

December 1, 2020

The Westport Wave

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A signal flare at sea started an adventure that made the 1977 Westport Christmas memorable!

A Westport Christmas Story

Bill Brazill

If I remember right it was mid-December 1977, on a perfectly clear and calm night which was unusual in those days for Westport, that our visitor from the west arrived. Back then our house sat all by itself on the west side of Omega Drive. It was about 8 or 9 o'clock, bedtime for our 5 year old daughter, Erin, and she was at the kitchen sink brushing her teeth overlooking the ocean while standing on a stool. The place still did not have an indoor bathroom after a hundred years, only the original outhouse on the bluff. Julie and I were in another part of the house when Erin let out a yell exclaiming "there is a bright red light on the ocean, come quick". By the time we got to the kitchen window it had vanished. We waited and watched and sure enough a few minutes later a bright red light appeared a little south of Northwest Rock. I grabbed the flashlight, which amazingly had good batteries, and went outside and waved it in the direction that the flare had been. My flashlight

signal was acknowledged by yet another red flare, and this time it was waving. As I headed to the beach below, Dave Morgan and Mike Stillwell had also seen the flares from up-town and joined me on the descent. No stairway existed in those days, just a rough trail. With the good flashlight we were able to see a small boat appear, and guided it in between the rocks to shore as it followed our beam of light.

The boat was a nice 14-foot wooden dory with a sail and a very tired and frightened, tall, bearded, middle aged man. Between the three of us we were able to help the guy out of his boat and drag the dory above the high tide line. It then took all of our energy to get him up the cliff and into our warm house where he eagerly consumed food and water. Before collapsing on the floor in front of the wood cook stove in the kitchen he thanked Erin and then fell asleep. We would hear his story in the morning.

The next day he was feeling much better and ate a huge breakfast. We learned that his name was Richard (can't remember his last name) and this is what he told us:

A few years earlier, he had built a 32-foot ferro cement boat by himself in Tacoma, Washington where he lived, and then fished it a few seasons out of Naknek, Alaska above the Aleutian Islands. He was gill netting Sockeye salmon and did very well. Richard had heard of the Herring run in San Francisco Bay so decided to head down single-handed from Tacoma to give it a try.

Two days before, en route south down the coast, he had shut the engine off and drifted for the night with his boat running lights on. It was 10PM, and he noted his location as being about thirty miles off shore and south of Fort Bragg. Fortunately he set his wind-up alarm clock for 5 before going to bed. When the alarm went off in total darkness he found his boat almost full of water and more coming in. Richard had just enough time to cast the lifeboat dory off with him in it. He stayed near his fishing boat until dawn and watched it sink. Richard was unclear of what day it sank.

Raising his makeshift sail and using his oars he started heading due east as he knew there was a good Southern current. Eventually he sighted Fort Bragg but was too far off shore to make it. Richard was disheartened but continued to row, sail, and drift until he saw the lights of Westport. He put all the energy he had left to make shore there knowing that this was the last outpost before the rugged and unpopulated Lost Coast. He said our kitchen light on the bluff was the brightest and closest so he rowed towards that and lit his flare when he dared not get closer to the rocks.

Richard spent a couple of days with us, resting up and regaining his strength, making phone calls, dealing with the Coast Guard and getting his life back in order. His wallet and personal belongings all went down with his boat. When he was ready we drove him to Leggett Valley to board the Greyhound Bus heading North. On leaving he gave me his dory and said he thought he was going to build another 32 foot fishing boat for Alaska and offered me a job fishing with him up there if he did.

A couple of years later in the spring I received a letter saying his new boat was completed and he was going to head north. The sock eye season was for the month of July. I flew up after school was out and met him in Naknek, and that's a whole other story.



Come celebrate Christmas with all your friends and neighbors on Saturday, December 12th!

Westport Community Christmas Festivities Saturday, December 12th!

