



Shopping Monologue

by Jack Taylor

I park out of the way.
The Dollar General lot as always—
unswept but I'm used to it now.

I know I am here for cat food but
first to the candy aisle for myself.
Now my teeth are gone,
I can eat all I want.

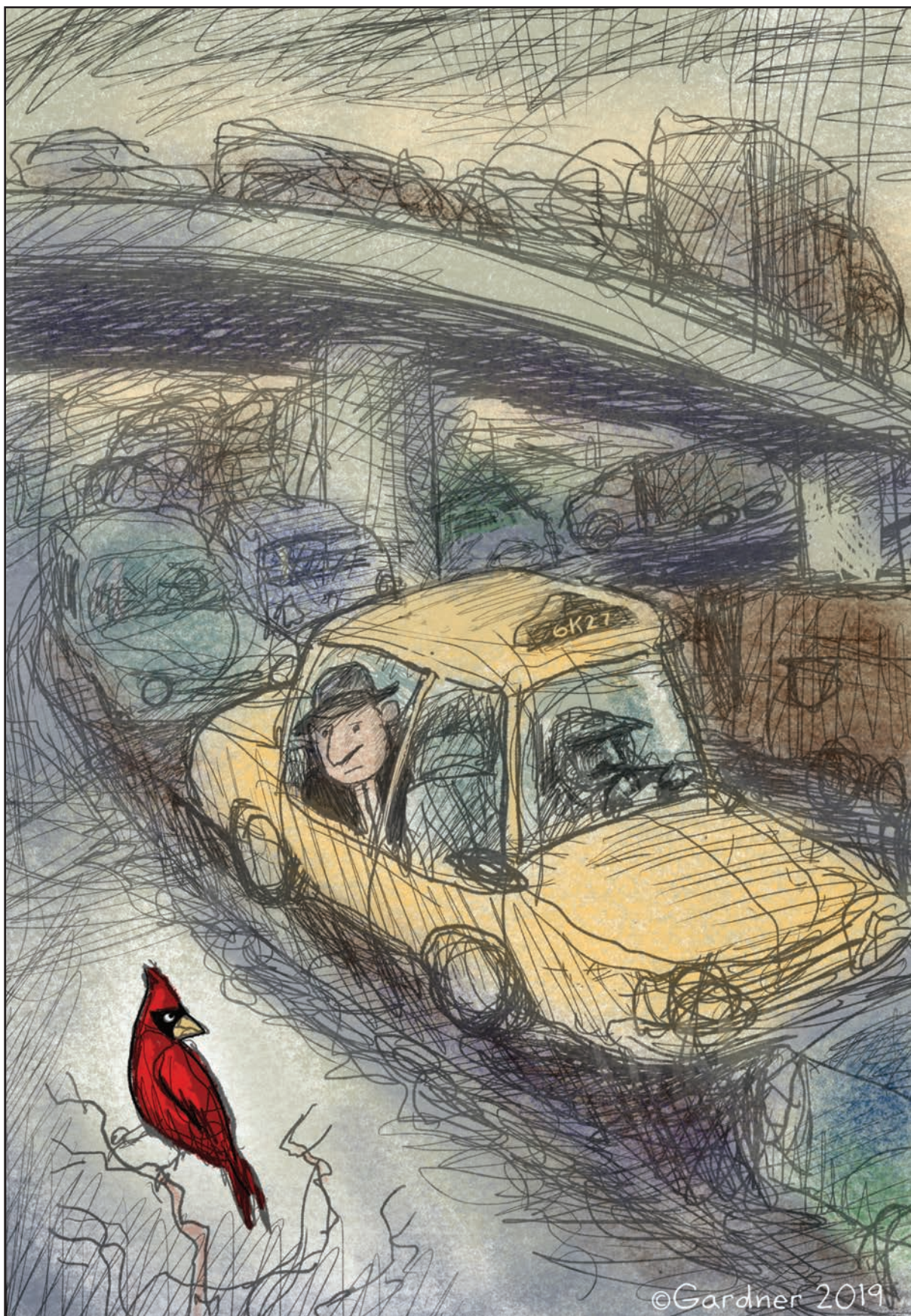
I don't even like cats,
now I have two—
that's a good one.

Passing by the men's caps, wait—
even though I don't need one,
how about the friend who
just got a job in the deli?

She can't wear the hairnet,
so she wears a ballcap,
with which I keep her supplied.
I pick two, she gets one.
At the checkout I ask for a price check
the well-made one costs half
as much as the other.
She asks, "Do you want them both?"
Yes, one for myself, the other for a girl.

Thinking out loud, "Do you think
a girl would wear a camouflage cap?"
The pretty clerk next register answers
"Yes, I wear one."
Maybe I guessed right for once.

I could almost hear the comments
after I left. "I wonder who the girl is,
do you suppose he has a girlfriend?"
"You never know, you know."
"Some old timers do."



Just Des(s)erts

Featuring:

Jack Taylor, Poetry (front, 8) / George Guida, Poetry (5) /
William Preston, poetry (5) / Gary Catt, fiction (12) / and
Wendy Schreiner, prose poetry (14).

Also In This Issue

- From the News Room 2
- From the Editor **Back**
- Speaking Out 4-5
- Nature and Gardening 6-9
- Out in the Owl Light 10-11
- Pen and Prose 12-13
- Sustainable Living 14-15
- Keeping it Light 16
- Light Lens **Back**
- The Past 17 Guest Contributor,
Historical Nonfiction
- Community Notices 18
- In Memoriam 19
Shirley Kuecken
Vida Lowery Edwards Todd

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From the News Room

On the Front Cover: Our front cover image is by cartoonist /artist Sally Gardner. We liked that it captured both the feel of a shopping trip and a bit of the “just deserts” of our lifestyle choices, to fit in nicely with the January issue’s literary/arts theme.



Cartoon by Sally Gardner
<https://sallygardner.com/>

The cover poem is by Whitney Point, NY poet Jack Taylor. Bio P. 8

Owl Light News wishes to welcome Steve West, with his monthly column, “Side Street Sounds,” on page 10. Steve has been making music and sharing his musical inspiration with others in the area for years. He helps keep the “Side Street Sounds” alive with various area open mic hosts and appearances, and now with his monthly appearance in *Owl Light News*.

Correction: Mbatata (Sweet Potato Cookies) on page 8 we omitted the sugar from the ingredients. The sugar amount is 1/4 cup.

Check out our *Owl Light Inquiry* for February, on page 4. We hope to make this a monthly thing, where we post here and on our facebook site responses from readers for the month’s inquiry.

A note on “lightening the load” (see back page) and our desire to promote art in small places, and lesser-known, albeit incredible, people. We want to hear directly from artists!

We want to hear from the people making the art—be they musicians, visual artists, performing artists, beverage artists, innovators, skilled crafts people...or... We also want reviews of events/shows that are happening in rural places across New York State that are newsworthy.

Add your event today—be it an art opening, a performance, a lecture, a community action meeting, or a reading...or—at:
<https://www.owllightnews.com/events/community/add>.

E-mail arts-related reviews to: Editor@canadicepress.com.

 **THE OWL LIGHT NEWS**

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Urban Areas Full of Hustle and Bustle

**Response to our Owl Light Inquiry for January:
Are urban areas exciting and energizing
...or a bit too much to take?**

Born and raised in West Seneca, New York, I was use to the hustle and bustle of city life. For the past 81/2 years, I have lived in Warsaw, New York. Even though I reside right in the village, the pace of the country life is a lot more laid back and low key. The traffic is a lot less here and everyone seems to know everybody as the one country song sings, “everybody knows everybody, everybody calls you friend, you don’t need an invitation, kick off your shoes come on in!” When I first came out here to the “country”, my husband didn’t know what I was going to do out here. I now don’t see myself back in an urban area with all the energy, noise and traffic. I miss some people and places, but not the fast pace. For example, Transit Road; which keeps building up and adding more and more and even more! **Response by Wendy Schreiner**

Owl Light Inquiry for February Issue:

Your take on Tom Waits’ line from “Hold On” - “You don’t meet nice girls in coffee shops?”
Let us know your take at: www.facebook.com/CanadicePress

Deadline for all content for the February issue of the *Owl Light News* is January 10th!

Our pages fill up FAST!

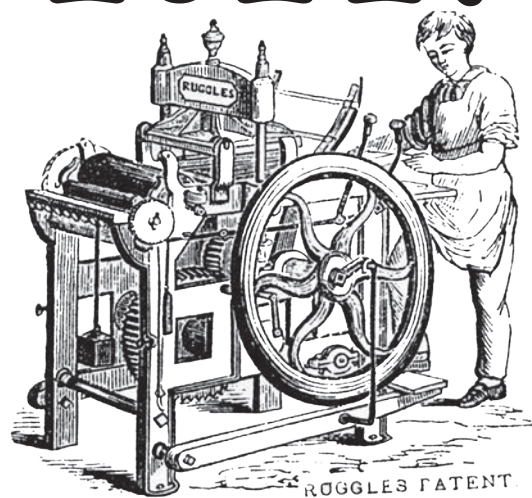
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We welcome varied views from our readers. E-mail Letters to the Editor and Opinion Pieces to Editor@CanadicePress.com. Please include your mailing address and any other pertinent information.

Letters should be less than 500 words, although longer, well written opinion pieces will be considered. All published commentary must be signed (or sent via personal e-mail) and include a street address. Please focus on sound arguments, respect opposing views and avoid direct attacks. We reserve the right to edit or refuse any submitted editorial content. Opinions and letters published in Owl Light News are not necessarily the views of the Editor, Publisher, contributors or advertisers.

Conservancy Goes Solar With Office Upgrades

Historic One Main Street, built in 1835, has received its most recent modernization this fall with the addition of solar panels to provide clean electricity.

Building owners Meg and Billy Lloyd partnered with Genesee Valley Conservancy to install the photovoltaic system that will offset 100% of the organization's electric use. While the organization works to protect habitat, open space, and farmland in the Genesee Valley, a large supply of power is needed to run the operations of this work: computers, printers, lights, modems, etc.

The up-front costs were shared by the building owners and the Conservancy, as both will benefit from the project. The Conservancy will see an immediate reduction in monthly utility bills and after six years will break even on the initial investment and begin seeing a net-savings. Meg and Billy benefit from helping the Conservancy work toward carbon neutrality, by having infrastructure on the building that will continue to benefit tenants for decades, and by making the space more attractive to tenants as it will come with low utility costs.

