

May 2009



CHUBB REPORT

WHAT'S GOIN' ON BY WAYNE CHUBB

I'm writing about May events after brushing snow off my car in Mt. Shasta – hmmm...

Yes, it's May – which means **Mother's Day** (May 10), Memorial Day weekend, and food, drink, garden, automotive and reptilian events galore, most of them within a short drive of Sacramento. My favorite, on name alone, is the **Horned Toad Derby**, a celebration of one of the Central Valley's favorite natives, in Coalinga (May 22-25). Right behind would probably be the **All British Car Show and Swap Meet**, honoring the beautiful yet poorly engineered autos of England, in Woodland on May 17. The most confusing to me is the **Cal State Button Society Show and Sale** over Memorial Day weekend at the Sacto Convention Center. Apparently, you can build not only a society but also a two day show around fasteners. If you go, explain it to me.

You have no excuses for staying inside this month. Open up in Sacramento at the beginning of the month, as **Concerts in the Park**, free concerts every Friday at Cesar Chavez Park, kicks off on May 1. So does the **Puppet Festival**, a summer series of puppet show at Fairytale Town.

Wondered how Jessica Simpson is doing lately? She apparently is now a country singer, and headlines the **Dixon May Fair** on May 7-10. The same weekend keeps you outdoors at the **East Sacto Garden Tour**, showcasing landscapes in the Fabulous 40's, and south of town at **Walk on the Wild Side**, an "open house" at the usually closed Beach Lake Wildlife Preserve in Freeport. In addition to some of the Central Valley's best bird watching, it will offer falconry demos, a wildlife petting zoo and, oddly enough, a barbecue. The weekend also brings the **Reno River Festival**, built around the world-class whitewater park that now runs through downtown Reno.

The weekend of May 15-17 allows you to indulge your loves of chocolate, cars, beer, Asian culture, semiprecious stones, and frogs, either alone or in combination. In addition to the aforementioned British autos, you can

also see the **Concourse d'Elegance** at Mather Field, which also features wooden boats and vintage motorcycles, or the **Hangtown Classic Car Show** in Placerville. The annual **Oakdale Chocolate Festival** continues in spite of the Hershey plant having closed, and is a chocoholics dream, or possibly nightmare. On the way back, wash down the chocolate at the **Zinfest**, this week's Lodi wine festival, featuring 45 wineries and 12 restaurants. You can drink closer to home in Miller Park at the **West Coast Brewers Festival** and sample 150 different beers, ales and stouts from 60 breweries. Half a mile up the river from there, Old Sacramento goes way east with the **Pacific Rim Street Festival**, featuring cuisine and entertainment from Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Korea, China and the Phillipines. If you forgot Mom last week, make it up to her at the **Gem Fair** at Cal Expo. And last but not least, the **Calaveras County Fair and Jumping Frog Jubilee** returns to Angel's Camp, featuring the frog jump that dates to Mark Twain's day, and **Pow Wow Days** return to Orangevale.

Of course, Memorial Day Weekend always brings the **Jazz Jubilee** and 100,000 fans to Old Sacramento, but for more low-key fare, try the **Sacramento County Fair** at Cal Expo with it's 4-H competitions and snow cones.

If you are a rockhound, history buff, or just love the desert, this month is **Nevada Archive Awareness and Historic Preservation Month**, offering dozens of events highlighting the treasure trove fossil and prehistoric sites around the north state. If you play your cards right, I might even tell you where to find the site that my friend Rob found in an area that was known to be frequented by Paiute and other hunting parties. After discovering hundreds of petroglyphs, he realized what they were – centuries-old dirty pictures, but, you know, historical ones. Apparently, guys on hunting trips haven't changed much over the centuries. I'll drink to that.

DIY CORNER—IT'S SPRINGTIME & THAT MEANS . . . SALADS!

The kids and I just planted our garden yesterday. We are trying something new, a variation on the popular square-foot garden. Ours is a garden in a bucket. I have been wanting to build a square-foot garden since I first read about the concept last year (if you don't know what I am talking about check out www.squarefootgardening.com). I mentioned it to Wayne, but as with many things around our house lack of time to build the raised beds was a problem.

So this spring I decided to take matters into my own hands and suggested that since we had a load of 5 gallon buckets from all our DIY projects we could plant the garden in them. Wayne offered to paint the buckets a nice tan to match the house and create some uniformity and off we went.

The garden is now planted—tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, hot peppers, water melon, beans, carrots and herbs—basil (2 kinds), cilantro, oregano, thyme, chocolate mint and stevia (this was Carson's suggestion). The kids helped decide what to plant, Wayne loaded up the buckets with soil and compost from our composter, and then I stuck in the plants. Carson discovered that if he chewed a chocolate mint leaf and a stevia leaf together it tastes like candy! Yeah, adventuresome boy!

The plants won't produce anything for a while, so in the meantime I will leave you with a couple of salad recipes that I created. The Mandarin Bleu Cheese has been a favorite in our house for over ten years and pairs nicely with Fume Blanc. I created the Pear with Honeyed Pecan salad just 2 weeks ago and it's now Wayne's favorite. I don't have the perfect wine pairing yet, but I'm and working on it (taste-test volunteers?).



Mandarin Bleu Cheese Salad

- 1 head red leaf lettuce, torn into bite size pieces
- 4 oz. gorgonzola or other bleu cheese, crumbled
- 1 can mandarin orange segments, drained

Raspberry vinaigrette

Place lettuce in the bottom of a large salad bowl. Layer on the mandarins and then the bleu cheese. Drizzle with dressing to taste. The salad is also beautiful served on individual plates as a composed salad.