Sarah Cullar

Mark your calendars! Westport Christmas festivities will continue this year, but with COVID precautions. On Saturday, December 12th, we are asking families to park near the Westport Store to see Santa light the tree at 5:15PM. Then, we will stay in our cars (and anyone interacting with Santa **MUST** be wearing a mask) and drive past Santa who will deliver presents to the kids in the cars. To help with this, you must **RSVP by December 4th** so that **Santa knows who will be there to receive a present.** RSVP to the folks at the Westport Store by calling (707) 964-2872. Come enjoy a little Christmas cheer. **Happy Holidays and love to you all!**

Westport Community Store & Post Office Expanded Service During COVID-19 Crisis

In this COVID crisis, the **Westport Community Store** now offers the following services:

- Call-ahead ordering – store personnel can grocery shop for you
- Curbside pickup of take-out food orders, groceries, PO Box Mail and packages delivered to the store
- Delivery of take-out food orders, groceries, PO Box Mail and packages delivered to the store
- Flexible non-contact payment methods
- All orders will be packaged and disinfected prior to pickup or delivery
-

The Westport Community Store wants to do anything possible to help its customers stay safe and minimize possible spread of COVID-19. Deliveries available in the greater Westport Community area. Call the Store at 964-2872 to order or get more information.

THANK YOU JIM CHAILLE!

Jim Genereux

We all owe a big THANK YOU to Jim Chaille. He is the person who delivers the U.S. mail to Westport. Not only does Jim drive to Westport 6 days a week, he also drives up to Hale’s Grove which is about 19 miles north of Westport. This about a 70 mile round trip fom Ft. Bragg each day. In addition to driving from Ft. Bragg to Hale’s Grove each day Jim also stops and delivers mail to the mail boxes located along Highway 1 from just South of Ten Mile River up to Hale’s Grove. Jim drives this route on sunny days, rainy days, and stormy days. Now with Covid-19 Jim has much more to deliver since people are ordering more on-line such as prescriptions and other necessities. Jim has been driving this route for more than 20 years. He said he will probably stay on his job for another 4 years. **THANK YOU JIM CHAILLE!**

Free Masks & Lawn Signs For COVID Awareness And Protection On Wednesday, December 2nd

COVID Response Network

On Wednesday, December 2nd, from 3:00PM to 5:00PM, The COVID Response Network will be handing out packs of masks for anyone that needs masks for the prevention of spreading COVID-19. We will be in front of SAFEWAY entrance at 660 South Main Street in Fort Bragg.

We also have yard signs with prevention reminders for anyone that would like to put up a yard sign. The cloth washable and reusable masks are courtesy of Mendocino County, via North Coast Opportunities. This is a RAIN OR SHINE event.

CRN Mission

The mission of the **COVID Response Network** is to do what we can as concerned people to make a broad, deep, and effective response to the threats of COVID-19. Our pilot region is the Mendocino Coast of California.

Westport Church December Spiritual Programs Cancelled

Baile Oakes

Due to the COVID crisis, regular Westport Community Church services are cancelled for the foreseeable future. Stay safe and stay healthy!

And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.

read from The Book Of Genesis by the crew of Apollo 8 in lunar orbit, December 24th, 1968

Help In Westport During The COVID Crisis

Gary Quinton and Bill Knapp

When you live in the Westport community, you do not live alone. You do have friends and neighbors. It's kinda like the old sitcom Cheers, "where everybody knows your name".

If you get sick or are at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 during these unprecedented times, remember that you live in an unprecedented part of the United States. This is not the big city where you are just a name and number, you are a neighbor and friend. If you are quarantined at home, let your community know about it. For your sake and ours. We want to help, and we can.

If you are quarantined at home with COVID-19 or in self-quarantine because of medical advice, symptoms or underlying medical conditions, it will be hard living in our area, but your neighbors can make the difference, we can help.

We might not come in for a cup of coffee, but we can get you needed supplies. We can assist you and still be safe to ourselves, our families and our neighbors. When you're quarantined, there might be things that must be done around your property, that have to be done. We can help. There might be any of a long list of things you cannot do that a neighbor can do, but only if you let us know.