Over the past several years, various energy efficiency upgrades have been undertaken at 1 Main Street to reduce the needs of the office. Upgrades include adding insulation and storm doors and windows, installing a programmable thermostat, and upgrading to LED lightbulbs.

Since 1835, the building has seen several large renovation projects. The right wing (when facing the front door) was an early addition to the original building which was built to serve as James S. Wadsworth's land office. In 1926 a rear addition was added and in 1928 a large front porch spanning the front of the building (not original) was removed and replaced with the current stone steps and railings.

The solar array, located on the south facing roof of the building to maximize its production, will produce 5.5kWp of electricity from the 18 panels and will allow the Conservancy to avoid 4 tons of carbon pollution annually.

The installation process was straightforward and quick. Contractor Glenn Steed of Steed Energy installed the system over the course of two days. The first day involved setting up the racking material on the roof to hold the panels and installing the conduit for running wires from the roof into the basement where the building's electrical boxes are. On day two the panels were installed and wired together on

the roof and the final wiring was completed in the basement to tie the system into the existing panel box.

Each solar panel is equipped with its own inverter, which converts the direct current (DC) electricity produced by the panel into alternating current (AC) electricity which is used in residential and commercial buildings. Because each panel has its own inverter, each panel will operate at maximum efficiency. If shading or a cloud reduces the sunlight hitting one panel, the others will still produce at maximum capacity.

From the roof, electric flows into the basement where a combiner box has been added to combine the two strings of panels together. From there, it flows to a shut off switch which allows for turning the system off should electrical work need to be done on the office. Normally, turning off the power coming from the grid would eliminate any power in the building, but with the solar producing electricity from the building side, both need to be turned off to eliminate electricity flow through the building.

Finally, the power flows into the office circuit breaker box where it is distributed throughout the building for use. If excess power is being produced (like on a weekend when the office is closed) it will flow through a new two-way electric meter into the grid. Electricity flowing into the grid will be credited to the building and when the Conservancy uses the office when the solar panels are not producing (like night meetings or during snow storms) electricity will flow back in from the grid and will use up the credits accumulated by the organization.

As the Conservancy works to protect the important natural areas of the Genesee Valley, productive soils, sensitive habitat, clean water, there is an obligation to ensure we are caring for the climate which will affect all of our conservation work if not addressed. This solar project is one more step towards reducing Genesee Valley Conservancy's emissions pollution.



While the architecture and technology within the office have changed repeatedly over the years, the use of the building has remained focused on the landscape of the Genesee Valley. As James Wadsworth's land office, the building served to support his land holdings. Farmers and tenants would come in to negotiate leases and pay rent at the building. Today, the Conservancy uses this office as a base for its land conservation work, protecting some of those same Wadsworth lands in addition to lands across seven counties of the Genesee River watershed.

On the Conservancy's side, the solar project was funded through a portion of a special bequest gift to the Conservancy that the Board set aside for special projects. Between the carbon pollution reduction and the medium range financial savings that will result, the investment is a win-win for the Conservancy's conservation efforts and operating budget.

An open house in the spring of 2020 will be held to showcase the system to the public as part of the Conservancy's 30th anniversary series of events.

Genesee Valley Conservancy is a nationally accredited non-profit conservation organization working to protect the habitat, open space and farmland in the Genesee River watershed. Over 20,691 acres of natural habitat and productive farm and forest land have been conserved by Genesee Valley Conservancy and private landowners. The organization also owns nature preserves open to the public year-round for recreation and education. For more information visit www.geneseevalleyconservancy.org

Submitted by Ben Gajewski

Livingston Co. gathering data regarding high speed internet needs

County residents can complete the survey online (at work or at home within the County) <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LivingstonCountyInternetSurvey> or using paper copies (available at Town and Village offices). The survey will be open through January 31, 2020.

Livingston County is conducting a survey of County residents to determine high speed internet needs. The goal is to gather data that will be used to make policy decisions regarding potential internet investment in the County. The County needs your help.

Complete the survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LivingstonCountyInternetSurvey>. Because the survey includes a speed test which is location specific, it is suggested that the survey be completed at home or

place of business within the County. Please only one survey per home or business address.

If you do not have Internet at your home or business, we need to know that too. Please complete a paper copy of the survey—available at town and village offices as well as at the County Planning Department. Paper surveys can be scanned and returned to broadband@co.livingston.ny.us or to the County Planning Department at 6 Court Street, Room 305, Genesee, NY 14454.

Pathways to Democracy

Provocative Readings...and Linzer Bars



By Doug Garnar

I normally devote my monthly column to deliberative democracy and provide an example from recent national issues forums developed by the National Issues Forums Institute. But this month I would like to recommend a selection of books you might find of interest. They cover a wide range of topics. I have also included at the end a recipe of my dear wife Judy's delightful Linzer Bars. Sitting down to read a book that stimulates the mind, while munching on a Linzer Bar, or two, along with a cup of your favorite libation, is a great way to get through the winter months.

"Sitting down to read a book that stimulates the mind, while munching on a Linzer Bar, or two, along with a cup of your favorite libation, is a great way to get through the winter months."

So, here are my top 12 reading picks:

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

Before the Christmas Holiday has faded, a read of Dickens' book is worth the time. His description of an England becoming the first industrial nation producing great wealth but at the same time poverty, alienation, and a broken Scrooge, is at times heartbreaking. Yet, the opportunity for redemption/reconciliation shine brightly. Parallels with our modern world are striking, most notably a tale of two nations---haves and have nots.

Ballpark: Baseball in the American City by Paul Goldberger

A brilliant analysis of the origins of baseball parks going back to the middle of the 19th century in Brooklyn. Berger observes that baseball parks among other things are an effort to keep a sense of nature in the emerging urban world of America. The volume goes far beyond facts/figures associated with early ball parks. It is also a great read before pitchers and catchers report for spring training, in less than two months!

These Truths: A History of the United States by Jill Lepore

This is likely the best current history now available, written by a very talented Harvard historian. Lepore's book chronicles the account of the origin and rise of a divided nation. Political equality, natural rights and the sovereignty of the people are core to her sweeping tale of the American experience from its origins to the present.

Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America by Jim Wallis

Wallis is a white progressive evangelical who challenges American to understand that racism exists and is systemic. He encourages Christians to "repent" of the original sin of racism and to fight against all forms of racial injustice. Put succinctly, he argues it is time for more white Christians to be more Christian than white.

How Democracy Ends by David Runciman

Runciman, a British political scientist, focuses on the questions of what kills democracies and what replaces them when they are dead. He argues that neither history or current autocratic regimes are a useful guide to explaining the death of democracy, and that they will end in novel ways.

The Guarded Gate by Daniel Okrent

Okrent writes a fascinating history of how Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Madison Grant, and Margaret Sanger, among others, waged a thirty-five-year fight to restrict immigration. By 1924, drawing on the pseudo science of eugenics. Congress passed the 1924 immigration act designed to keep out Jews, Poles, Italians other European immigrants—all who were presumed to be "non-white" by the "Guardians". Only with the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act did this dark chapter in American history seem to come to a close

Thirty Million Words: Building a Child's Brain by Dana Suskind

Dr. Suskind writes a passionate volume on the importance of child literacy beginning at birth. The power of words spoken to infants and as they grow is crucial for their future success in school and the larger world.

Impeachment: A Citizen's Guide by Cass R. Sunstein

A brilliant, short, nonpartisan primer on the history of impeachment, from the Founding Fathers to more contemporary actions to preserve constitutional order.

Divided Politics, Divided Nation: Hyperconflict in the Trump Era by Darrell West

A short autobiography of growing up in a conservative midwestern community and then teaching at a progressive Ivy League College. West's story wrestles with how family tries to remain family despite strong political differences. He offers some suggestions at the end-- breaking bread is one of them.

Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations by Amy Chua

Dr. Chua describes an increasingly "tribalized" America where citizens on both the left and the right have gravitated to "identity" political groups finding little in common---the end result an increasingly dysfunctional nation and democracy.

The Climate Swerve: Reflections on Mind, Hope, and Survival by Robert Jay Lifton

Lifton is one of the great scholars on the profound effects of living in a world of nuclear weapons. He now tackles, at the age of 90, the other great existential problem of climate change. He holds out the hope that humans have the capacity to translate a growing awareness of climate change into action---156 pages reflecting a lifetime of thought on how humans cope with the unthinkable.

Constitutional Myths: What We Get Wrong and How to Get It Right by Ray Raphael

Dr. Raphael is one our top historians on the history of the Constitution. His historical analysis debunks many of the myths that we have grown up with about the Founding fathers and the "Miracle at Philadelphia".

*SUNY Broome Community College is working with the County Executive and a State Assembly Woman to provide books to every child upon birth, when they enter pre-school and then Kindergarten. Anyone wishing to know more should contact Doug Garnar.

Doug Garnar

Doug Garnar works with the Kettering Foundation and NIFI (National Issues Forums Institute) to help citizens find "pathways to democracy." He has taught since 1971 at SUNY Broome Community College. He lives in Binghamton, NY. E-mail: garnardc@sunybroome.edu.

LINZER BARS

Ingredients:

2 ½ cups of flour
1 ½ cups of sugar (divided into 1 and ½ cup)
½ pound of butter
2 eggs (separated)
6 egg whites
10 oz. jar of raspberry jam (homemade or store bought)
1 ½ cups chopped walnuts

Make dough with flour, half a cup of sugar, butter, two egg yolks by working with fingers. Pat into lightly greased 11 x 17 cookie sheet (about a quarter inch thick layer). Prick with fork. Bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes till golden. Remove from oven and immediately spread with jam. Beat six egg whites and 1 cup sugar---fold in nuts. Spread over jam and return to oven for 25 minutes. Cool. Cut into squares (meringue is crumbly). Sprinkle with 10X sugar. Store at room temperature or freeze (freezes well)—heat for 5 minutes in oven or leave out for 90 minutes.

POETRY

By George Guida

Paint

One morning a father awakens
to his son's blue hair
as the boy, in sixth grade now,
staggers down the stairs
like a newly branded foal,
whinnying, snorting on his way
to a trough of fruit loops
he'll eat with eyes still closed
and thin bangs dangling across
the dream-soaked stage of a brow.

Until this moment blue has been
the color of peace, but there is none
in the vortex of stained milk and scowls
as the boy performs a symphony of angst
with his silver spoon on yellow
porcelain so complementing blue,
thinks the man, that even breakfast
is an act of will, as the son stalks
silent past him back upstairs
and into a darkened room.

The father lowers his brush.
A child is no still life.

