***Imperiled***  ***by Nancy Maxson***

*An aside: after watching Ken Burns’ Viet Nam series’ and hearing journalist, Tim O’Brien ,talk about what GIs carried as they fought, & after seeing the disastrous toll of recent California fires, & now reading a Federal agency (FERC) approved the never-before-attempted construction of a 42” wide, fracked-gas pipeline along our hill and close to countless neighbors stretching from WV to NC, I got to wondering:*

How many times in your life have you looked around your house

and whispered “which of these things should I take

if we had to evacuate in, say, an hour?

a half hour?

in a few minutes?”

What would *you* load up the car with?  What would *you* grab

if you only had time to

*carry* things out?

Which would you save?

Parts of your history?

gifts? Mom’s clock? Dad’s artifacts?  scrapbooks?

Parts of your present?  practical portable items? computers?

products of your productivity?

your instruments?

your financial identity? And why? Who are you now?

We’d be carrying what we could grab, mindlessly probably,

new fears, new pain,

finally, we’d be carrying our determination

and mostly,

each other~~as we’d be glancing around,

coughing the smokey acrid air.

In those moments, who’d care *why* we needed to evacuate ~~

     the deliberate choices of distant bureaucrats to destroy old growth forests?

     the casual toss of a cigarette by a guy on a construction crew?

...like in war, the only winner is the ‘Law of Unintended Consequences.’

One thing is clear: I will be leaving the heaviest burden for the members of FERC

who will be forced to carry their hubris through hell.