We want to reactivate the Westport Neighbor to Neighbor Network. Contact either of us if you need help or can help if notified. We will coordinate calls for help and offers to help, while helping as much as we can.

Gary Quinton at (707) 964-7073 or email gquinton@mcn.org

Bill Knapp at (707) 964-7355 or email bill@netwidget.com

Your Neighbors can't help you if they don't know you need help. Remember, if you have an emergency, any emergency, call 911! Be calm and safe, and use common sense. Social distancing is proving to be effective. We are all in this together!



December In The Westport Community Garden

Derek DiOrio

Stop by the **Westport Community Garden** in December for fresh, organically grown veggies – ready for you to harvest, **ABSOLUTELY FREE!** Cherry tomatoes, brassicas, and a nice variety of winter greens are all available for picking during the month of December.

With cooler temperatures and shorter days now upon us, vegetative life in the garden has slowed down; but, that doesn't mean there isn't still work to be done! As usual, the community garden work days are the first and third Saturdays of the month (weather permitting).

This month's focus is on pruning/cleaning up any dead/dying veggies from last season, amending soil, re-building garden beds, and of course... weeding.. alwaaays..weeding. If you're free and care to join us for a few hours some Saturday in the garden we just ask that you please wear a mask and socially distance when possible – thank you!

At the Westport Community Garden, fresh vegetables are **free to everyone every day**, so please come do your part by harvesting regularly so that nothing goes to waste! Just bring your own cutting utensil and a bag to take your goodies home. We're at the end of Abalone Street at the Westport Community Center (look for the greenhouse). *Bon Appetit!*



- Protect habitat of fish, wildlife and plants
- Preserve open space for scenic enjoyment of general public in accordance with legal conservation policy
- Preserve historically important land areas and certified historic structures

These goals, guided by the Westport community at large, provide opportunity for local residents and visitors to have local “places to go

and things to do”. WVS is an organization that can be utilized by the independent and resilient Westportians to shape their community to better meet their needs and desires.

Westport Village Society Goals

Bill Knapp, President, Westport Village Society

It is hard to believe we are in the Winter holiday season already. This has been a year with many challenges, one of the most significant being kept distant from friends and family and the “normal” activities with them. Being in a small remote community, Westport residents know or know of most of the people in the community. Westportians have a reputation of independence and resiliency. Where am I going with this?

The goals of the Westport Village Society, paraphrased from the articles of incorporation, are:

- Sponsor, organize and fund civic improvement projects which:
 - Are charitable
 - Are educational
 - Provide civic betterment for Westport and the area around it
- Acquire, hold and manage land and interest in lands, including qualified conservation easements and open space easements which:
 - Preserve land for outdoor recreation and education of the general public

The last nine months caught us, and most of the world, unprepared to deal with the social and cultural changes imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a consequence none of the traditional events and activities happened. Currently it does not look like the first half of 2021 will be able to operate as in the past. The WVS Board is looking for alternative or modified events that are safe, but still interesting and entertaining. Different funding methods will need to be considered. We will also be looking for projects of value to the community and new ways to fund them. These will be the topics discussed at the January 16th quarterly Board meeting. It will be conducted via Zoom and the public is invited. Instructions on how to attend will be provided by e-mail. If you get the Wave by e-mail, you will get the instructions for the meeting. If you would like your e-mail address added, or have any questions, please send an e-mail to wvs@westportvillagesociety.org

Just as a reminder, current activities include an aggressive invasive plant removal and mitigation with native plants and ongoing work and harvesting at the Community Garden. These are outdoor, social distanced, safe activities. A strong WVS can help improve Westport and the area around it. But WVS cannot be strong without the support and participation of people it serves. **Remember, we need you!**



Aggressive exotic Ivy chokes out native plants without providing good habitat for native animals.