Beside the White Chickens

someone
stole your
wheelbarrow
in the rain
and now
no one
depends
upon you

George Guida

George Guida is the author of eight books, including the forthcoming collection of poems Zen of Pop. He is about to become a full-time resident of Dansville, where he and his wife own MacFadden's Coffee Company. George also teaches writing and literature at New York City College of Technology and serves as Senior Advisory Editor for 2 Bridges Review.

By William Preston

SANDBOX SERENADE

The first time that I saw her,
we were playing in the sand;
she was the neighbor's daughter
and came from a faraway land.

You could count on a single finger
the English word she knew,
but her laughs would peal and linger
in the air the whole day through.

Her giggles made me happy
and so I began to sing
a song that was awfully sappy,
but I added some special zing.

Well, that began our romance,
although I didn't know it then,
for kids don't do a slow dance
when playing in a sandy pen,

and as she learned the language,
we'd gather by the lake;
sometimes we'd share a sandwich;
sometimes a strawberry shake.

Pretty soon, I chalked some street art
to show her how I felt;
by then, she was my sweetheart
and always made me melt.

We dated throughout our school years;
petted in the car and bed;
together we passed the fool years
and eventually were wed.

Pretty soon we needed a nursery
and then came a house of our own;
we're now at our golden anniversary
long after the kids have flown.

So, you see, we never have parted,
not in sunshine nor in shade.
And to think that all this started
with a sandbox serenade.

THE APOTHEOSIS OF AUTUMN

Because she baked with Northern Spies,
Mom's apple pies could not be beat;
I lusted for Thanksgiving pies
because she baked with Northern Spies,
and from that fruitful enterprise
she gave us all the perfect treat

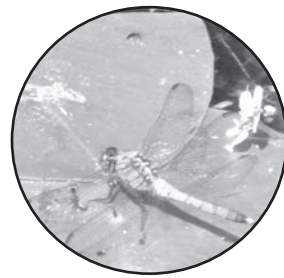
William Preston

William Preston is a retired medical writer and editor who at present does general freelance editing and writes poetry, generally in forms. He and his family live in Macedon, New York.

Dragonfly Tales

The Powering of Odonata Sanctuary

by Steve Melcher



Energy!

The main house at Odonata Sanctuary was built in 1969 when a gallon of high-test gasoline cost 35 cents. Fuel oil flowed from the middle east without the encumbrances of a price-controlling cartel or the concern for adding to the carbon budget of the environment. Designed by the son-in-law of the Taylors, the spreading ranch had all the electric accoutrements befitting a modern house. There was the classic orange and gold tile bar with a marble offering slab where that day's catch of trout could be prepared. We no longer fish here at Odonata Sanctuary and heat mostly with wood in an insert in the original fireplace and a beautiful rotating Danish Rais woodstove. Like the oil-rich Saudi's, we buy our wood from others and keep our supply of woods for the future and wildlife.

Geo-Thermal

The Taylors were way ahead of their time by installing geothermal heating in the mid-80's. The house is so spread out (there were five water heaters) that they had to install two 'pump and dump' units. A pump and dump, also known as an open loop system, takes water from the well at 55F, draws heat from that water and then dumps it into a pond. A closed system uses a continuous loop filled with a liquid that is usually in a long underground trench. We were concerned when we first moved in about the amount of water being used by the system. The Taylors spent months away traveling or in their matching home in Arizona. We are a family of six with two girls who take famously long showers. The well has held out so far with no issues. Geothermal heat pumps can have a COP (coefficient of performance) of 3-4.5. That means for every unit of energy used to power the system, 3-4.5 units are supplied as heat. Where a fossil fuel furnace may be 78-90 percent efficient, a geothermal heat pump can have efficiency rates as high as 400 percent.

Solar

One of the first things we did when we moved to the sanctuary was to install 'as much solar as the roof could hold'. Fortunately, the roof pitch and south-facing direction made an ideal platform for installation. When I was at the University of Delaware, we had installed 32 solar panels designed to heat water on the White House under the direction of Mr. Habitat himself, Jimmy Carter. I had contacted my colleagues and picked their brains about the latest solar electric technologies. We took advantage of as many state and federal programs as we could find and installed what was then the largest solar array of its kind in New

York State. The array is tied into the grid which means that what we produce is used by anyone on the grid and that we cannot store the electricity. We are listed as a source of 'Green Energy' in National Grid's system.

We decided to build the barn, which was designed on the back of a napkin, off the grid. The barn had two solar panels and one small wind turbine. The 400w wind turbine was from a sailboat. Smaller than a mailbox, I still had to go before the town board for approval to install the device. I was before the board for about 1/2 hour, ten minutes to approve the installation and the other twenty to answer questions about how they could have one installed. One of the panels is now part of a research project at RIT. I had noticed what I thought was 'bird crap' on the lower left corner of one of the panels. "I don't think so", said one of the RIT profs who sent one of his students to investigate. I can still picture the student standing on the roof holding a golf ball. No one, not even the twins who had a driving range on the lower 40, has claimed responsibility for the mishap. That panel became part of a capstone project for a graduate student from Brail. The remaining panel and the small turbine keep a bank of batteries fully charged. If there is an accident on the grid, a car knocks over a telephone pole for example, my grid-tied solar shuts down so the linemen can work safely to correct the problem. The barn is totally off the grid so the kids had no excuse during a power outage and could go into the barn to do their homework.

Methane

RIT students have been volunteering at Odonata Sanctuary since the beginning. They not only help to plant garlic and weed tomatoes, but they have carried out research projects that have helped finance the farm operations. I taught at a school in Muzaffarnagar, India that used a huge pit filled with cow dung to create methane gas. The pit was covered with a heavy steel plate that ran up and down a greased central pole to adjust the pressure. A hose ran from the plate to a series of Coleman-like stoves where water was heated and chapatis were made. We had plenty of free manure here at the sanctuary and there was even a soil profile pit I had just dug for a class of Geneseo students. Within a week we were generating enough methane to boil water and cook lunch for all. We even buried a slow cook crock pot filled with stew into a pile of poop. There were few takers for that delightful yet dung covered dish.

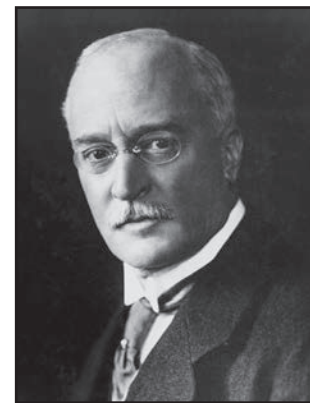
Microhydro

We encourage artists and scientists to use Odonata Sanctuary as an experimental

field station for their dreams, creations, Eagle Scout, Gold Awards, Capstone Projects and school-related projects. One student wanted to test his micro-hydro turbine in an existing stream. He installed the unit and his face lit up as much as his gauges and meters when he successfully generated enough electricity to light a small lamp. We're hoping to use a similar device to pump water from the pond to the hoop houses in the near future.

Biodiesel

A few years ago, we ran my Dodge diesel truck and a compact diesel tractor using used, strained vegetable oil. Of course everything smelled like KFC or Wong Dung Poo and the kids were grossed out when they had to sift out the lumps. We decided to invest in a biodiesel machine. This was when restaurants were paying folks to take their used oil away, so the fuel source was cheap. We used the same technique that we learned while living in Costa Rica to convert used vegetable oil to biodiesel. This turned out to be too much like sugaring maple syrup. The machine we designed took many hours of babysitting, turning valves and watching pressures and temperatures. We ended up abandoning the project when a new company came into town and was buying up all the used veggie oil they could get. Our free source was gone. We did run our equipment for a few years on biodiesel and our daughter, Forest, did get a science fair project out of it. The dogs still pause and sniff the ground for the smell of burnt chicken and chop suey where the machine once stood.



Rudolf Christian Karl Diesel

FYI: The story of diesel and its creator, Dr. Diesel who disappeared crossing the English Channel, is a fascinating one. If we had stuck to Rudolf Diesel's plan, we would be running most of our agricultural equipment with farmer-grown peanut oil.

Steve Melcher

Steve Melcher is the primary caretaker, hoof trimmer & poop scooper at Odonata Sanctuary, Mendon. His studies included using members of the Order "Odonata," as bioindicators of freshwater ecosystems. He has written/coauthored in journals, magazines, and books re: environmental literacy and ecological issues. Steve now works with environmental and educational organizations whose goal is to have "no child left inside". Learn more: fb Odonata Sanctuary.

At home with the Owl Light. Subscribe today! See page 7

The Night Sky - January

Orion and the Quadrantids meteor shower



By Dee Sharples

January 2020 is here and brings with it a new decade, as well as a New Year. It also brings many beautiful celestial events to our skies.

The stars in our night sky appear to move around the Earth, progressing in an orderly, fixed, and unchanging parade. Constellations rise toward the east and set toward the west. The constellations we observed in the night sky in January 2019 will once again return to the night sky in January 2020.

This movement of the stars makes it appear that they are revolving around us, but that's not correct. It's Earth which revolves around the sun and in doing so changes our position in space so that we view a different section of our star-filled universe each month.

However, the planets in our solar system do change their positions relative to the background of these fixed stars. The naked-eye planets Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn were known to the ancient Greek astronomers, but because they moved differently from all the other stars, they referred to them as wandering stars. They studied these strange "stars" which seemed to move at will across the night sky and called them planetes which means wanderer. Our word planet comes from this Greek word.

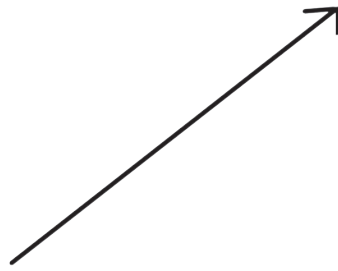


Orion

Illus. Dee Sharples



Pleiades



On January 1st at 9:00 PM, look about 40 degrees above the southeastern horizon for Orion, one of the most recognizable constellations. Due south and about 20 degrees above Orion are the Pleiades, or Seven Sisters, a beautiful star cluster. To the naked eye, the Pleiades will look like a fuzzy patch of light. If you have binoculars, turn them toward the Pleiades to see the individual stars in this stunning star cluster. Orion will be rising earlier as the month progresses. Look for this constellation at 8:00 PM in the middle of the month and 7:00 PM at the end.

On January 1st one hour after the sun sets, look for the planet Venus shining brilliantly at magnitude -4.0 only 16 degrees above the southwestern horizon. A crescent moon lies high above it in the south. Although the moon will change

phases and positions in the sky during the month, Venus will continue to shine in the southwest.

