

POINT REYES LIGHT

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Kalle Cook collected a feral bee hive from inside a wall at the Marconi Center in Marshall. Cook said he likes working with bees because they are often misunderstood. Photo by Jacoba Charles.

Feral bees in business

by Jacoba Charles

Living bees cover the slab of honeycomb in Kalle Cook's bare hands like a thick layer of velvet. A golden drool of honey falls onto the grass as he fastens the comb onto a bar of wood, suspending it inside a wooden box. Then, armed with a smoker and a chisel, he fetches another humming comb from within the wall of a small cottage.

"I like working with the bees because they're often misunderstood," said Cook, who spent several hours removing the 19-comb hive from an outbuilding at the Marconi Center in Marshall last week. "It

forces me to be more bold and confident."

Cook, who lives in Inverness Park, is a beekeeper and hive removal expert. He describes his business as "removing your bee colony safely with love and minimal stress to bees."

Eventually Cook plans to use the same bees that he collects to produce wax and honey, as well as provide pollination services for local gardens and crops.

For the moment, though, his focus is on the removal services, and particularly "cutouts" from buildings such as the one he did at the Marconi Center.

"Most beekeepers are happy to grab

Fishermen face closed season

by Jacoba Charles

A partial or complete closure of the salmon fishing season in California and Oregon will be announced by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council on Friday, in a drastic move responding to disastrously low returns.

The number of salmon that returned to freshwater to spawn during 2007 were the lowest they have been since 1992; 2008 is expected to be even worse.

"This year both chinook and coho returns to Washington, Oregon and California were down," said Melody Palm-

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Pluto of Bo passes on

by Justin Nobel

Pluto Maroon, who read horoscopes on Bolinas beaches, repaired busted Volkswagens and once lived in a mail truck, passed away earlier this month. He was 76.

"He was a free spirit," said Eden Clearbrook, his longtime partner and mother of their daughter, Eve. "He had a tremendous ability to read through the lines and go way beyond the box. Eventually, he got too far from the box."

Pluto was born Cecil A. May III on July 16, 1931 in Detroit, one of more than a half-dozen children. The large family dwelled in a rough part of town; his father often drank and was sometimes violent. Pluto learned to become a mediator in family disputes. He loved his mother and

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ASK MISSY /15

Modern dads invent even better bonds



Pluto Maroon lived in a mail truck with a skylight and a shower when he first came to Bolinas. He spent his final years in this RV. Photo by Ryan Solniat.



Pluto's Point, where Pluto lived at the end of Maple on the Bolinas Mesa, looks out at Duxbury Reef and the city beyond. Photo by Ryan Solniat.

>> Pluto

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had a good relationship with some of his siblings but left home at a young age. He dropped out of school and changed his name to Pluto—the far-flung iced planet was in rare alignment with the sun on the day of his birth.

Drafted into the Navy, Pluto traveled to Japan, where at one point he was locked in the brig for refusing to fight. In the 1960s Pluto fled the United States and moved to Montreal, where he studied astrology and wrote a book on the topic. After Canada, Pluto dipped into the Hollywood rock 'n' roll scene before moving to the bucolic bohemia of Bolinas sometime in the 1970s. His home was a 25-foot mail truck. Pluto cut out a skylight for stargazing, and put in a carpet and shower.

The town's carefree atmosphere suited him. He read horoscopes at the beach, in the back of his truck, or at a table at Scowley's, a bygone Bolinas coffee shop. He used his fix-it know-how to help residents repair broken fences or dilapidated Volkswagon Bugs. For one downtown friend he built a sauna. Pluto joined the infamous Bolinas Border Patrol, which removed links to the outside world like road signs along Highway One. He also produced what friends called "imagina-

tive and metaphysical art." A favorite medium was candle wax, which he poured into juice cartons. Once the cartons were full he would cut away the paper and use a torch to make undulations or embed a shell in a groove.

Eden was one of many people enamored by his craft and ability to connect. "His gift helped people realize their own gifts and detriments," said Eden. "He had a way of relating to everyone—the young, the old, the rich, the poor, the highly educated and the uneducated."

Bolinas of the 1970s and 1980s had its troubles, too. Cannabis gardens were common and cocaine was popular. "Bolinas is like a thumb," said Eden, "energy doesn't necessarily flow through. It can get very stagnant." For some, this stagnancy leads to dependence—on a drug, the place, or a carefree way of life that in the end may prove shortsighted and selfish. Local lore says that Coast Indians made pilgrimages to Bolinas, a well known healing spot. Once you were healed, you were supposed to leave, and those that didn't were thought to redevelop the affliction that drove them to Bolinas in the first place. Eden speculated that this may have played a part in Pluto's life.

Eden and Pluto produced a child, Eve, but by that time Pluto was in no shape for fatherhood. "He was a child of the generation that awakened through the use of Neptunian substances," said Eden. "After she came along he became extremely involved with substances and destroyed

himself." Eve never got to know the Pluto that many in Bolinas remember: prophetic, pleasant and paternal. "He was a really great guy who let himself deteriorate pretty badly in the last 30 years of his life," said Eve, who unfortunately only knew him in those last three decades.

"She doesn't remember him when he was very in love and devoted to her," said Eden. "When I met him, he was vital, bright, alive and involved." He never did escape the pain of his childhood, continued Eden. "People change their name because they have deep pain," she said. "Pluto was never relieved from that pain."

In response to her experience with Pluto, Eden devoted her life to healing. She runs Garden of Eden, an odorous Point Reyes shop that sells extracts, salves and tinctures, including one made from a plant she discovered with Eve when she was a young girl on the Bolinas Mesa—"A beautiful healing salve," said Eden, "it brings new flesh."

"When I look today at the things I was involved with then, I say, 'Oh my God, Oh my God!'" Eden said. "I thank Pluto for bringing me to where I am today and making me conscious."

Last Tuesday afternoon, several Bolinas locals hanging out in an overgrown patch of grass behind the market remembered the Pluto of yesteryear. "Pluto was street people," said a man who swayed against a wooden fence, a Pilsner in hand. "Hey Gary, tell us about Pluto," he hollered at a waif with holes in his jeans and a shock of white hair.

"What's there to say about Pluto?" mused the man. "He's dead...We're all dead."

A man in a brown cap and grizzled beard joined the requiem. They joked about some of their friend's favorable traits and lamented some of the less favorable. "He had the most beautiful blue eyes," the man with the grizzled beard wistfully recalled.

"Every dog has his day," muttered the man with the Pilsner. "Pluto's the end of an era." They spoke for some time. A sinking sun scattered sequenced shafts of light through the eucalyptus, and the air chilled. The bearded man wandered quietly into the empty yard, bent over and began gathering something from the ground. He returned, extended a large, weathered paw, and presented three pink flowers and a wad of ripped out grasses.

"Do you have a girlfriend?" he asked.

"No," I said.

"Well," he said, "you give this to a girl and she'll love you forever...You got a dollar or two?"

Pluto is survived by Eve Love, Eden Clearbrook and many friends in Bolinas. A memorial service and potluck will be held for Pluto on April 12 at the Bolinas Community Center from 3 to 6 p.m. Donations for the services should be sent to Pluto's daughter Eve Love at 754 Clayton Street, San Francisco, California 94117. The family is also requesting photos anyone may have of Pluto: contact Eden at (415) 663.1747.