

July 1, 2012

# Westport Wave

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## Back To The Land

Steve Brigham, *Editor*

Welcome to summer in Westport! – a time when we all spend a lot of time outdoors. Here on the North Coast, the natural world around us is alive with thriving plants and animals, and our senses come alive in special ways. With the inspirations of the Summer Solstice, now is the time to renew our deep connections with the land around us. This is the land of our ancestors, the land of our dreams, and it is the land that we call home, along with every living thing around us. And so this is our theme for this July 2012 edition of *The Westport Wave* – Back To The Land.

Heading up our lineup this month is important news about our much-loved Westport-Union Landing State Park. It wasn't too long ago that we got the news that ours would be one of 70 California State Parks to be closed this year because of budget cuts. And if you told me back then that virtually all of these parks would end up not closing on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, I'd have said you were crazy. But that's what's happened – for now anyway. A full 40 state parks on the original closure list are now still open because of community groups and private funding. And an additional 25 parks (including ours) are in negotiations to remain open through non-government operation. Money has been allocated in the state budget to fund these parks until operating agreements are signed. This is a miracle of community involvement!

Westport-Union Landing State Park is truly the land of Native Americans, who have lived and visited there for thousands of years. Only in the last 170 years or so has this changed – a mere blip in history. Their love of their land makes them the perfect administrators of it today. Nowadays, we all share the Land we call Westport, which represents so many of our dreams, no matter what ancestry we may have. A number of our articles in this month's *Wave* touch

on that theme, including Thad's Time Traveler column on page 2, previews of both our new Westport Community Garden and the new Kibesillah Coastal Trail on page 4, and much, much more. So read on, dear friends! Maybe you'll be inspired to love this land, and our community, just a little bit more this summer!



Feather Dancers at Westport-UL State Park.

## State Park Remains Open

Thad Van Bueren

A lot of energy has been focused on keeping this state park open, and I'm happy to report that Mendocino Coast State Parks District Superintendent Loren Rex has told me that our State Park will definitely remain open during the negotiations regarding an operating agreement with the Cahto Tribe. Loren told me he is optimistic that agreement can move forward after initial discussion with senior State Parks staff in Sacramento. The next steps are reviews of the agreement by the State Parks legal and executive offices. Those reviews will not be completed before July 1. But State Parks staff will keep the park open while the reviews are going on.

Loren mentioned there will be a ongoing State Parks oversight of the implementation of an operating agreement since the Cahto Tribe does not have any prior experience running a State Park. Several people have mentioned to me they would like to ensure equitable access for all visitors. I can assure you that State Parks is well aware of that issue. Any park operator will be required to abide by State Park policies, a stipulation that is spelled out in the boilerplate operating agreement the Westport Village Society reviewed earlier this year. Several other activities have focused on keeping our local State Park open. A Native American gathering was held June 2 at the north end of the park in the group camp area just north of Howard Creek. The event was organized by Round Valley tribal member Nicole Eleck, and drew participants from many surrounding tribes. The Bear Dancers came from the Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria in southern Humboldt County, which is a mixture of Wiyot and Mattole. I attended the Feather Dance held in the late afternoon, and a Manchester Pomo man officiated. You can check out a short video clip of that dance at: <https://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=4177560076582>. If you hover at the bottom of the frame you can choose the "HQ" button in the lower right to view the high quality version. Several meetings were also held in Laytonville in May, organized by members of the Cahto Tribe. In addition, the Westport Village Society has received some modest donations that will be used to help keep the park open.

## The Time Traveler

Thad Van Bueren

There are many ways to know the past, from stories and fables to documents and photographs. The ones that involve our personal journeys hold the most meaningful lessons, however. I've been thinking this month about the changes I myself have experienced over more than half a century. It is a journey that brought me into this community, which is not just a place, but a group of people I treasure.

My story has a lot in common with others who have arrived here since the early 1970s. Many of us were (and remain) part of a "back to the land" movement. The northern California coast attracted folks of our persuasion because of its beauty and rural character. The local area was in sharp decline by that time

because local timber reserves were largely exhausted. This new wave of immigrants formed experimental communities or simply camped out on vacant land like the headlands where Westport Union Landing State Beach was later developed in 1983.