The Quadrantids meteor shower peaks in the early morning hours of January 4th. Around 4:00 AM, look east-northeast a third of the way up from the horizon to the area of sky where the meteors will appear to originate. The shower will be active from December 28-January 12, but at its peak you may be able to spot 120 meteors per hour. Although most meteor showers are created from dust and debris left behind from comets that have passed through our solar system, the Quadrantids originated from an asteroid designated 2003 EH1. Fragments from this asteroid burn up when they enter our atmosphere creating what some people call shooting stars.

To see these events in January, you'll have to brave the cold, so be sure to bundle up before stepping outside.



Dee Sharples

Dee Sharples is an amateur astronomer who enjoys observing planets, star clusters and the Moon through her telescope. She is a member of ASRAS (Astronomy Section of the Rochester Academy of Science) and records "Dee's Sky This Month," describing what can be seen in the sky on the ASRAS website, rochesterastronomy.org.

Magnitude

Magnitude measures the apparent brightness of a celestial object and is expressed by a decimal. An object with a negative number like our Sun is brighter.

Sun: -26.7

Full Moon: -12.6

Venus: -4.0

Bright star: 0.0

Dimmest star visible with the unaided eye: 6.0

How to measure degrees in the sky

A simple "ruler" is to hold your arm straight out and make a fist. The area of the sky covered by your fist measures about 10°. Start at the horizon and by moving your fist up and counting how many "fist widths" it takes to reach an object in the sky, you'll have an approximation of its height. To measure 1°, hold your little finger out at arm's length. The area of the sky covered by your finger is about 1°.

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Snowed In: Winter Break Science Days at RMSC, Dec. 26 through Jan. 30

ROCHESTER, NY— For parents wondering how they'll keep their kids occupied for the long holiday break, the Rochester Museum & Science Center (RMSC) has the answer. Families are invited to visit the Science Museum & Strasenburgh Planetarium for winter-themed activities and special presenters during the RMSC's Snowed In: Winter Break Science Days from December 26 to January 5, 11-3pm daily

Discover the wonders of winter with hands-on activities and demonstrations by RMSC staff and meet & greet with local scientists and organizations to explore the wonders of science and technology happening across our community. In addition to our guest presenters, there are many daily workshops. Visitors will also be able to explore the RMSC's new featured exhibit, SciFiTech, exploring the how science fiction has influenced modern technology. With interactive displays and exhibits around every corner, paired with references to classic sci-fi novels and films and the technology they predicted, this exhibit will be fun for the whole family.

Planetarium shows will be running throughout the winter break. For the full show schedule and information about all events visit RMSC.org/. Admission: Programs are free with regular museum admission, unless otherwise specified: \$18 adults, \$17 seniors and college students with ID, \$16 ages 3 to 18, free for children under 3 and RMSC members. Admission to the SciFiTech exhibit is also free with regular museum admission. RMSC offers \$1 tickets for those with an EBT card (for up to 4 people a card).

Bee Lines

Winter in the Bee Yard

by Sam Hall



The bee yard is my continuous source of education, fascination and pure delight.

I also enjoy writing these notes as it compels me to focus on things that sometimes I might forget. Such as this past April I got a nuc (usually a small box with 3 to 5 frames of bees with a queen) from a commercial beekeeper. I put it into an 8-frame deep super with the anticipation that it would progress like the others I got at the same time. The others within a month had filled most of their single deep super with honey, pollen and brood. They were ready for a second deep super. Hopefully, they would be in position to make honey as the summer progressed in sufficient enough quantities that this old beekeeper might share some.

From the get-go this colony seemed to be at war with itself. As soon as they would supersede the queen they would start the process of replacing her all over again. I lost track of how many times this happened. By the end of the summer the queen issue seemed resolved, but they had almost no stores for the winter and not much of a population due to their continuous search to get the right queen.

I was resigned to letting it die out but as you do with children sometimes the colony that gives you the most trouble you try working the hardest with to see if you can do something. So as of this writing I am feeding this colony with a 2 to 1 sugar to water syrup using

a plastic pail with a screen feeder directly over the center hole in the inner cover. This way the colony can access the feeder without breaking cluster as the cluster is right below the center hole. I'm hoping I can feed them this way all winter. Have to admit I'm concerned the syrup may freeze but so far in all of the cold we have had to date it has not. A friend told me that this combination of sugar and water will not freeze. We'll see.

From now on until April if you check a colony and it is right up against the bottom of the inner cover, it generally means they are out of honey stores and will starve if the beekeeper does not intervene. I have previously written about candy boards and how to use them. For the small cost involved it is a good idea to have one or two available if you need them.

I have placed another order for some Saskatraz bees for delivery in Wilkes Barre, PA next April 27 or thereabouts. In agriculture there is really no such thing as a set date until you are at least within a few weeks of the event. All sorts of things can change the delivery date of new bees, primarily weather related. I'm pleased with the Saskatraz that I had this past season but will not limit my yard to one line of bees.

Diversity in the bee yard to me is a desired necessity. A frame of my bees held up to the sunlight will have bees that are almost black and some that are almost translucent. They

all bring many things with them. What one trait is lacking in one group will be present in another and shared in the offspring. So much if not all of this depends on the queen. Hopefully the queen in her mating flight will mate with upwards of 20 or more drones. Each drone will furnish the offspring with their individual characteristics, i.e. gentleness, honey production, longevity, etc.

No matter how many losses I have sustained over the years during the winter due to many things, I still look forward with great anticipation to spring. I even look forward to the blooming of the skunk cabbage which occurs about a week before crocuses bloom. It is the first flower of the new year that the bees have to work. Sometimes I think if bees had human intellect and speech, when the skunk cabbage blooms in the spring one forager might say to the queen mother "I did it last time it's Mary's turn".

"Words are like bees – some create honey and others leave a sting."

Sam Hall

Sam Hall is a Western NY beekeeper who first worked bees as a child growing up on a "dirt farm" in Allegany County, NY. He has kept bees for most of his adult life and believes that his mistakes "far outnumber his successes."

Summer Morning at the Door

By Jack Taylor

Open—then a
breath of cool air
through the screen-door.
Pausing for a moments joy,
seeing the soft sunlight
on the moist green grass.
And the feeling—
I'm glad I've lived
to see this day.
In early working days
mornings like this
were followed by
a boiling sun.
Thankfully, now
my work is done.
The hay is in the barn.

Jack Taylor

Jack Taylor spent his childhood on dairy farms in Long Island and Whitney Point, NY. He served as a Postmaster for twenty-eight years. He now spends his time writing poetry and prose. He lives in Whitney Point, NY.





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The Homestead Gardener

Are Animals Necessary?

By Derrick Gentry

I realize that the question raised in my title may sound awkward and insensitive, especially since it appears in print right beside the photo of an animal that I have known and lived with for several seasons now. Contrary to what some have assumed, this is not a photo of me; it is a photo of Lyle, the only male who lives among our otherwise all-female herd of goats. Lyle is a wethered buck and therefore not necessary with respect to breeding. He is a jolly good fellow, though, and loves to pose for the camera. The girls love him, and so do I.

Lyle is much better looking than I am and has far more charisma. That is why his picture has been up there for the past year that I have written this column. I do not think consciousness is the quality that separates Lyle from me. Consciousness breeds conceit, and I am pretty sure that Lyle is never as self-conscious or as egotistical as I can sometimes be.

So, back to the uncomfortable question raised up above: Are animals like us necessary? I'm pretty sure Lyle doesn't give the question much thought. Speaking for myself, I'd like to think I am necessary or at least in demand. All of the research I have done, however, indicates that my own sense of self-importance is little more than a conceit. Here is what entomologist E.O. Wilson has to say about me and Lyle and our place in the larger ecosystem that is home to insects and plants and invertebrates:

"The truth is that we need invertebrates but they don't need us. If human beings were to disappear tomorrow, the world would go on with little change But if invertebrates were to disappear, I doubt that the human species could live more than a few months."

Well, then ... That is the sobering verdict from a scientific and ecological point of view. Take a few slow breaths, let it sink in, carry on with the day.

So let me now rephrase the question and make it a little more self-centered and practical-sounding: Are animals necessary on the homestead, in the garden? From what point of view is it worth having animals around?

These are questions that naturally arise during the lean winter months, the long period when keeping animals often involves trudging through the snow to haul water long distances on bitterly cold days. Operating an animal boarding house during the winter also means going through stockpiled reserves of hay and grains and

winter forage. Year-round animal husbandry demands a considerable amount of work and planning ahead. One of the rewards of all this patience and labor, of course, is a barn full of rich organic matter ready to transfer to the garden beds in the Springtime. (But then again, you can also have manure hauled in from other people's barns...)

Yes, it is worth reminding ourselves that it is entirely possible to have a garden and a farm and a homestead without any animals around at all: no poultry, no ruminants, no diseases to watch for and treat, no hooves to trim, no predators to watch for, no culling of the flock or herd before winter. You don't even need to haul in manure from outside.

Will Bonsall, the iconic Maine grower and author and founder of the Scatterseed Project, has shown us how to practice agro-ecology based entirely on vegan principles. Bonsall has spent decades building soil and cycling organic matter and nutrients with cover crops and leaves and plant matter, with no animals needed for processing. (Bonsall does, however, make use of composted "humanure.")

Bonsall himself is a practicing vegan and makes as compelling a philosophical case for veganism as I have heard. What Bonsall has to say is all the more interesting to me because he has such an intimate knowledge of how ecosystems work and of how to produce food in harmony with ecological principles. He knows that nature is mostly about eating and being eaten and about creatures exploiting each other symbiotically for their own benefit. And yet, Bonsall has found ways to participate in that system on his own terms.

I am not vegan myself, but I always enjoy the challenge of cooking for vegan friends when I know they are coming over dinner. There are some tasty vegan dishes involving fruits and vegetables and legumes and grains and pulses. Apart from the artistic satisfaction that comes from working within limits and with limited materials, there is also some satisfaction that comes from the knowledge that you can do without something — another form of aesthetic appeal, a principle of parsimony. And thinking about what we can do without -- whether it's eating meat, spending money or driving places—is a philosophical stance worth cultivating and celebrating, particularly in the context of a larger culture that so often glorifies indulgence and over-consumption.



