



Ned Hickson

Some people should have to earn the right to use fire

What follows is a re-enactment of sorts, pieced together from observations and details gathered during an incident over Mother's Day weekend at a nearby campground.

When you consider that we once carried embers around in hollowed out animal skulls for fear of losing the potential to make fire, it seems we've come a long way as a species.

Then, again, I've seen chimps driving motorcycles — it doesn't mean they should be in line at the DMV...

"You kids stay away from the grill! It's gonna get very

hot!" Mr. Kingsford said, ripping open a bag of briquettes labeled "easy starting." Over his bermuda shorts and a 49ers T-shirt, he wore a red and white striped apron with the words "It Ain't Ready Yet" emblazoned on the front. A prophecy, really.

After stacking the charcoal into a pyramid, he grabbed a quart of lighter fluid and proceeded to empty half of it over the briquettes, one hand patting his pockets. "I need matches," he hollered, then pinched the cigarette from his lips. "No I don't — never mind."

Crouching, he extended the red tip toward the vapory charcoals, holding as much of his body away from the grill as possible.

On the steps of the mobile home, his son and daughter sat riveted, elbows on their knees and hands clasped in anticipation, watching as Dad summoned the fire god. And kept summoning.

Then summoned some more.

"Where's those matches I asked for?!" he bellowed, and rose to his feet. "Mo-therrrrr!"

From the living area, a window slid open, and from painted fingertips was tossed a small box of matches.

"Thanks —"

The window slid shut.

"— Honey," finished Mr. Kingsford. Scratching the comb-over beneath his "Just Do It" hat, he examined the briquettes and decided the gods needed something more.

Eyes widening, his children watched as he opened a compartment near the rear of the mobile home and removed a red, plastic canister.

"But Dad, Mom said..."

He scowled, index finger pressing his lips. "You want to eat or not?" he hissed at the top of his voice, then proceeded to douse the grill with gasoline.

Slowly, the children backed along the mobile home and away from the epicenter as Dad slid a sulfur-tipped stick from the matchbox and pressed it against the gritty side panel. He stood, poised for the sprint, one leg dug into the ground for traction, the other angled for speed — like a relay runner waiting for the baton. Trembling slightly,

Mr. Kingsford smiled reassuringly at his huddled children, then struck the match to life and tossed it into the face of the grill.

In that instant, the lid blew shut, which caused the dog to bark, bringing Mom to the door just in time to see the kids cover their ears as Dad pushed off for the sprint while the split-level grill lifted off like an early 1960s NASA rocket, rising about six feet before angling left, then exploding into a ball of flames.

As the firemen put the last of the flames out a short time later, and the surrounding campers returned to their campsites, Mr. Kingsford shoved a copy of his citation into an apron pocket and

nursed a minor head injury with ice. From the small kitchen, the sizzle of skillet burgers made its way outside as Mom cooked over butane fire...

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Then, again...

Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, "Humor at the Speed of Life," is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com

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Folk music series to kick off May 19

KXCR and the Kenneth B. Gallery will kick-off the Spring/Summer Folk Series with well-known folk singer George Mann on Tuesday, May 19, beginning 6:30 p.m. at the Kenneth B. Gallery in Old Town Florence.

Mann's powerful music brings a message of hope, healing, struggle and change to the American scene.

For an evening of fun, friends and great music, bring your voice and join in the singing of the many folk tunes most of us learned as children.

Mann's focus has been toward the nation's veterans and the effects that two long wars have had on soldiers and their families.

"Until You Come Home: Songs for Veterans and Their Kin" is a George Mann-produced CD compilation of songs focusing on PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and the cost of war to our military families.

Always the labor historian, Mann produced "The Almanac Trail," a CD celebrating music from "The Almanac Singers" whose founders included Pete



COURTESY PHOTO

Folk singer George Mann will perform at KB Gallery on May 19.

Seeger and Woody Guthrie.

Bring along your singing voice and join in when Mann breaks into Guthrie's, "This Land is Your Land."

This will be the opening concert for a spring and summer music series presented by KXCR and the Kenneth B Gallery, 1458 First St.

Door will open around 6:30 p.m. for food, beverage and a

chance to greet neighbors.

The show runs from 7 to 9 p.m.

Everyone is invited. Mann's performance is free but a "passing of the hat" for donations will take place.

For more information, visit www.georgemannmusic.com, or www.kennethbgallery.com.

Call the gallery at 541-999-5875.

Volunteer for Power of Florence

This year's Power of Florence will be Saturday, July 18. In the past, there have been as many as 37 volunteer events in one day. This year could be even bigger.

The Power of Florence is an opportunity the entire community to work together and have fun making a difference in the community by giving one day dedicated to volunteering.

The all-day event is set up like a community festival, with fun events all around town that anyone can take part in, like barbecues, car washes, face painting, etc., as well as fundraisers that raise money for our non-profits that work year around to support those in need in our community.

There are also service project events that beautify local parks, schools and beaches.

In four years, there have been 130 events and Power of Florence participants have raised \$32,000 in donations,

completed 48 service projects and collected more than 10,000 pounds of food for Food Share and Florence Area Humane Society.

If you or your group would like to participate, choose an event and contact coordinator Kaylee Graham at powerof_florence@hotmail.com.

You could do anything from a service project like weeding around town, to a collection event for a non-profit, or be a part by just going around to different events and helping volunteer.

Events will be advertised in email blasts, on Power of Florence's Facebook page, on Power of Florence's website, in the Siuslaw News and on KCST 106.9 FM.

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Schedule of Classes*

Monday	Pilates 10:00–11:00 am Adult Ballet 11:30–1:00pm (6/15) Bollywood 5:30–6:30 pm
Tuesday	Hot Yoga 8:30–10:00 am Hot Yoga 6:00–7:30 pm
Wednesday	Zumba 6:00–7:00 pm
Thursday	Hot Yoga 8:30–10:00 am Zumba 6:00–7:00 pm
Friday	Pilates 10:00–11:00 am Bollywood 4:30–5:30 pm
Saturday	Hot Yoga 10:30–Noon Workshops TBA
Sunday	Workshops TBA

*Subject to change without notice

We Love Beginners

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