



LAFAYETTE

# Second sight, second life for Lafayette psychic

By PAM KING

Staff writer

LAFAYETTE— In Mount Shasta or Sona, the marriage of a psychic and a dream analyst might pass for commonplace. In Lafayette, a New Age couple is more the exception than the rule.

Chuck Coburn was living what he calls a "statistically average" life in the suburbs when he had his first psychic experience, at precisely 6:45 on a Sunday evening at a San Francisco waterfront restaurant.

He had a vivid vision of a woman in the restaurant, with a man's hands around her neck. Fifteen minutes later, the woman choked on a piece of food. A companion rushed to her aid, grasping at her throat to help dislodge the food. Shocked, Coburn realized that reality had duplicated the image he had foreseen.

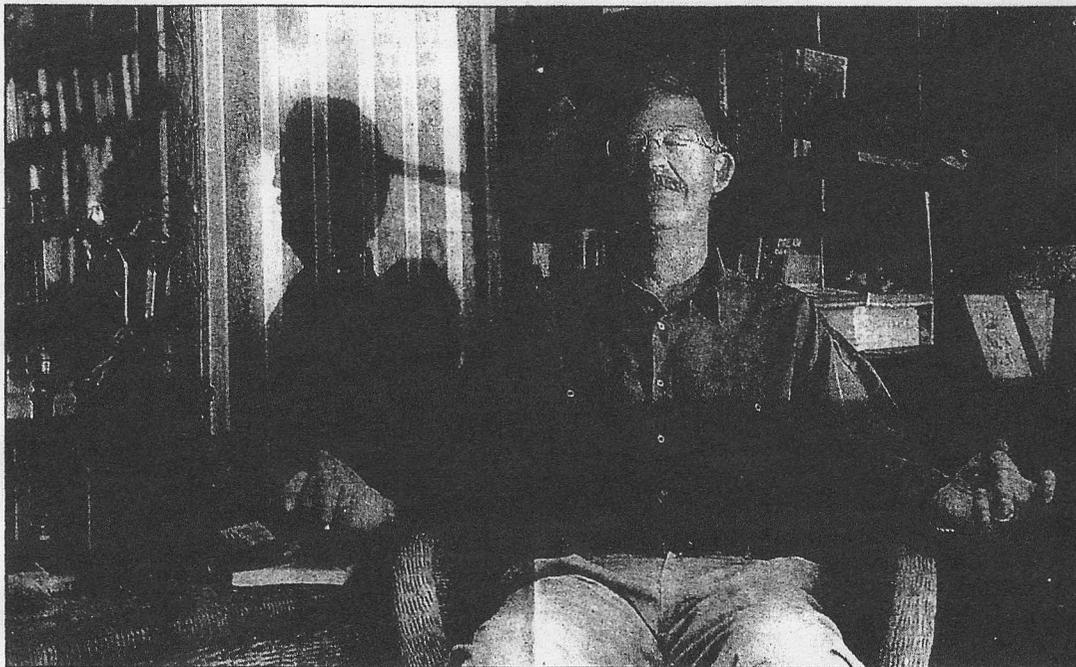
Some people might have ignored the experience, or acknowledged it as an isolated moment of prescience.

"I had the curiosity and gumption to follow it up," said Coburn, 56, a retired general contractor. "I wasn't going to let it go. I was driven to find out."

That was the beginning of a 20-year journey for Coburn. His spiritual awakening was a factor in the end of his first marriage, and in his relationship with his second wife, Shirley. It led to his decision to shut down his construction company, an \$8 million a year business, so he could focus full-time on psychic readings.

It also is the subject of his newly published book, "Funny You Should Say That . . ." a lighthearted memoir of his psychic development. Seed Center, a Humboldt County publishing house, printed 4,500 copies. The \$15.95 book is available in local bookstores.

"I really am this ordinary guy," Coburn said. "Most of my friends are the people who have been my friends for years. In some ways, I wrote this book for them - to tell them what I did, to legitimize my process."



JON McNALLY/Times

**CHUCK COBURN** takes a moment Friday to meditate in the room he uses for psychic readings in his Lafayette home.

The conversion from regular guy to psychic phenom has been difficult at times, like when the Coburns are introduced in conventional social settings as psychic and dream analyst.

Some people are enthusiastic, he said, and

immediately start describing psychic experiences to him or recounting dreams to his wife. But others can't seem to escape their company quick enough, and a few ridicule them.

Whatever people think of his beliefs,

Coburn said his psychic transformation has taught him how to live his life.

In a past life, he has decided, he must have been a nasty guy. This time around, Coburn said, he is giving more than he re-

ceives. He describes helping police locate missing children and advising people to stay off airplanes that later crash. Less spectacularly, he helps clients locate the "spirit guides" who will lead them to a higher level of awareness.

In Coburn's practice, a typical reading lasts between 90 minutes and two hours. His technique, he said, is to move his own personality out of the way and to allow his client's higher self to "channel" through him. He can provide information on past lives, he said, and can introduce a client to as many as seven spirit guides.

"No psychic should ever tell someone what to do," Coburn said, explaining his philosophy of guidance. If, for example, a woman asked if she should marry her fiancé, Coburn might uncover former unsuccessful relationships, and encourage her to explore whether this man reminds her of the others.

Coburn's odyssey has taken him to Africa and Brazil to visit shamans. He said he has seen a ghost in a spooky German castle and has witnessed dramatic healings, including one hosted by Shirley MacLaine. His house, like his book, is full of the memorabilia of his metaphysical journey.

"I really want people to understand that we're all psychic," Coburn said. "You don't need to be weird and smoke grass. I was very exacting, very left-brained - to me, 2+2 equalled 4.00000. There has been such a metamorphosis in my life, but it's very authentic. For me to deny my spiritual gift would be like Heifetz refusing to play the violin in public."