Though I am neither vegetarian nor vegan, I do agree that there are many good reasons for consuming much less meat than most of us currently do. There is no question, moreover, that producing meat and dairy products within the current and dominant industrial model -- with more than 50% of energy-intensive corn production going to fatten up confined animals living in squalid conditions -- is a system that is profoundly degrading both to the animals and to the environment. People have naturally come to view all images of livestock, regardless of the setting, as emblematic of a larger problem. But the problem, of course, is not with the animals themselves. Nor is there a fundamental problem with the deeply ethical practice of (true) animal husbandry. And while I admire Will Bonsall and have learned a great deal from his vegan methods of growing food and building soil, I am nevertheless of the opinion that there are many good reasons for having animals around.

Just because we CAN do without something does not necessarily mean that we SHOULD do without it. My ongoing education in permaculture has taught me that thinking in terms of efficient processes and thinking in terms of resilient systems represent two very different ways of looking at the world. Resilient systems, unlike efficient systems, involve a certain amount of inefficiency and redundancy by definition. That is what makes natural ecosystems resilient.

The concept of resilience may offer a measure of consolation to the more pensive and insecure denizens of the animal kingdom. Animals, myself included, may not be strictly necessary in an ecological sense. But we are here; some of us are queer; a good many of us are deer; and as plant-eating nutrient recyclers, we all have some positive role to play as promoters and facilitators of ecological biodiversity.

Over the next year, I would like



to dedicate this space to reporting and reflecting upon the animal-intensive practice known as "silvopasture." Steve Gabriel, of the Cornell Cooperative Extension, wrote a wonderful treatise on silvopasture techniques, and here is his definition:

"The intentional combination of trees, domesticated animals, and forages as a multilayered system where each benefits from its relationship to the others, with multiple yields harvested from the same plot of land."

Silvopasture is enjoying something of a vogue at the moment, in part because it ranked near the top of the list of carbon-sequestering and regenerative practices in Paul Hawken's much-discussed Drawdown Project of a few years back. I have no desire to go against the grain of this popular trend; in fact, I am eager to ride the wave and join the crowd and try out what so many others across the world are trying out. And I am excited to share with you what I have learned from others, from my own experience, and from the small library of inspiring books on the subject that I have recently begun to live with: books by extraordinary individuals like Steve Gabriel, Rebecca Thistlewaite, Sarah Flack, and Fred Provenza. Their names will likely appear in these pages over the coming year, and I hope to report as well on what my readers tell me they are doing and what they have learned.

In all important respects, I consider silvopasture to be a form of gardening. There is an expansion of the term, perhaps, but no stretching of it. My decision to undertake a long-term experiment in silvopasture and to write about it here feels like a natural and logical development. I will still write about other more traditional aspects of gardening, and this column will still be called the Homestead Gardener and will still have Lyle as its avatar image. In fact, Lyle will be playing a newly important role in this silvopasture-gardening experiment. I need him now more than ever. Let's hope his new celebrity status does not go to his head...

Derrick Gentry

Derrick Gentry lives in Canadice with his wife and son, and numerous furred and feathered friends. He teaches in the Humanities Department at Finger Lakes Community College.
E-mail: Derrick.Gentry@fccc.edu

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Joseph Fasano is the author of three collections of poems, Vincent (Cider Press Review, 2015), Inheritance (Cider Press Review, 2014), and Fugue for Other Hands (Cider Press Review, 2013), winner of the Cider Press Review Book Award. His honors include two Pushcart Prize nominations, the RATTLE Poetry Prize, and a finalist nomination for the Missouri Review Jeffrey E. Smith Editors' Prize.

He teaches at Manhattanville College and in the graduate and undergraduate writing programs at Columbia University. He lives in New York. <http://josephfasano.net/>

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Side Steet Sounds

Sharing the Music

By Steve West

I have attended and hosted open-mic nights at various locations for the better part of the last twenty years. I've met some wonderful musicians and made some great friends along the way. Like many musicians, open mics are how I got my start as a professional musician.

As a host for open mics, it is always my goal to encourage and nurture the people who show up to play so that they can develop as performers. That's been the tradition of musicians for generations. Help the ones coming up. It keeps the music alive, and challenges the older generation to stay fresh.

When I was getting my start on the local music scene, I met a man named Bill Brown. He would ride to Rochester every Tuesday with Lisa Bigwood to attend the open mic that she was hosting at Daily Perks Coffee Shop. Bill was twenty-five to thirty years older than most of the other performers. He looked like he had lived life, and paid his dues. God, I wanted to impress him.

At the time, I was singing with sort of a growl in my voice. It was an affectation I thought made me sound bluesy. Most times when it was my turn to play, Bill would listen for a moment to my first song, then get up to go outside to have a cigarette. One night he said to me, "You know, when you stop trying to sound like somebody else and decide



Bill Brown at my place, being Bill Brown.

what Steve West sounds like, you might have something." It was like someone turned on the light for me. The first time I decided to sing in my own voice, I was a little nervous about it. The growl affectation was my security blanket. I felt a little exposed without it. When it was my turn to take the stage, I saw Bill get up and move toward the door for his smoke. I started to sing and I saw Bill stop and turn around. He listened to the whole song. For my second song, he went back to his seat and sat down. At the end of my last song, he gave me a slight nod and said, "So that's what Steve West sounds like." I was over the moon. It was the start of a friendship I have valued ever since. Although I don't recall Bill ever teaching

"So that's what Steve West sounds like."

me any music, he taught me more than I can recount here about how to be a professional musician. Bill passed on Easter Sunday in 2014, but his lessons have stayed with me. If it weren't for him spotting something in me and taking an interest in helping me to develop it, I wouldn't be able to say that I play music for a living today.

The nurturing and encouragement offered me I've tried to remember and pass along to the next generation of musicians. Some of the people that have been to open mics I have hosted have gone on to achieve a fair amount of national or regional success as musicians. Others will never play on stages bigger than those of the coffee houses, breweries, and bars that host open mics. It's all about the music. Everyone who shows up to play is sharing a part of themselves. A kind word to someone can change their life.

Steve West

Steve West performs every Sunday, 11am-2pm at The Brown Hound in The Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, NY. Other gigs and info. can be found at: <https://www.stevewestmusic.com/>

January Events

Events listings are free. Enter your event at: www.owllightnews.com/events/community/Add
Events may be added at anytime.

(Events will be added to print if in before the deadline).

Advertising inquires to Editor@CandicePress.com.

Winter Solstice Spiral Walk with Crystal Singing Bowls and Reiki
December 21st 2:45 - 5:00pm Suggested Donation \$5 - \$40 (families are welcome to make a group donation) No one turned away for lack of funds. Inquiries and RSVPs audrey@yoga-bhoga.com www.yoga-bhoga.com for complete description of event. Little Lakes Community Center 4705 S. Main St Hemlock NY 14466

Art Space 36 - A selection of works by the FLCC student Photography Club until Jan. 17. ArtSpace is located at 36 S. Main St., Canandaigua, next-door to the storefront that housed the first art classes for the then-Community College of the Finger Lakes. Regular hours for ArtSpace36 are 2 to 6 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays, and the gallery opens for special events which are listed on the college website.

After Hours at the Museum - Entertaining and informative bimonthly presentations at the Antique Wireless Museum. Wednesdays beginning at 7:30 pm. January 15, 2020, Leif HerrGesell, Executive Director of the East Bloomfield Historical Society, will present the fascinating history of 2nd Lt. Myron Adams, US Signal Corps, in the Civil War. Adams, from East Bloomfield, carried the word to Washington of the final surrender of Confederate troops east of the Mississippi in May 1865. Enjoy the Antique Wireless Museum before and after the presentation. Tickets are available in advance at the Museum or at the door. Admission for adults is \$10 or \$5 for Museum members. 6925 Route 5 in Bloomfield just east of the corner of Route 444.

Party with the Pittsford Fire Department Band Saturday, January 25, 2020 7:00 p. m. Doors open at 6:30. Tickets are \$10. This 40-piece band is one of the top bands in the Rochester area, and play jazz, pop and Broadway tunes, even some marches. Dancing is encouraged! Light refreshments available. Little Lakes Community Center

Red Cross Blood Drive Tuesday, January 28 12:30 to 8:00 p. m.
The need is urgent. Please consider donating to help save someone's life!
LLCA is dedicating this drive to the memory of Joe Dady.
Little Lakes Community Center

The Hochstein School's 100th Anniversary Celebration Kicks Off with Hochstein Alumni Orchestra Concert January 4

Free concert by former Hochstein students features acclaimed cellist Annie Jacobs-Perkins and a world premiere of a new piece by Cyrus Reynolds

ROCHESTER, N.Y.—Former students of The Hochstein School – some traveling from as far away as Los Angeles, Stanford, and Berlin, Germany – return to Rochester to present a free orchestral concert on Saturday, January 4, 2020 at 8:00 pm in the Hochstein Performance Hall. This concert marks the 10th anniversary of the Hochstein Alumni Orchestra and kicks off Hochstein's yearlong centennial celebration. Founded in 1920 to commemorate the genius of the late David Hochstein – an acclaimed violinist who was killed in action in World War I – the School opened in the Hochstein family home on Joseph Avenue to 250 eager students on January 2, 1920. This is just the first in a series of events to commemorate the School's 100th anniversary in 2020.

Directed by Evan Meccarello, the 50-member Hochstein Alumni Orchestra (HAO) performs Brahms' Tragic Overture, the dramatic overture to Ferdinand Herold's opera Zampa, and Haydn's technically challenging Cello Concerto No. 2 in D Major with Hochstein alum Annie Jacobs-Perkins. A newly commissioned work, Fifteen, by Hochstein alum Cyrus Reynolds, will have its world premiere. It is a modern re-imagining of Edward Elgar's classic Enigma Variations, drawing its name from both an implied 15th variation (Elgar ended his masterwork at 14) and Cyrus's age when he first performed the Elgar variations as a member of the HYSO. In addition, a Cello Choir and a Flute Choir made up of Hochstein alumni will perform.

The concert is free and open to the public, with donations accepted to benefit Hochstein. A reception follows the concert. See below for performer bios and a calendar listing.

This event is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Thank you to Wegmans Food Markets for their support of our community events.

Past Becomes Present (fiction)

By Gary Catt

The woman manning the reunion registration table looked up. "You're Walt Gage? Wow! I'm Randi Davidson. Randi Kirk Davidson. You knew my late mom."

Walt Gage just stared open-mouthed. The blonde hair, the dimpled cheek.

Oh my god. You look just like her!"

"Oh, everybody says that. I've been waiting for you to show up at one of these things."

"I was so very sorry to hear about your mom's death."