There were a lot of vacant properties at that time, and the Thompson Ranch north of town was being converted into the Westport Beach Subdivision. Cooperatives sprang up at the Ten Mile, Frazier, and Howard Creek ranches, among other places. It was a



Camping on the headlands, 1978 (courtesy of Noemi Schirmann)

time of social experimentation, new music, growing your own food, and the advancement of civil rights, environmental protection, and other issues. There is an engaging new book I recommend called *West of Eden: Communes and Utopia in Northern California* edited by Iain Boal, Janiferie Stone, Michael Watts, and Cal Winslow (2012, PM Press, Oakland) that explores those trends, although it does not specifically mention our local history.

A couple of themes in that book resonate with me. One is the sense of community that is present in rural places like ours. The same feeling can connect people in urban areas, but they don't get the benefit of our immersion in nature. The other theme is the idea that growing our own food is the key to self-sufficiency and the future of the planet. The consequences of depending on long distance transport of food are legion and we've all heard about them. There is the cost of transportation, as well as the fact that foods are picked before they are ripe so they can survive the trip. The bigger issue is what happens if the global food supply system gets disrupted?

Gardening is not just about empowering ourselves and eating healthier organic, local food. It is also a way to connect with the earth. Gardening is an act of faith, subject to the vagaries of weather and wild animals. Up Howard Creek we plant some new possibilities every year, just to see what succeeds. Noemi Shirmann shared a photo of an earlier garden on Howard Creek that gives me a sense of continuity. The main ingredient in gardening is patience. Our experiment this year involved a large patch of wheat, oats, and fava beans that turned out to be a fabulous success. Our favas achieved six feet of growth and yielded pods 8-10 inches long not because of steroids (as some friends have joked), but due to the happenstance of the rainfall. We've had 49.62 inches this year and the heavy rains in March were the perfect gift.

The great thing about these new crops is the high yield for modest effort. We simply tilled the soil in November, sowed seeds, and then watched. The favas came ripe in June, while the wheat and oats will be ready in July. Hopefully the recent rain has not introduced a problem with the rust fungus, which can damage coastal wheat. It is not hard to imagine surviving on favas if it came down to that. They are not only nutritious; the plants also fix nitrogen in the soil, and bees find them irresistible. They are the only old world bean variety, grown from China to Europe and north Africa. So there are a lot of recipes to try out. Next year I'll plant grain where the favas now stand, and sow favas in this year's grain patches to replenish soil nutrients. Barley is on my list for next winter, since I like to make ale. Roasting the barley will be another fun experiment. My hops vines, now in their third year, are already flourishing.

We're also pushing the envelope with various trees and bushes that produce food. This takes even more

patience, but with global warming I figure why not try some plants not usually found in our climate? We now get oranges, lemons, figs, and olives in addition

to apples, pears, walnuts, almonds, cherries, plums, and a variety of berries. Our lime, strawberry guava, kiwis, pomegranates, and chestnuts are not yet producing, but seem to be thriving. A Haas avocado tree grown from a seed that sprouted in the compost pile is now flowering for the first time after about a dozen years, and they require no cross pollinator—so I'm cautiously optimistic. Our coastal environment presents some unique opportunities because we don't get that many frost days. For sensitive crops that like some heat, I pick south-facing slopes sheltered from the wind and located above the valley bottom where cool air tends to pool.

I also appreciate another historic precedent that is still going on today. Namely, the way people in our community share their produce and plant starts. What a great way to connect and thrive!

### 2011-2012 Rainfall Report

After a couple of pretty good years for rain here in Westport, our July 2011-June 2012 rainfall season started out nicely last fall, with over 11 inches of rain here in town in October and November. But then, a weakening La Nina nailed us with a very dry December (only 1.75"! ). By the end of February, we had just 22.64" for the season – 70% of the year before. Things were looking grim until March, when we got soaked with a healthy 13.37" of rain. It dried up again in May, and now we're finished, at 40.42", or about 15 inches less than a year ago, and still somewhat less than "normal". That's here in town – many of you folks up the hills and canyons had more rain than we did (Thad reports 49.62" on Howard Creek for the season). Sometimes it seems like there's never enough rain here in California, so we're happy to take whatever we can get!



Inspecting the 2012 Fava Bean crop.



Productive beginnings at new Westport Garden.

## The Westport Community Garden

Steve Brigham

There's nothing like fresh vegetables, and I mean really fresh vegetables that you eat within minutes, or even seconds of picking. Wouldn't it be nice to have a place in town where you can pick your own fresh, organically grown vegetables any time you want, and absolutely free? Well now there is – at the brand new Westport Community Garden, which is right next to the Westport Church and Westport School at the corner of Abalone and Hillcrest streets. With a minimum of time and expense, and the blessings of both the School District and the Church Board, David Brothers and I have rejuvenated the old greenhouse and set up a deer fence, and now your new garden is ready for you to harvest!