The Challenge

Thad M. Van Bueren

If you've visited our Headlands Park recently I'm sure you noticed the dramatic changes. We've been working on removing the some of the largest patches of aggressive invasive plants, mainly ivy, jubata grass, and periwinkle. Gary Quinton volunteered the use of his tractor for the major work, while two volunteers joined us November 14th for the volunteer work day.

One thing is clear: The problem is daunting in scope and manual removal is unlikely to accomplish the task. Follow up measures will be required given the deep roots of the exotic plants and the inevitable problem of resprouting. It would take an army of volunteer gardeners. Volunteer work parties will be needed on an ongoing to implement some planned

treatment efforts, but other techniques will be essential for success.

A Westport Village Society focus group is developing strategies to keep the exotic plants from taking over, while at the same time protecting environmentally sensitive areas. Our approaches will likely include various strategies such as repeated mowing, mechanical ripping to pull roots in non-sensitive areas, selective hand removal in sensitive areas, and lengthy tarping to kill any residual exotics as a prelude to replanting native species.

We are excited that local botanist Rhiannon Korhummel has offered help with the vegetation management and restoration project. We also welcome community input and gardening volunteers. Eventually we will also need seeds and seedlings of plants native to the coastal bluff area. Please contact me at wvs@westportvillagesociety.org or 964-7272.



Your WVFD: Left to right, Beck Regalia, Firefighter, Ski Saunders, Captain and EMT, Dan Maxey, Chief, John Huff, Assistant Chief and Paramedic, Jeff Mathias, Captain and EMT, Steve Goleman, Captain, John Allison, EMT, Eric Dumars, Firefighter (not pictured are Kayla Cooper, Firefighter, and Salvador (Sal) Palomar, EMT). Also pictured are our trusty vehicles 8569, 8351, 8580, 8590, and 8560.

Westport Volunteer Fire Department News

WVFD

2020 has been a busy and challenging year for the Westport Volunteer Fire Department. We have already set a new record for emergency 911 calls. By November 23rd we had 90 calls. These included 34 medical calls, 25 motor vehicle accidents, 11 fires and 2 calls for hazardous conditions. We also had 13 calls for miscellaneous public assistance and 5 false alarms.

We currently have 10 active duty members. Four of our members are EMTs and one is a paramedic. We continue to train four times a month to maintain and sharpen our skills.

Our annual fundraising barbecue had to be cancelled this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Tax revenues we anticipated from the County have been delayed. Fortunately, we were able to obtain some important grants. The Community Foundation of Mendocino County awarded our Department \$10,000 towards the cost of a new generator. The Mendocino Coast Healthcare Foundation gave us a grant of

\$4018 to buy a higher level of personal protective equipment for our responses to medical emergencies and traumatic injuries during the pandemic. We were also awarded a FEMA grant of \$62,000 to buy up-to-date self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs). In late November the Mendocino County DA's office gave us \$2,500 from the marijuana restitution fund.

Also, thanks to the efforts and hard work of Chief Dan Maxey we were given a surplus Type 3 fire engine by the East Bay Regional Park Fire Department. The engine is in very good condition with low mileage. With financial assistance from an anonymous benefactor, we are equipping this fire engine to CalFire standards. The engine should be in service by early next year, and it will help us perform our mission of keeping our community safe from wildfires.

We want to extend our best wishes to all the members of our community for a happy, healthy, and safe Holiday Season. We are extremely grateful for the volunteer work and the financial contributions from community members who provide critical support for our Westport Volunteer Fire Department.

Help Protect Mendocino County Land Conservation Easements

Bill Knapp

Since formation in 1992, a major element of the Westport Village Society's mission has been the preservation of land in a manner to benefit, encourage, and advocate for sound public and private conservation. We focus and offer our public stewardship for local important natural areas, wildlife habitats, water quality, historic cultural resources, scenic views, and landscapes. These goals specifically relate to the nine-acre land conservation easement (a voluntary, legal agreement between landowners and land trusts) for the Westport Headlands that directly overlook the natural rocky coastal beauty of the Pacific Ocean.