Randi Kirk Davidson eyed Walt Gage as though drinking him in. "I'm so happy you're here. Can we meet tomorrow morning? We can get coffee."

Perennial bachelor Walt Gage loved Susan Kirk in a way that still ripped at his heart some 25 years after their bitter parting. His sense of lost love still sent him down roads that only deepened the gulf of time and distance and despair. She was now dead, and he was looking into the eyes of her mirror image.

Their parting was so bitter. He pursued a college scholarship a continent away. She didn't

understand his decision. It was a disagreement that in retrospect was so petty, but was about to be revealed as something more.

Once at a party on the West Coast he bumped into a school friend of Susan's. A casual inquiry brought a blistering response. "Just leave her alone. She's happy and that's all you need to know." The ugliness hurt. Sometimes he wondered about it. It was only a high school break-up. Hardly something to elicit such rancor.

Why would her daughter want to meet? Susan's married name was Nikahd. Randi's name was Davidson. How was it all connected?

Walt was at the coffee shop at the appointed time when Randi came in accompanied by a toddler.

"I thought you might want to meet your grandson, dad. His name is Walter. Walt Davidson. I've been married a couple years now."

As Walt Gage attempted to recover his faculties, Randi Kirk Davidson began talking. "Ovarian cancer killed mom. As she was dying, she chased others from her hospital room and told me to sit. She had something important to

tell me. Just after you broke up, she learned she was pregnant. It was pride, she said, that kept her from telling you. She said she never stopped loving you. I kept the last name of Kirk when she married my stepfather, a man I really don't recall. The marriage didn't last. She indicated she married him for money. She begged me not to pester you, but to let you live your life.

She took this from her neck and handed it to me just before she passed."

Randi Kirk Davidson reached across the table and opened her hand. It was a ring on a chain.

Walt Gage took it and examined it. "It's my class ring."

"She said to tell you she wore it every day."

Gary Catt

Gary Catt is a retired journalist and corporate communications counselor who lives in Honeoye, NY. He can be found wandering the trails in the area with his canine companions - most recently Patches.

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Writing Groups

Canandice Lake Writers' Group
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For more information, contact Darlene at (585) 358-1065

Warsaw's Write Connection
2nd Tuesday, 6:45 PM ~ Warsaw Public Library
For more information, contact Wendy at (585) 786-5290

Wayne Writers Group, Macedon
2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7-9 pm. ~ At Books ETC., by Post 494.
Goal: To Intensify Creativity

Lakeville, NY ~ Poets' & Writers' Group
1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 10:30-12pm
~ Chip Holt Ctr., Vitale Park.

The Canandaigua Writers' Group
1st Friday of the month from 10 am to 12:30 pm.

Reading Groups

Honeoye Public Library Book Talk Group
4th Wednesday, 5:30pm, library conference room.
See ad page 11 for upcoming titles: or 585-229-5020

New Age Book Study
Wednesdays at 4 pm ~ Warsaw Public Library
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Find book details @ trinitywarsaw.org.

The Monthly Read

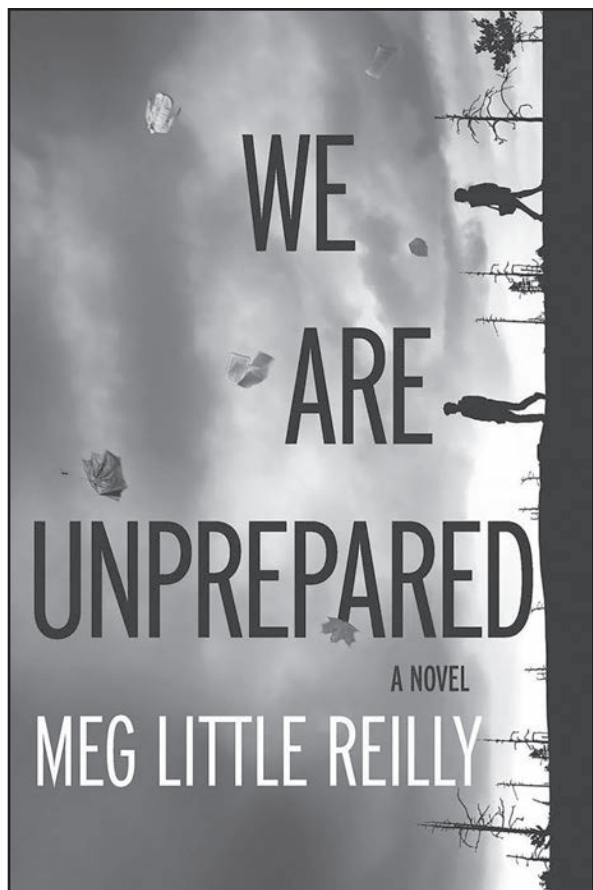
Whom Do You Trust?

By Mary Drake

We live in the age of climate change. Or do we? Whether you believe that “scientific evidence for warming of the climate system is unequivocal” or whether you don’t, that will determine how you act.

A recent (November 2019) news article stated that “In October 1964, when Lyndon Johnson was running for president . . . , 77% of Americans believed the government did the right thing all or most of the time, according to the National Election Survey. Since then, NES, Gallup and Pew Research have asked versions of that question repeatedly and the number has fallen dramatically. As of March, it was down to 17%.”

These figures are shocking, but for the characters in Meg Little Reilly’s dystopian novel *We Are Unprepared*, the question isn’t whether you believe scientists and the government about climate change. It has occurred and a big superstorm is heading your way, now, how do you prepare?



This is the question faced by Ash and Pia, a yuppie couple from New York City, not long after they move to their dream home in the country—an old farmhouse located outside the little village of Isole (which means isolated in French) in an area of Vermont known as the Northeast Kingdom. Like many urban dwellers, they’re not especially suited to country life; Ash tells us that “Pia had worked in advertising and I was a partner at a graphic design firm. . . . We had only the vaguest plan to escape the city and remake ourselves, but we were sure the details of this plan would present themselves when it was time.” In other words, they were flying by the seat of their pants. Ironically, news of the impending superstorm comes the

A review of *We Are Unprepared* by Meg Little Reilly

same day that the couple is diagnosed as being infertile. Nature—both inside and out—is not behaving as it should.

The rest of the book addresses a universal theme—fear of the unknown. If you don’t know what’s going to happen or when, whom do you turn to? Whom do you trust? Do you believe the government’s predictions about The storm, the big one that’s coming? A neighbor tells Ash,

Governments are conservative about such things. They have reason to be—every storm report has the potential to move markets and set into motion a series of events at a global level. It’s not willful deception, exactly. It’s more like a compulsory downplaying. If the US government panics, everyone panics. So yes, I think The Storms are going to be much worse than they are predicting.

And if it’s really going to get that bad, what do you do about it?

Early in the novel, Pia convinces a reluctant Ash to go to a meeting in the basement of the Elks Club where he listens with increasing unease to the moderator, a local man named Crow, talk about different types of energy; Crow says that later on they’ll discuss “water safety, food supply, communication technology, and, finally, personal safety.” Alarmed, Ash immediately identifies them as “Preppers. I’d read a New Yorker piece about them several months before. . . . These were deranged weirdos fixated on the apocalypse.” Some might also call them survivalists. These are the independently minded who want to get away from it all, live off the grid, and build bunkers underground in which to survive the coming catastrophe. Ash thinks that neither of them are “weirdos” and he leaves the meeting, only to find that Pia stays behind.

Serious fissures in the smooth surface of rural life begin to appear, in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, in the village of Isole, and even in the marriage of the young couple, Ash and Pia.

Pia becomes a Prepper, buying hand-crank water sterilizers and setting up colonies of worms in their living room for composting. Ash takes the conservative approach, which infuriates Pia who accuses him of “joining the authoritarians.” In fact, Ash is invited to join “the select board, what New England towns typically call their local government, because they need someone “young and smart and a little . . . detached. . . . You hardly know anyone, which is a great asset in this case.” Before he knows it, Ash is approaching owners of property where the Isole creek passes through and trying to persuade them to participate in a “flood runoff plan,” funded by the state, which would involve digging a new route for the creek. This would be a “construction-heavy project” that

would alter the landscape. Needless to say, not all landowners are keen on the idea.

One of the landowners Ash talks to is Crow, leader of the Preppers, who says, “there’s no way in hell that I’m going to let a group of strangers, beholden to God knows who, come onto my property and start tearing it up. Not gonna happen.” Then he shows Ash his “back-up plan,” for the superstorm, a small, hidden, windowless bunker with all the necessities of living, including a couch, table and chairs, a camp stove, a water pump, and a tiny camp toilet. Ash is impressed by the “ingenuity that had gone into it.” The only problem is, that when the big storm does come, it’s only big enough for one.

Not surprisingly, the fear generated by the predicted cataclysm arouses brings out those who would capitalize from it. Enter Rodney Riggins, “a Canadian-born atheist who had already reinvented himself several times before striking gold with his final act as a man of God.” Ash thinks he is “the most brilliant variety of opportunist” who, besides selling God, also sells disaster preparedness kits. People desperate for more information, desperate to know what to do, buy into Riggins’s odd variety of evangelical meteorology.

Although when the big storm finally arrives late in the novel after much brouhaha, some of the characters’ actions will still surprise the reader, but, without spoiling the ending, suffice it to say that the brave new world left behind after the disaster is still one that is inhabitable. The ending seems a bit overly romantic and simplistic, although it does satisfy.

Published in 2016, this is Meg Little Reilly’s first novel and it is a suspenseful imagining of what the human reaction to a world-altering disaster might look like. She really is a native of Vermont who has recently moved back, although she is no meteorologist or climate scientist. She is simply a skillful writer concerned about what is happening to the environment and a keen observer of people, who can behave better or worse when under duress than they normally would. She has since written *Everything that Follows* (2018) and *The Misfortunes of the Family*, which is due out in 2020. With a degree in Media and Public Affairs, and having worked for the Federal government, Reilly seems likely to be one of the “authoritarians” if she were a character in her own novel, but whichever part she might play, this disaster thriller makes us pause to wonder what we would do if disaster strikes.



Mary Drake

Mary Drake is a novelist and freelance writer living in western New York. Visit her online at marydrake.org to learn more about her books



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The Conscious Crow

Mindful Eating for Happiness and Health



There is an incredible connection between what we eat, how we feel and how we act. We have overlooked the weight and presence of diet in our life as with many other basic aspects that make such an enormous change on our well-being. We may not realize how intrinsically food carries the ability to simultaneously heal and harm us on our walk of life and pursuit of health and well-being, but it does carry a substantial percentage validating illness or healing.