This salad is great as a main course or side salad. Warm sour dough bread goes great!

Chicken and Pear Salad with Honeyed Pecans

- 1 head green leaf lettuce, torn into bite size pieces
- 1 pear, thinly sliced
- 1 chicken breast, cooked and thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup pecans, toasted
- 1 T. honey, or to taste
- 1 T. balsamic vinegar
- 3 T. olive oil

Toast pecans then drizzle with honey while still warm, toss to coat. Set aside.

To make dressing, whisk together balsamic vinegar and olive oil.

In a large bowl, toss together lettuce, pecans and dressing—reserve 1 tablespoon of dressing.

Divide lettuce mix evenly among 4 plates. Top with sliced chicken and pears - I like to alternate the slices. Drizzle with reserved dressing.

Bon Appétit!

Do you feel validated?

I heard Oprah once say that she thinks everyone on this earth has one basic need—to be validated. I know when I started the National Assn of Women Writers it was because I needed to find other women who loved to write and create like me. I needed to learn with them and laugh with them because I yearned for the validation that I would receive as I in turn validated the writers too. Little did I realize at the time how many women all over the world needed their goals and dreams affirmed just as I did.

I too believe that validation or passionate connections as I like to call them are so important that I have built multiple companies with that vision in mind. Here are a five ways I have learned to create passionate connections and validate others over the last seven years as I grew the NAWW and my other companies (www.sherimccconnell.com). Even if you don't want to start a business—whatever your goals are—I know you will accomplish them by reaching out to validate others and following the tips below. Enjoy the journey!

Tip 1: Be of Service—Do you know what Web 2.0 is? It is the evolution of the current state of the Internet... the trend of social networking and all of the technology that supports it. I love that the present culture of the Internet has evolved to focus on people and that the technology makes it even easier to be of service. Being of service and helping others feel good about themselves is not only rewarding, it allows you to grow exponentially. You grow internally as a person and externally because your influence will have a farther reach.

Tip 2: Be a Problem Solver—Focus on helping people with their problems in your writing and in your products/services (if you own a business) and you will build a strong foundation of support for yourself. Always connect by sharing a part of your personal life—but remember that creating passionate connections with others by solving their problems should be the focus in all that you do. I always tell me kiddos—solve problems—don't create them.

Tip 3: Be Not Afraid—Taking risks and moving through fear is the only way I know how to accomplish big dreams. You know the dreams I am talking about. The ones we had when we were young, before we gave up and decided to be "practical". Don't be afraid of fear and the muddled mind feel-

ing—as you reach out and help others, you will receive the resources you need. Take the risks you need to by basking in that uncomfortable feeling of trying something completely new. This is even harder if it isn't something you do often. I now do it so often that taking risks seems a normal part of my day.

Tip 4: Be a Visionary—Use your creativity to craft life visions for yourself and others. Most people don't spend any time at all on visioning what they want in their lives. Vision-ing is the key to making long-lasting passionate connections with everyone you come in contact with. Be a dreamer and then follow through with action. Trust me—this one simple tip will attract like-minded individuals into your life and together you will achieve more than you ever could have alone. And don't worry if you get overwhelmed—being a visionary is supposed to be overwhelming to some extent. But vision-ing works on many different levels too. Try breaking it down by creating smaller visions for your family, your significant other, your work and/or business goals, and so on.

Tip 5: Be Real—This is my favorite tip for creating passionate connections because it helps others the most. Think about all the times someone was honest with you and it pushed you forward. When someone cared enough to validate you by showing you that you were worth the time to talk, laugh, and learn with. Remember when we were a kid—isn't that all we wanted back then—relationships that were real and honest. Be real with those you come in contact with (personal or professional) and you will create a life-long stream of validated friends and/or customers to serve.

Let's face it—what it all boils down to is that life is about making passionate connections—it is about validating others and allowing them to live dreams that touch other people's lives too. When your dreams include serving others you can't lose. Make sure you practice the tips above so that you are doing your part to make an incredible life happen for you.

Sheri McConnell is the CEO of Sheri McConnell Companies, Inc. and the president and founder of five national and international associations, the National Association of Women Writers-NAWW, the International Association of Web Entrepreneurs-AWE, the Global Institute of Associations-GIA, the International Association of Online Business Managers-IAOBM, and the International Association of Millionaire Mom Entrepreneurs. You can visit Sheri, access her free article archive, and find out more about all four of her companies at www.sherimccconnell.com.



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Moms. No matter what your relationship with them, they are an important part of our lives. My mom and I have a bit of a rocky relationship. Both of us are a pretty pig-headed and this makes things rather difficult at times. It's not that I don't love my mom, I do, but I don't always show it.

I'm the kid who is always behind in writing thank you notes and is forever sending gifts late. I just can't seem to get it together. This Mother's Day however, I vowed things would be different.

My mom has been taking computer lessons and while she's struggling and a little afraid of messing up I think this is great. So, for Mother's Day I sent her a brand new fancy laptop computer. Before I shipped it I completed the set up so she didn't have to worry about it, and I loaded it with pictures of my kids and used them to create the wallpaper and a slide show for the screen saver.

This is a far more extravagant gift than I've ever given before. But I realized how grateful I am that she is my mom and it felt wonderful to do something this nice and unexpected for her, and it made for a really great day. Showing gratitude every day in small or big ways can change your outlook on life and lead to having the feeling of more great days. I challenge you all to show gratitude everyday. Try it, it just might change your life.

All my best,

P.S. Happy Mother's Day to all the moms out there!



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