Abuse of land conservation easements by those motivated to create a financial tax shelter rather than land conservation is a serious problem that endangers the viability and reach of the land conservation easement goals of honest charitable actors. Please note that the fair tax incentives offered to honest charitable actors are reasonable to motivate donations of land (such as the Westport Headlands) that directly benefit the public interested in nature's inspirational beauty.

The good news is that our U.S. Congress has introduced an efficient and effective approach to address this problem of abusive tax shelters. The bipartisan Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act would continue to recognize honorable philanthropy for land conservation easements while shutting down those abusive tax shelters that are creating backlash against the concept of charitable conservation easements.

The legislation would disallow a charitable deduction when a tax shelter profit is monetized in a short time (three years or less) from the donation of the land conservation easement. The bill is balanced in that it does include an exception for certain good faith land conservation easements donated by family partnerships.

It is no secret that the Westport Village Society believes the Westport Headlands is an incredibly special Mendocino County place for the public to

visit, preserve, and enjoy the spirit of its natural coastal beauty. We diligently work to preserve additional lands and resources for public benefit using conservation tax credits to motivate donations by honest landowners.

We will continue to advocate for the tax shelter abuse to end and we trust you will as well so we can reduce the risk that could befall honorable philanthropists who aim to preserve places such as the Westport Headlands.

So please speak up and support this congressional legislation that is designed to enhance, not diminish, the reputation of those supporting honest land conservation easements. Please urge your members of Congress to pass the Charitable Conservation Easement Program Integrity Act this year.

Court-Ordered Community Service Opportunities in Westport

Gary Quinton

Do you need to serve court-ordered Community Service or serve in a Sheriff's Department Work Release program? Why not serve it in your community? We would value your time!

There are several places and varied types of work in Westport where you can provide your hours and get credit towards the satisfaction of your court order, including work for the Westport Volunteer Fire Department, Westport-Ten Mile Cemetery District, and the Westport Village Society. Jobs include grass and weed cutting, painting, handyman work, and more. We can help you with registration paperwork and compliance/completion documents. If you are interested, please call Gary Quinton, (707) 964-7073.

24/7 Westport Wave

The Westport Wave is always free to everyone at any time on the Newsletter page of our website westportvillagesociety.org – where you'll always find our most current issue as well as nearly 9 years of monthly back-issues, all in living color, with live links! Check it out, and tell your friends!



talented Westport artists. Here is a description by artist Baile Oakes of his monumental creation “Gestation”.

“GESTATION”

1986-1990

**Palisades Park,
Santa Monica,
CA**

The primal forces of Life are the inspiration for my work as a sculptor. I aspire to describe and demonstrate natural phenomena and the cycles of Gaia’s Creation in such a manner as to place us in direct relationship with the living systems that sustain us all.

Palisades Park is a meeting place of Sun and Moon with air, water, land, flora, and fauna.

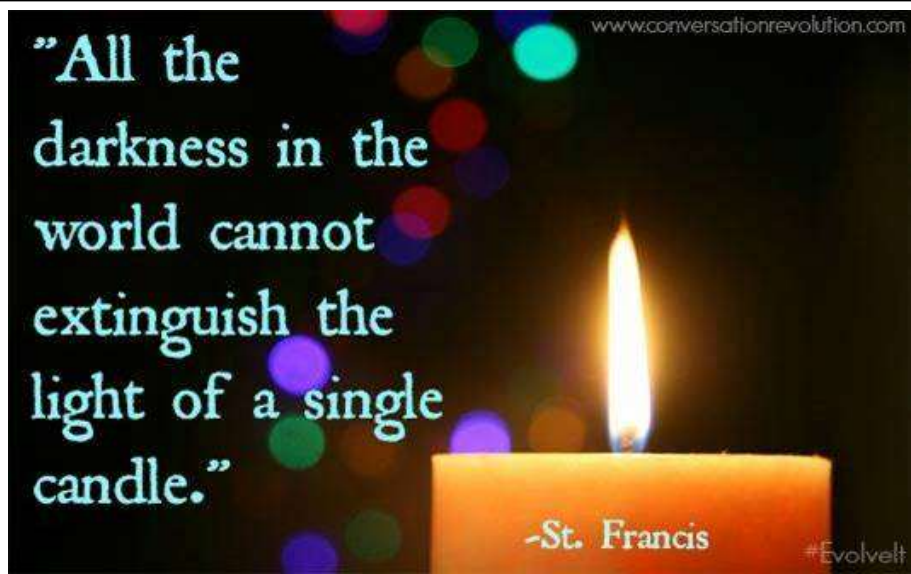
I wanted to create a sculpture that would symbolize the dynamic of all Life: Creation, Birth, and Regeneration.