Our bodies mimic the nature and law of the universe just as our mind does; how we feed our brain will direct our life and our bodies represent the same whereas the quality that we feed is the quality that we seed. What we put in our hands and feed our body sprouts, directly supporting us in the same capacity and frequency as what we consume within our minds. Energetically we vibrate and react to whatever thought and food choice we ingest and embrace. How we choose to nourish our bodily systems will determine how we run on a physical level as well as emotional/mental. Wholesome foods equal wholesome thoughts, vibrations and feelings that not so surprisingly lead to a wholesome lifestyle- one always carries into the next.

When we extend our sight, bringing awareness into our eating hab-

its, we begin to recognize the similarities in our demeanor throughout the day and the connection and reflection that our mood and food have. In bringing this notion to light we realize they emit the same energetic aliveness (or lack thereof). By slowing down, bringing awareness to these connections and paying closer attention to what we feed our bodies and minds we see the direct link between our actions and the way we interact within the world. As we awaken and stream this consciousness and careful thought into all of our choices, we plant fruitful seeds that will feed our life bountifully. In this new year of 2020 let us be mindful of what goes into our bodies and mind; for it is what we emanate and emit out that creates such great change. We can lead a year filled with clear sight, health and well-being if we take the time to consciously plant these seeds of change...

The choice for change is in our hands and starts now.

The Conscious Crow - Reminding you to Grow

The Menu Contained Just Desserts

What if the only thing on the menu was

JUST DESSERTS:

- lemon meringue pie
- brownie sundae
- tiramisu
- chocolate cake
- flan
- cannoli
- crème brulee
- baked Alaska
- chocolate chip cookies
- woopie pies
- caramel cheesecake
- white chocolate dipped strawberries
- coconut cream crepe cake

THE LIST GOES ON!

Carrot cake

Cake in my book doesn't contain vegetables and carrots, as much as I love them, **DO NOT BELONG** in a cake, as they are definitely a vegetable. According to my mother, when I was younger I turned orange after eating too many carrots. The proper word is "carotenemia;" which is generally harmless and caused by eating too many beta-carotene filled foods. So there we have it, forget the carrot cake and bring on the Devils Food Cake on the Double. I never heard of anyone having a reaction from too much chocolate cake! If so, I am sure it would have been me and that I would have gotten my Just Des(s)erts!

Wendy Schreiner

Wendy Schreiner resides in Warsaw with husband Dave and their two shih tzus Daisy Mae and Paisley Rae. She studied English at Daemen College and does freelance writing for Warsaw's Country Courier. She also facilitates "Write Connection" at the Warsaw Public Library.

Ontario County 4-H Youth Practice Life Skills at Harvest Food Fest

The holiday season is a memorable time of year featuring food, family, and community. Ontario County 4-H'ers enjoy the annual Harvest Food Fest for many of the same reasons – a great time of preparing food, enjoying time with their "4-H" family, and engaging in creativity and learning. This event takes place each November about a week before the Thanksgiving holiday, and the emphasis is on giving youth a chance to practice cooking and presentation skills.

The auditorium of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County was bustling with excitement on Saturday, November 23rd as forty 4-H youth ages 5-18 completed silent food demonstrations followed by a tasting test where they answered questions about what they had prepared. After their dish had been evaluated, they took it to the tasting table to be plated for everyone in attendance to try. Four volunteer evaluators provided encouragement and constructive feedback as a team of twelve 4-H teens assisted with registration, organization, and plating food for tasting. The tasting table soon became overflowing with tasty food ranging from tea and smoothies, to pies, salads, and main dishes.



If you have questions about the Ontario County 4-H program, please reach out to Sarah Bagley at sab423@cornell.edu or call 585-394-3977.

Cornell Cooperative Extension is a non-profit educational organization with a mission to extend new knowledge and research-based information in agriculture, family and consumers sciences from Cornell University to county residents. County residents with concerns or questions related to agriculture, horticulture, water quality, 4-H youth development, parenting or family financial management can call 585-394-3977 any time or visit our website at www.cceontario.org.

Harvest Food Fest is an important event because it gives youth a space to practice and learn safe and effective food preparation practices as well as become more comfortable presenting in front of a crowd. Another noteworthy aspect of this event is that youth are required to use at least one cup of local Finger Lakes grown product in their recipes, promoting awareness of local agriculture. Each youth left the event with a special cookbook containing a collection of the recipes that were prepared on that day, in addition to essential skills and fun memories.

Crafting Your Own Cuisine

Resolutions for a Healthful Diet in 2020

By Eileen Perkins

It is January and a new year lies ahead. Resolutions to improve health and well-being are statistically at the top of the self-improvement list. Natural food stores typically experience a surge of business during the first weeks of the year. Both organic and conventional produce sales spike. People eat more fresh veggies. Store patrons stock their refrigerators and pantries with products that support new dietary goals. Individuals with food intolerances also search for new foods to try, although the goal to get healthier may have been thrust upon them in a past more distant than January 1; they relinquished, by force of necessity, many old food friends and were pried loose from habits to consume foods that were simply convenient, tasty solutions at meal time. Spurred by health related, environmental or ethical motivations, a growing number of individuals are choosing to reduce or cut their consumption of animal products, and face the question of what's left when meat, dairy or eggs are minimized or eliminated.

Each of these motivations for nourishing oneself in a new way requires a change both of food and its preparation. There is a learning curve. It helps to be patient with oneself, while seeking out new products and, perhaps new techniques, to enlarge the range of satisfying food options.

This column is designed to introduce you to products that may be new to you, and cooking techniques useful for this food odyssey. I am not a medical professional and offer no medical advice. I am a cook, and I look forward to sharing resources that may be helpful to you!

Monthly Cookbook Review: 1000 Gluten-Free Recipes

1000 Gluten-Free Recipes is an encyclopedic collection of recipes authored by internationally recognized GF expert Carol Fenster, Ph.D. The tome is very well organized, with an approachable format. There are plenty of formulas that are quick-to-make, as well as being vegetarian, and both are clearly marked. Although the author offers suggestions for workable dairy substitutions, as you investigate the recipes bear in mind that the book was written over ten years ago, and non-dairy products have since exploded into the market place. You will find a greater selection of dairy analogs to choose from than were available when the book was written, but the author does provide a place to start.

I was impressed by the breadth of the book's scope. In addition to the many recipes, the author makes the book personal by recalling her own introduction to the GF lifestyle. She also answers many questions that puzzle newbies, such as exactly what gluten is, types of gluten intolerance, how to approach reading ingredient labels and seasoned advice about how to cook and bake with GF supportive ingredients.

One helpful baking ingredient the book introduced me to is a product called "Expandex". This tapioca starch product contributes to making GF baked goods behave more like ones that contain gluten, no small feat! Mimicking the taste and texture of wheat products, without gluten ingredients, requires know-how. Of the formulas I tried, I found they yielded reliable results. Among the ingredients in her baking arsenal is a flour mixture she developed and appropriately named "Carol's Sorghum Blend"; it is key in the success of many of her baked goods. Hers is not the only flour blend that I use, but it does have a respected spot in my own pantry.

Carol Fenster's website, www.savorypalate.com, is informative.

1000 Gluten-Free Recipes is available for loan through many area libraries.

Products to Try

• "Nut Pods" (shelf-stable) Almond and Coconut Creamer – A convenient, unsweetened, gluten free, non-dairy delight for coffee drinkers, available in a number of flavors. I like caramel best!

• "Simple Mills" Artisan Bread Almond Flour Mix- I am surprised by how satisfying the bread this GF mix makes. The recipe calls for eggs. I contacted the company for a tweaked egg replacement suggestion, for those going egg free, since making gluten free baked goods without eggs can be tricky. The company's customer service representative was very prompt and helpful. She mentioned the usual flax seed and fruit substitutions, adding that their team is working on tailor making egg substitution advice for their products. If you try doing this yourself, I'll be happy to hear about your experience. This bread is pictured next to the Broccoli Cauliflower Soup in the recipe photo.

• "Live G Free" (Aldies brand) Gluten Free Everything Bagels – This is the best brand of GF bagel I have tried. The company makes a raisin bagel, that I also enjoy. Store in the freezer after splitting fully in half, and toast as needed. The DF cream cheese left from the featured soup recipe is a good match!

Creamy Broccoli Cauliflower Soup

Makes approximately 6 (12 oz.) servings



Gluten Free, High Fiber, Low Carb, and Vegan (with Non-Vegan Dairy Options) when appropriate ingredient choice and safe handling procedures are adhered to.

Ingredients:

6 cups broccoli flowerets, chopped, apx. 1 lb. cleaned	1 tsp. GF DF buttery spread (or butter)
5 cups cauliflower flowerets, chopped, apx. 1 lb. cleaned	1 Tbsp. dried parsley
6 cups water	3 to 4 tsp. salt
1 1/4 cups celery, course chopped	1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 3/4 cups onion, diced	1 tsp. mustard powder
1/2 cup carrot, shredded	1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/4 cup "Braggs" brand GF nutritional yeast seasoning	4 oz. ©Kite Hill DF GF chive cream cheese softened (or 4 oz. plain dairy cream cheese softened + 1 Tbsp. GF dried chives).
1/2 to 3/4 cup GF DF almond or soy milk, original flavor, start with lower measure *(or dairy cream)	3/4 c (3 oz.) "Parmela Creamery" brand Aged Nut Cheese –Sharp Cheddar shredded Style** (or shredded mild dairy cheddar).

Preparation:

-In large pot, cook onion in buttery spread until lightly brown.
-Add water, broccoli, cauliflower, and celery
-Cover pot and bring to a boil. Cook 40 minutes on medium low or until vegetables are very tender
Whisk in nutritional yeast, salt, mustard powder, lemon juice and softened cream cheese
Remove pot from heat and carefully puree to desired smoothness using an immersion blender (or blender in divided batches) The soup will be thicker if pureed to smoothness
Return pot to heat. Add carrot, and cook on low for 10 minutes
Add shredded cheese and whisk over low heat until cheese is fully melted, then stir in milk or cream
Add parsley, and correct flavors to your taste (add more lemon juice, milk/cream, salt, water, nutritional yeast)
Heat gently to serve. Garnish with parsley and grated carrot, or a small dollop of cream cheese.

This soup freezes well. Divide leftovers into single serving sized portions for the freezer, clearly labeling. This is a convenience food that can be used not only as soup, but as a sauce over pasta or rice, and a filling in a pot pie. Add more cheese to taste. Defrost before reheating. Stir frequently until completely smooth, over low heat.

