

### A testimonial for a natural remedy.

Glen Birbeck

It's great when one remedy can be applied to a couple of problems. Such is the case with garlic. It is known to keep vampires away and now I can testify as to its effectiveness against another scourge, ticks. They seem to dislike garlic as much as I favor it. One of the compounds in garlic, AMS, finds its way to the skin of the garlic eater. There it produces an odor which seems to drive a tick to distraction. A tick who could normally crawl from a person's foot to their head unnoticed will perform St Vitus dance a few steps into the journey. This announces their presence. Then if they haven't already jumped away from their erstwhile victim they can be pinched and added to the tick collection. Where once I'd put my pants in my socks to bar their access I now wear shorts allowing them to escape. I got Lyme disease a couple of years ago. I was lucky in that my reaction was the classic bull's eye rash. It was treated early and effectively. But getting over Lyme doesn't confer immunity. The symptoms and progress of the illness made me want to avoid getting it again, which so far, I have. I've collected 30 ticks from my skin this season, yet I've had no tick bites. I believe they'll not bite skin exuding AMS (Allyl methyl sulfide), the compound giving garlic eaters their "aura". In the time of Covid it helps to have an odorous aura. As an added benefit this chemical defense keeps people six feet away.



photo by Steve Carroll

## Letter From New Mexico

Phil Groce

I sold a 22-caliber pistol that I was storing in the outhouse to the owner of a gun shop in Carefree AZ, because I didn't want to take it home to Maine on the airplane. Shaved head, tattoos up the arms, cut-away tee shirt at the sleeves, and I didn't notice the money he paid me had inscribed, "Trump is great."

We were happily visiting relatives in Scottsdale, AZ, but we were glad to return to our cabin in western New Mexico (NM) in the high desert--6700 feet up--populated by many cows and few people. Phoenix traffic and stoplights wear thin fast.

We decided to sell the cabin, even though we had been coming to this area south of the Zuni reservation in NM for over 20 years, always during the winter, except for this time. We had the place built 11 years ago with locally cut and sawed Douglas fir and made it comfortable to our taste. It has a view that when people walk out to the back deck, they inevitably say, "I love it!" Saddened to sell it, but being in our 70 and 80's, travel to remote spots grows difficult on us. We had been driving out there and back.

Our genuine real estate agent from the nearest town, Quemado, told us that she is talking to her family about possibly making an offer on the place herself. Few, if any places like this one. We are stepping out of ownership but will stay close to neighbors spaced miles apart in the valley.

Some of you will know that a person can live comfortably without running water, or electricity, and not even use solar. We use propane for light, heat, and cooking, delivered from Quemado 30 miles away on sometimes harsh dirt roads. We have a destination outhouse with a view. Words fail to describe what it's like for us to dance on the back deck to music from a CD player during a NM sunset, or to sit watching the sun rise every morning drinking coffee from the percolator, or to lay in bed at night to look out the window at the billions of stars in a very dark sky, or watch foul weather assaulting us up the wash. Memories stacked upon one another.

The people of NM look you in the eye and say what is on their minds, much like around here in Union. From the very beginning, we felt welcomed in NM. We chose the general area to look for property as we were flying at night to the West Coast to visit family, nearly 25 years ago. I looked down and saw no lights. I nudged my wife, "How about a cabin down there?" Magically later, my wife, Dianne, saw in the Courier Gazette a little advertisement for property from a large ranch divided in NM. A travel agent friend found us cheap tickets, and she and her husband and Dianne and I, flew out the next weekend.

The people selling the property took us down a steep dirt road off the central NM plateau, just west of the continental divide, and we were wowed at what we saw below and beyond, to the mountains of AZ 100 miles away. It was only a 30-acre parcel (puny in NM standards), but we literally ran around to see it. Ancient Indian artifacts and petroglyphs were all around, along with sunken dugouts and broken corrals from early 1900 western migrations from the dustbowl, not to speak of the volcano down the road filled with salt, harvested for thousands of years by Indian folk. We made our decision forthright.

We started going out there each year during the winter. We kept two lawn chairs hidden in the bushes, and we would set them in various places on the property to find our special spot and essentially one that had good cell reception (a rarity in the outback). Took us several years to make the decision to build something.

A carpenter, a Sioux Indian, was recommended to us by a friend who owned the village store in Quemado. From Maine, we contacted him and told him approximately what we wanted, and he did the rest, sending us pictures of what he was doing and bills now and then for the materials and labor. We never met him until we arrived one stormy winter day. Wonderful craftsman. Affordable.

So, we are now selling it. We look on it as transition. We note that many friends and family are in transition. Seems that Covid made so many of us come to a full-stop in our lives for nearly 2 years, and now all the changes are bursting from of the package.

If you go to a bar in western NM, or eastern, AZ, and plop on a barstool and look down the bar, you likely will see black cowboy hats and Bud Lites in a bottle. You already know they look up to see your black hat, and when you order Bud Lite in a bottle, it's like homecoming and old times with no longer strangers. Politics not an issue.

I'm partial to my black hat, but there's a white one, too, for the summer. Lots of practical reasons to wear a hat. Out there, you can see cowboys right down the road. In fact, the cows have the right-of-way. If you don't want them around, you have to build a fence, and I hate fences. It's free range. I feel that way myself, and I don't have hooves.

I have to admit, that when I sold my gun in AZ, I felt somewhere between a SNL skit and the haunting of Germany in the 1930's. I know that it takes a blind eye to politics to have a good time out there, and I also know that all I have to do is start walking down the dry wash below the cabin, and I would eventually be swimming in the Gulf of California.