This month, you can choose from gourmet varieties of stir-fry and salad greens such as collards, kale, bok choy, swiss chard, mustard, and spinach, plus beets, sugar-snap peas, and zucchini. Later in the summer, and into the fall, there will be several varieties of summer squash, cucumbers, Italian Beans, lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, and 15 different kinds of tomatoes, all ready for you to pick and enjoy! And it won't stop there, since the greenhouse will allow us to grow fresh greens throughout the winter months.

Of course Rome wasn't built in a day, and this new Community Garden is still just a fraction of what it can become. It would be nice to have a little money

for soil mix (we grow everything in giant pots and raised beds to eliminate gopher problems and get the vegetables more up to reaching level), and also it would be nice to install some professional looking raised beds. By next year, we hope to have many more vegetables, and flowers for cutting as well. If you would like to help, you can e-mail Steve Brigham at [Westport2010@aol.com](mailto:Westport2010@aol.com), and we'll talk about it.

So come visit your new garden, any time you want! Just remember to close the gate when you leave so the deer won't get in. I'm sure that you will agree that David's years of experience as an organic farmer really shows in the quality of the produce. Get your greens now, while they're at their peak, and come back often! And "DON'T PANIC, IT'S ORGANIC!"

## Coastal Trail Opens

Thad Van Bueren

On June 23 about three dozen people gathered at the south end of this newly completed 1.25 mile long section of coastal trail for a ribbon cutting ceremony and hike. The trail was completed under the direction of Louisa Morris of the Mendocino Land Trust, with the generous support of landowner Will Jackson, the Coastal Commission, the State Coastal Conservancy, and many others. Supporters attended to celebrate the opening, and comments were offered by Louisa Morris, Teresa Spade (formerly of the Mendocino County Planning and Building Services Department), Supervisor Kendall Smith, Linda Locklin of the Coastal Commission staff, and others.



Kibesillah Trail Opening, June 23, 2012.

The trail is designed for hiking and mountain bikes, with great views of the local coastline. Parking will be built as a follow-up project later in time. For now, you can easily walk from the parking area on the headlands just north of Abalobadiah Gulch to the south end of this new trail segment. The trail will eventually connect from that existing parking all the way north to Chadbourne Gulch ("Blues Beach"), which is part of a large Caltrans property.

If the coastal trail interests you, you may also be interested in attending the Westport MAC meeting July 3 at 7:00 PM at the Church. Input will be taken at that meeting on the proposed State Parks dune restoration project, which includes removing miles of the old haul road that will permanently foreclose any future opportunity for a bike and hike trail in the northern portion of MacKerricher State Park. This project was featured prominently in the June 21, 2012 issue of the *Fort Bragg Advocate News*. You can download a summary of the pending coastal development permit at the WMAC web site on the Next Meeting page:  
<http://www.westportmac.org/nextmeeting.jsp>

## WVFD Responding

Don Armstrong, Captain, WVFD

A community cannot survive without the involvement of its members. Westport is no exception. We have chosen to live in a place that is truly beautiful, but is isolated and far from resources such as medical and emergency care. This is why you should consider joining the Westport Volunteer Fire Department.

The WVFD is made up of volunteers from the community committed to being available when the community needs us. We have all chosen to become trained in medical skills, as well as firefighting, rope rescue and vehicle extrication. We are the first responders to all emergencies between Ten Mile Bridge and Usal Road.

There are approximately a dozen members of the department right now, but at any given time there may not be that many in town to call upon. We need others to step up, especially younger and stronger members to recognize their obligation to the community and join us. We will provide the training

and the guidance. Currently, we have a combined total of at least 50 years of firefighting experience on the department and we would like to share our knowledge with you for the future health of Westport.

If you are interested in joining the department, or would like further information regarding the department and our trainings, please contact Chief Beck Regalia at (707) 367-8501. To paraphrase the late President Kennedy, ask not what Westport can do for you, ask what you can do for Westport!

## Oddz 'N Endz

Donna Brigham

A lot of folks recently have had the unfortunate experience of bears trying to sort their trash and recyclables for them (the photo above comes from Jim Genereux – thanks, Jim!). Although I, as the current Westport Recycle Queen, strongly urge (and even plead with!) all of my customers to separate their trash and sort ALL of their recycling into the proper categories BEFORE you come out to the Recycle Center (open Thurs. & Fri. 10-2; Sat. 10-4) – don't hire a bear to do this, since they just don't do a very good job!

