



I saw this herd as a friend and I were leaving Lake Mbuho National Park. The park has giraffes, zebras, and other herd animals, but these cows got me out of the car! There is a breeding program right outside the park. Efforts are being made to preserve this breed because interbreeding with Holsteins to increase milk production (by Heifer International, I have read) has threatened it. There is an association to breed them in the US – I may have to join!

This cow has a long, rich history with the tribes of Southwestern Uganda and Rwanda. The best cows, with the biggest horns, were treasured possessions of kings. A person’s wealth would be measured in cows. Even now, throughout Uganda cows are highly valued, even if they are not Ankole. As I mentioned in another letter, there is often a “bride price” for brides in Uganda. The more desirable a woman, the higher her “price” in cows will be. One of the doctors I work with is interested in a woman who has a bride price of at least 30 cows. Good cows can cost about 1,000,000 Uganda shillings, so 30 cows would be about 30,000,000 shillings, or approximately \$10,000. A huge sum in Uganda.

How is my work going at the hospital? Very well, I am happy to say. Last December I said my goal was to see the hospital reimbursed



\$40,000 by July for care they provided to patients. I recently went through our records and from July 2015 to August 2016, the Watsi Program has provided care to over 200 people and the hospital has been reimbursed about \$65,000! This is a growth of about five times over the previous year.

There have definitely been some bumps along the way, but we got through them. It has been so amazingly rewarding. My colleague, Barnabas, and I also just heard from Watsi that they would like to see the program expand at the hospital, so we are starting to plan for that. In June, Barnabas and I visited another hospital that has a Watsi program and learned a lot from how they do things and got some ideas, like radio advertising, that will help us expand.



Even though I tell people in the program that the money for their care doesn't come from me, I have received several small gifts from patients, like this basket full of eggs. The name on the basket is the name of the child that received care and the basket was made by his mother. So amazing and touching to receive it.

Gerald. In another letter, I shared a picture of Gerald and his family. I am now sponsoring Gerald in school and I am happy to say he is vying for first and second in his class with another student!



He is a student in a nearby boarding school and here he is in his new uniform. It costs about \$25 a month to sponsor a student at his school. Anyone interested? Let me know and I will send you the information. There is a small American foundation working with the school, so you make the donation through them and it is tax deductible.

The teaching style in Uganda is very rote. Lots of repetition, etc., and class sizes are very large. But I bought Gerald some of the standard texts for Uganda and was quite impressed by the rigorousness of the subject matter.

Gerald is in Primary 6 and has one more year to go before "high school". His grades this year and next and how he does on the standardized tests, will determine what senior school he gets into. It is an English-style system. Students complete either four or six years of senior school; leaving after S-4 (O level) or going on to complete S-5 and S-6 (A levels). People completing A levels usually go on to university.

I have told him he can count on me to pay for him to complete senior school and then we will see about university...

When am I coming home? I am flying to Spain on September 29, 2016, to attend the wedding of the daughter of friends. A whole group of Seattle friends are meeting there. Then I am traveling to Italy with friends for about two weeks before flying home on October 24. I want to get home in time to at least do something for the presidential election.

I am planning to come back to Uganda, though, in January 2017. Yes, I have signed up for another six months. The program I am managing appears to be on the cusp of really growing and I want to help with that. If any of you have a hankering to visit Uganda, plan now!

After that, who knows? Itinerant guest, perpetual traveler, Buddhist retreats, something in Seattle? Hmm.

My love to all,

Sheila

The 9th Northwest Permaculture Convergence.

NORTHWEST PERMACULTURE CONVERGENCE
Fort Flagler, Nordland, WA (near Port Townsend)

October 7-9, 2016

This event will bring together hundreds of people from around the Pacific Northwest who are practicing, or interested in, permaculture. The Convergence will feature workshops, keynote presentations, round-table discussions, Expo, Skillshare Village, Fruit & Nut Show, entertainment and much more.

For more information contact:

Michael Pilarski

360-643-9178

friendsofthetrees@yahoo.com

[Northwest Permaculture Convergence](#)

Quest: A Counseling and Healing Center

Our belief is that mental and emotional health is a prerequisite for spiritual well-being, collaboration, and the expression of compassion. Quest's counseling and education programs, open to all interested individuals, focus on empowering individuals, couples, and family groups to be happier and be more effective in relationships.

Call John or Colette (206-755 8404) or Colette and John at Sahale – 360 275-3957. In Seattle, John and Colette meet with clients at the community center, 3610 SW Barton Street, Seattle 98106, as well as at Sahale.