## Mid-Coast Recovery Coalition Launches Capital Campaign for The Friends House

The Mid-Coast Recovery Center has launched a \$50,000 capital campaign to support repairs and renovations to The Friends House, a men's recovery house located in Rockland. Addiction to drugs and/or alcohol has become all too common in mid-coast Maine and across the country, taking its toll on individuals and families throughout our communities. Since the onset of COVID-19, deaths due to drug overdose have dramatically increased in Maine. According to the Maine Attorney General's Office, 2020 was recorded as the worst year for drug overdoses with 502 deaths and numbers continue to increase in 2021.

The twin epidemics of COVID-19 and drug addiction have made recovery more difficult because of the separation and isolation requirements. Individuals in recovery are in need of significantly more connection, not less, to establish new patterns of healthy relationships. Without providing safe, sober and supportive housing, most people cannot make progress in their recovery and continue to struggle with complications of their addiction.

The capital campaign will raise additional funding to support needed repairs and renovations to The Friends House. Some of the repairs include the addition of a first-floor bathroom and extensive renovations to the parking area. The Friends House provides a healing environment in which the residents spend time together for support, while establishing employment and connections to other local resources in the community that assist their recoveries. The campaign will provide for an even safer and a more effective place for those committed to recovery from addiction.

If you would like to help, please visit [www.midcoastrecovery.org](http://www.midcoastrecovery.org) or via email at [info@midcoastrecovery.org](mailto:info@midcoastrecovery.org)

Mid-Coast Recovery Coalition, established in 2016, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide support to individuals and families seeking help and healing to address the challenge of addiction.

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It is not easy, and we would very much like to have your help! We are open to everyone and eager to welcome you into the fold.

Our local business sponsors, over 80 strong, support us because they appreciate the interest local media and local business share in maintaining our independence and viability in an increasingly centralized culture and economy. We also receive much-appreciated support from individual donors.

The Buzz which you hold in your hand, or see on your screen, is a weekly publication of WRFR. The Buzz editors, writers and artists are also all volunteers, and we are eager for you to join us.

The umbrella organization for WRFR, The Buzz, and other activities is the Old School, a non-profit - 501 (c) (3) - educational organization, also all volunteers.

To learn more, to become a sponsor or a donor, or to join us as a volunteer, go to [wrfr.org](http://wrfr.org), email [steinberger@zwi.net](mailto:steinberger@zwi.net) or call Joe at 596-0731.

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## WEEK SIXTY-TWO

### COVID-19 RANDOM NOTES WHILE SHELTERING IN PLACE

by Phyllis Merriam

New CDC guidelines for fully vaccinated Americans, free us to go mask-less in most public settings – except on an airplane, bus or in medical settings. These guidelines have left me with mixed emotions. On the one hand, it feels freeing. On the other hand, my masks have been my security blanket for well over a year. While my Pfizer vaccinations will give me 95% protection from Covid, I'll never know which strangers I encounter in public have not been vaccinated and will now not wear masks. It sounds like the CDC is relying heavily on an honor system. Not sure I can trust an honor system when too many refuse vaccines. I guess I'll think of my venturing out more as a sort of Learner's Permit for a driver's license. I'll continue wearing masks in indoor public settings, many of which still require masks. Why do Americans comply, for the most part, with life-saving seatbelts but object to life-saving vaccines? Why do Americans have to qualify for driver's licenses but don't have to show their Covid vaccination cards?

My neighbor's daffodils and tulips have been blooming for many weeks now as they glow in the early evening light. Weeks of canary yellow forsythia in yards, hillsides, cemeteries and parks are coming to an end as they morph into green leaves, just as lilac buds are beginning to form early this year. Deciduous trees are leafed out now.

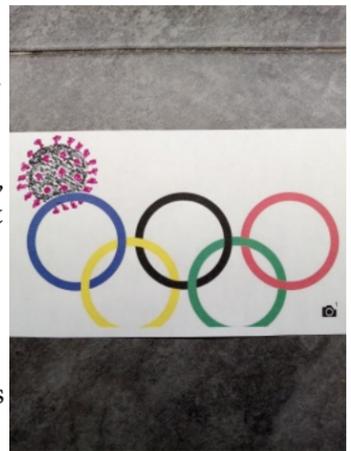
I've been laid low by BigBoi's death. Losing a beloved pet after so many years of companionship has been even harder than I imagined. I become so attached to our furry pets. This turned out to be especially so during the unexpected pandemic, which meant even more meaningful time with our sweet BigBoi.

My husband and I had our first social outing at a Rockland relatives' home since sheltering in place. Since we were all vaccinated this winter, we were all able to enjoy an outdoor gathering over delicious food without masks. What a treat.

A creative South End Grocery staff member was sporting a wonderfully whimsical outfit with a theme: A mask, earrings and tights all with red cherries. Another day her theme was colorful skeletons. Our city and the world need more creativity and fun during these times.

6,000 doctors in the Japanese Medical Practitioners Assoc. are calling for the Tokyo Olympics to be cancelled due to spikes in Covid-19 cases with a third state of emergency declared. The IOC is forging ahead with the games due to start in less than three months. Maybe there will be new, added events: Covid Cycling, Aquatic Aerosolization, Spreadation Sprints, and Volleyball Variants & Pandemic Pentathlon.

I spent well over two hours waiting at the Rockland BMV to renew my driver's license. Everything was well organized but the clerk told me they're slammed with all the business from people moving to our mid-coast.



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