If you've got bears in your trash, you can try spraying your garbage cans with ammonia every night, but sometimes even that doesn't work! So you might want to check these days and make sure your trash storage system is bear-proof. Good luck! (You just have to be a *little* smarter than the bears!)



How NOT to properly sort your Recyclables!



The flowers of Feverfew can be used medicinally.

## Feverfew

Lois Senger

Botanically known as *Tanacetum parthenium* (and also *Chrysanthemum parthenium*). Feverfew is blooming in our gardens now with clusters of daisy flowers with white outer rays and a yellow center. It grows about two feet tall with slightly hairy leaves that alternate along the stem. It can be seen growing along the side of the road and often can make its way into your yard. It is an herb that is most powerful around the summer solstice, so this is a good time to look for it and harvest some for use. Feverfew is used in alleviating migraine headaches, inflammation, common headaches, and stress related tension. It usually needs to be taken over a period of 1-3 months as a preventative for migraines; however, it will help alleviate the pain of an active migraine. It should NOT be taken by pregnant women or people taking anticoagulant drugs. Feverfew/Lavender Flower Tea for Headaches: 2 parts Feverfew blossoms, 1 part Peppermint leaves, 1/2 part Lavender blossoms. Prepare as an infusion and drink 1/4 cup every half hour until headache symptoms have passed. The active ingredient, parthenolide is highly sensitive to heat and can be destroyed if the herb is exposed to high heat in drying or preparation process. So care should be taken when handling this herb.

## Water District News

As had been announced well in advance, The Westport County Water District Board of Directors (Toby Hickman, David Brothers, and Homer Whitehouse) conducted a public rate increase hearing at their Board Meeting on the evening of June 30<sup>th</sup> at the Firehouse. This was the culmination of many months of careful budget work and operations review that was necessary this year to balance revenues and operating costs. Members of the public were carefully briefed on budget and operations details, with polite discussion ensuing. A number of people expressed their gratitude for a very educational meeting, and were pleased with all of the information presented. With positive public input, the Board then approved the rate increases that they had proposed in a May letter to all Water District Customers. The new monthly rates of \$166/month for residential water and sewer service and \$262/month for commercial water and sewer service will take effect immediately, and represent an increase of 27% over the old rates which were approved five years ago. The Water District Board would like to thank all who have provided public input and suggestions during their budget review and rate increase process, which has been most helpful in their decision-making.

## “THE ART OF PERFORMANCE”

Liza Saenz-Bernard

### Bridge Show, Working Together, Food, Change

There's so much going on in July! Here is just a few on the list – Mendocino Music Festival, Salmon Barbecue, and Bastille Day – a good place to go for brochures and more information is the Chamber of Commerce in Fort Bragg right on the old Mill site on Highway One.

Westport's BRIDGE SHOW paintings & photographs are still on display in the Westport Hotel's dining room and Abalone Pub. Kathryn LeMieux's oil painting of Don Armstrong's mother came from a small black & white, 75 year old photograph and has a story to go with the painting. Bill Brazill's son Nelson is showing a black & white night image of the old Noyo Bridge, and right next to this image is an original piece of the bridge. Bill Brazill was there when the Noyo Bridge came down and brought home

a piece of steel & girder that has the original green paint on the wood. The iron is rusting into the kind of patina that artists work very hard to create!

Suzi Long has an original pastel of the “Pudding Creek Trestle” that really shimmers from the water’s reflection of the trestle on the creek’s flowing waters! She will be showing at The Mendocino Art Center in a one-woman show called “The Big Splash”. There are also artworks by 10 other local artists from Fort Bragg, Mendocino, and Westport now on display in the BRIDGE SHOW, which will come down July 18-20.

We attended the play “OTHER PEOPLES MONEY” (OPM) and left full of energy & questions for the actors, who will visit & discuss the script after their awesome performances. Wants vs. needs, arbitrage, dying corporations, Moms & Pops, etc, is all in this well-written piece of work. Mendocino Theatre Company’s play, OPM, written by Jerry Sterner was enlightening, humorous, and like Debbie L. Holmer said, “This is indeed a complex play.” Go to [www.advocateneews.com](http://www.advocateneews.com) for Debbie’s CULTURE CORNER. In her column, photographer, Larry Wagner says, “The five different characters all have a different set of values. It is the clash of values that makes for such an interesting play. “OPM” is also a primer in what the world of arbitrage is about.”

The word diversify came up all through the play and stayed with me for days. Diversify – broadening their horizons to expand a commercial organization into new areas of business. It was upsetting to see the little company get liquidated but the next day there was an article about a tribe in Brooks (Yolo County) who are doing just this, working together to bring about CHANGE.