Gestation is positioned precisely to allow *Gestation* to frame Sun as it meets Ocean on the Winter Solstice. On this day it reminds us of the importance of this sacred moment each year that nurtures all life on Earth: The Conception of the Rebirth of Spring.

A Winter Solstice Tribute To Life

Baile Oakes

Editor’s Note: It has long been a goal of The Westport Wave to feature works of art by our many



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE WESTPORT WAVE!

December 2020 Westport Calendar

(Please note that because of the COVID crisis, meeting occurrences, dates, and modes may vary.)

Tuesday, December 1st – Westport Municipal Advisory Council Monthly Meeting CANCELLED (see <http://www.westportmac.org/>)

Wednesday, December 2nd – Free Covid masks and signs, Covid Response Network, 3:00PM-5:00PM, in front of Safeway in Fort Bragg. (see page 3)

Wednesday, December 9th – Westport Volunteer Fire Department Monthly Meeting, 6:00PM (call Chief Dan Maxey at (707) 357-4353 to attend remotely)

Thursday, December 10th – Bookmobile, 9:30AM-10:00AM, Westport Store (service outside of Bookmobile only)

Thursday, December 10th – Hanukkah Begins At Sundown

Saturday, December 12th – Westport County Water District Monthly Board Meeting, 10:00AM, Westport Hotel

Saturday, December 12th – Westport Christmas Tree Lighting and visit by Santa Claus, 5:15PM (see page 2)

Sunday, December 13th – Monthly Westport Church Thich Nhat Hahn Discussion Group CANCELLED

Monday, December 14th – New Moon, 8:16AM

Friday, December 18th – Hanukkah Ends At Sundown

Sunday, December 20th – Monthly Westport Church Quaker Worship Group CANCELLED

Monday, December 21st – Winter Solstice, 2:02AM

Thursday, December 24th – Christmas Eve

Friday, December 25th – Christmas Day

Saturday, December 26th – Kwanzaa Begins

Tuesday, December 29th – Full Moon, 7:28PM

Thursday, December 31st – New Year’s Eve

Friday, January 1st, 2021 – New Year’s Day

Saturday, January 16th, 2021 (save the date) – Westport Village Society Quarterly Board Meeting, 9:00 AM via Zoom. Public is invited, instructions will be emailed to the Wave e-mail list. If you wish to be added to the e-mail list please email the Westport Village Society at wvs@westportvillagesociety.org.

The Westport Wave is a free monthly community newsletter published by the **Westport Village Society**, a non-profit community-benefit organization. Internet subscribers to *The Wave* receive their **COLOR** copies on or before the first day of every month by e-mail. Printed (black-and-white) copies of our current newsletter are also available for free at the Westport Community Store. Both the current *Westport Wave* and nearly 9 years of monthly back-issues are also on the Newsletter page of our WVS website www.westportvillagesociety.org.

Contributions for our January 1st, 2021 issue of *The Westport Wave* are due by December 27th, 2020, and should be sent to Editor Steve Brigham at westportwave@gmail.com. Thank You!