A Tribe in Healdsburg is giving \$1,000,000 to the local Fire Department, according to a recent article in the Santa Roasa Press-Democrat ([www.pressdemocrat.com](http://www.pressdemocrat.com)). The tribe will give \$800,000 over the next 10 years to pay a salary to the fire department. This is creating CHANGE in huge ways.

This is and has been the best time for creation and change. In commemoration of LABOR DAY our next Art Show theme will be TEAM WORK/WORKING TOGETHER. Express yourself this Summer into Winter, paint, photograph, sculpt and share your art!

Following are a few dates for the next few months to keep in mind for you artists wanting to submit work.

Art show themes for GALLERY THIS! @ THE WESTPORT HOTEL are as follows (dates are for the Last Saturday Receptions at The Westport Hotel):

July 28<sup>th</sup> and Aug. 25<sup>th</sup> -- **LABOR DAY ART – WORKING TOGETHER** (working together, families, gardening, communities, building).

Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>, Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>, and Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> -- **FOOD.**

Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> and Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> -- **CHANGE.**

Call me at 303-6376 when you wish to meet at The Hotel, or email me at [saenzphoto@yahoo.com](mailto:saenzphoto@yahoo.com)

## July at The Westport Hotel and Old Abalone Pub

Dorine Real

### Neighborhood Nights

The Old Abalone Pub has extended its hours for the summer. We will now be open on Sunday and Monday afternoons and evenings from 3:00 to 8:00. Caitlin Fanning will be cooking a simplified menu with many of Chef Daniel Martin’s dishes (including ribs) and a few specials of her own. You are invited to come in, hang out, play a game, and have a meal or just a drink, snack, or dessert.

The Pub will also be open all Fourth of July week. We’ll be open for dinner on Wednesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, from 3:00 to 9:00. And Tuesday through Saturday you’ll be able to get a special picnic dinner, with ribs or chicken and all the trimmings, to eat in the Pub or on the deck or lawn (we’ll provide a picnic blanket) or to take home or to the beach.

Don’t forget to see the “Bridge Show” before it closes on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. We have been adding a few new things, such as an actual piece of the old Noyo bridge, so you may want to take a second look. The next show, opening on Last Saturday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, will be titled “Working Together”. The theme honors Labor Day and will feature people (and a few animals?) working together. Submissions are invited: contact Liza at 303-6376.

Story Night for July will be Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM. You can eat in the Pub first. If you never found out who fell off the bridge to Bridge Rock, you might want to be there. The theme of fathers and grandfathers from last month is not worn out, and this month you might want to include a mother or grandmother. Instead of a verbal story, you could bring something made by your ancestor, or a picture of multiple generations. Dorine's grandfather was the tallest man in his town, and she hopes to bring a picture to prove it!

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You are reading the *Westport Wave*, a monthly community newsletter published on the first day of every month by the Westport Village Society, a non-profit organization. Contributions for the August 1, 2012 edition of the *Westport Wave* are due by **July 29th**, and should be sent to editor Steve Brigham at [westportwave@aol.com](mailto:westportwave@aol.com), or P.O. Box 237, Westport, CA 95488. Electronic subscription requests can be sent to [wvs@westportvillagesociety.org](mailto:wvs@westportvillagesociety.org).

## July 2012 Westport Calendar

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Full Moon, 11:52AM

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Westport MAC meeting, 7:00PM at the Westport Community Church

**July 4<sup>th</sup>** – The 4<sup>th</sup> of July (duh!), celebrating 236 years since the USA Declaration of Independence.

**July 7<sup>th</sup>** – Fort Bragg Salmon Barbecue (11AM-6PM) and Fireworks, at dusk (duh again!)

**July 12<sup>th</sup>** – Bookmobile, Westport Store, 9-9:30AM

**July 14<sup>th</sup>** – Bastille Day

**July 18<sup>th</sup>** – New Moon, 9:24PM

**July 19<sup>th</sup>** – Westport Village Society Quarterly meeting, 7PM at The Westport Community Church

**July 20<sup>th</sup>** – Story Night at the Westport Hotel, 7PM

**July 26<sup>th</sup>** – Bookmobile, Westport Store, 9-9:30AM

**July 28<sup>th</sup>** – WORKING TOGETHER Art Show Reception, 5:30PM to 8:00 PM at the Westport Hotel

**August 25<sup>th</sup>** – WVFD Annual Summer Barbecue (save the date!)