* When using the dairy milk product options, remember to check for gluten content, if sensitive. Its presence might not be obvious. Refer to labels for declared content, or lack thereof.

**I store this shredded nut cheese in the freezer, once opened. The manufacturer said this is fine to do, that the cheese will still melt, but it will become a little dryer. I compensate by adding a bit of fat.

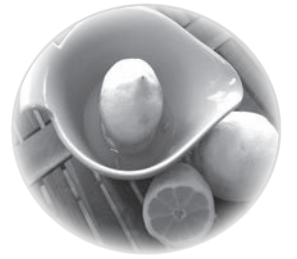
Eileen Perkins

Eileen is a professional cook who supports a "Food-as-Medicine" model for wellness. She and her husband owned and operated "Eileen's Bakery an' Soup Kitchen" in Brockport, N.Y. and cafe in Rochester. Her interest in special diets was reinforced while working in area natural food stores. Currently, when Eileen is not engrossed in recipe development, the preservation of food from the garden, or presenting special-needs food programs, she enjoys soaking in the quiet beauty of the woodland home she shares with her husband and pup, pursuing her Falun Gong practice, reading, and volunteering.

Making Lemonade

Telephone Talk

By Barb Stahl



Remember that recently published book I raved about in December's column? Well, here's what you don't know, and I didn't at the time I wrote it. I had contributed a chapter titled "Telephone Talk" so I was hoping you would buy the book. It seems that my chapter, plus that of one other person, got omitted by the publisher. The coordinator of the project was terribly upset, and I believe he may have felt worse than I did. I know how hard he had worked organizing the project with over twenty authors contributing. Luckily, I have this column because when I get lemons, I can make lemonade! Here is my chapter that didn't get printed in that new book titled *Before I Forget: Short Stories from Collective Views*. (Amazon - \$13.99; or \$3.99 - e-book)

Telephone Talk

As I watch a YouTube update of last night's talk show interview on my smartphone, I think about how much is available inside this small box I hold in my hand. In my thirty-plus-year school librarian career all of my library collections combined together, plus inter-library loan capabilities didn't contain a tiny fraction of what this device that fits into my pocket can provide.

This same smartphone can be used to call people just to chitchat or for serious concerns; update folks using text messages; inform me what the weather will be; provide multiple news sources such as newspapers, or current television reports; emergency alerts; monitor health / medical appointments and the resulting reports; define words; identify famous people; connect me to worldwide places; and many more things that I cannot even imagine. For those I ask my grandchildren.

Of course, I can also get a series of unwanted spam or robo-calls. At least my smartphone shows me the number calling and if I don't have that caller identified I ignore them. If someone legitimately needs me s/he will leave a message. Unfortunately, there is a huge amount of "bad" or "incorrect" information available in that small tool as well. One must use wisdom and care with sources.

Not so very long ago I was amazed to own a cell phone that fit in my pocket, was mobile, and could be used from most geographic areas -- at least that I frequented. No longer did I have to have that required "quarter" in my pocket in case I needed a pay phone. Nor did I have to seek out a gas station or roadside phone booth that would accommodate my need to "call home" or whomever could help me with my current situation.

My first mobile phone before the cell phone was the approximate size of a lunch box complete with a handle. It sat beside me on the car seat ready to serve if necessary. I had deemed it not to be used for pleasure, only emergency. Fortunately, I did not have occasion to use it much.

In my nearly eight decades of life I have probably used most every form of telephone that became available. In the 1940s my family lived with my grandparents who had a wall

phone in their dining room. It was a large box mounted on the wall with a crank for ringing it on the right side. This was a party line and our ring consisted of one long and two shorts. Other people on the line had different rings such as two longs and one short, etc. Very often when we picked up to answer our call there was a distinctive second pick-up heard which we assumed was Ethel, the nosy neighbor. At that time this new communication tool was amazing as we now, from home, were able to be connected to doctors, dentists, or just plain could get the latest gossip from a relative or friend if they were like us and had a phone -- an unbelievable, modern connection to the world! All we had to do was give the phone one long crank and that would signal an unseen operator located somewhere to respond and complete our call. To my youthful knowledge, most of the telephone operators were women who worked in some mysterious undisclosed location. The caller would give them the other person's number and the operator would magically connect you to the other party. Amazing!!!

In the early 1950s a desktop-style version of the telephone became available. It had a rotary dial with which one could reach the operator by dialing 0. Our number was 503-W, and although we would be the only ones to hear our ring, once again we shared the line with others. A telephone operator was still necessary to complete long-distance calls or accommodate collect calls.

By the mid-1950s I was in high school and became quite the chatterbox on the phone. Lengthy conversations were the norm with topics about absolutely nothing of importance. What new dress did I get? Who was going to Sharon's birthday party? Who is the cute new guy who moved to town? Well, a few calls were important such as - what was the homework assignment in math? What was the answer to number seven on the chemistry worksheet? Calling my friends was a part of the daily ritual. At some point our phone service became single-party and it was a welcome improvement. No more could folks listen in to our conversations.

You, the reader, will be the first to hear this -- I am embarrassed to confess that once when, as a teenager, I wanted to be the "cool" one by showing off for my friends I called to order a taxi for an unsuspecting, elderly woman who lived down the street from me. We left my house after calling and began walking toward her house which was cleverly timed perfectly to see the taxi driver walking up to her porch and ringing her doorbell. I heard her denial as we innocently walked past. As an elderly woman, I no longer find this so clever or amusing!

Oh wait, as long as I'm confessing, there was another time to confess -- I called a random person in the phone book and asked, "Do you have Prince Albert in a can?" Then quickly I added, "Then let him out," and immediately hung up. Those were both pretty daring for me, normally a real chicken.

Calling collect was an important tool,

especially for the young people in high school or college. If you needed a ride, you were sick, or something was amiss and you had to talk to your parents or someone for help, you could call them collect with the aid of an operator. The charge for that long-distance call then would be added to the receiver's bill, once accepted.

As a young mother I recall being "tethered" to a wall phone chatting with a friend while my three young children raided the cupboards for pots and pans and organized a parade just beyond my reach. These wall phones became "modernized" by the numbers being able to be punched in, rather than dialed.

Phones and phone service continued to get "smarter and smarter." In 1968, the number 911 became a single, nation-wide phone number to enable people to report emergencies such as fires, accidents, or medical problems, and by now it was becoming unimaginable not to have a phone in your home.

By the 1970s our children were becoming teenagers so now they used the phone with their friends. It seemed important to have a phone both upstairs and down as we needed a communication device for who knows what whether day or night. This makes me wonder if my adult children have any phone misdeeds they should confess.

In the early days of my career as a school librarian locating library resources, or setting up meetings could take several phone calls to other librarians to iron out the necessary details, make changes, etc. A marvelous new tool called e-mail became available because of the phenomenon of the mysterious and amazing Internet. This tool allowed distribution lists to be formed enabling several to communicate with each other efficiently. Technology began to change and become more and more sophisticated almost on a weekly basis. While learning totally new ways to do things, there was admitted frustration while at the same time it was quickly apparent that these new abilities could ultimately change our profession in huge, unpredictable, and mysterious ways... hopefully for the better and with more efficiency.

By the 1990s the World Wide Web (WWW) changed the lives of those of us in the world of research. (I just used my smartphone to look that up!) No longer were World Book Encyclopedia, Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, dictionaries, or thesaurus styles of common reference tools the only resources available. Now we could use the Internet! We just had to figure out how to do that. It certainly didn't take the students long to grasp usage of this marvelous new tool. And I will once again confess, I often let students show me the way as technology was not as foreign an idea to them as to me, and they had no fear whatsoever!

Now that I am owner of my second smartphone I am still learning about the power it contains. It connects all the above things plus much, much more in that one small handheld object that fits into my pocket.

Continued on page 17

2 or 3 WWII Men

By Merton E Bartels

“War is fear cloaked in courage,” so claimed General West Moreland.

War is fierce, vicious, and unpredictable. It exemplifies how reality can be much, much stranger than fiction. What is rarely or never ever discussed by veterans is combat situations, whether of short or long duration. One of my uncles was in George Patton’s Third Army attempting to get to Berlin ahead of the Russian eastern movement toward the city. My Uncle Alfred, an infantryman, was assigned to it once the Allies were firmly in France. Patton’s Third Army was comprised of six corps and 42 divisions in May 1944 and had fought in 281 days (40 weeks) to Germany’s center.

Uncle Alfred was one of three brothers from Orleans County in the army during that era. Since my grandmother Jenny on my mother’s side of the family died in her fifties, I have often wondered if the stress of those war years having three sons and a brother-in-law irregularly confronting the Axis triad was the reason she had died early. Her youngest son, my

Uncle Charlie, was on the Battleship Missouri as part of General MacArthur’s staff when the Japanese had been reluctant to sign the unconditional surrender treaty in September 1945. Now on to the strange event.

Between combat periods there were times of R&R, aka rest and recovery. These foot soldiers who had marched sometimes 20 to 30 hours straight could fall asleep in an instant when told to “take ten.” After the war Uncle Alfred, who let my wife and I occasionally sleep over in his trailer, would turn off the main light and I swear instantly begin snoring before his head hit the pillow.

The Third Army, scattered as three spearheads across the European front, was waiting for supplies, fuel and personnel reinforcements. During an R&R break, my uncle queried his superior officer if he could borrow a jeep for a few hours. Reason was Uncle Alfred had heard his younger brother Raymond was close by at 15 miles away with the armor division. Also, the first uncle was unaware his brother was awarded a bronze star for saving a captain with two bro-

“Then and only then did my uncles realize that each was talking to his own unrecognized, war-weary brother.”

ken legs from an overturned jeep incident and turning both safely to the allied lines. They had not seen each other since each one had enlisted at different times while training at various stateside forts. Training in the desert climate was terribly hot and alkaline filled the air. In Arizona training fields, my uncle claimed one could cook eggs on the hood of any vehicle.

As my uncle reminisced on the past, he had finally arrived where his brother might be located if not wounded, killed or possibly reassigned to another unit. He had stopped his jeep to talk to the first GI he saw and question the location of his brother’s unit. The GI had told Uncle Alfred he was close but must go another two miles. So, he drove to the designated camp as directed while hoping he wasn’t too late.

The only thing to do was to stop the jeep and ask more questions. A soldier he had spotted walking toward him caught his eye. “Hey! GI is this the location of the armored division?” shout-

ed my Uncle Alfred. The soldier had replied that it was. Next my uncle had asked the GI if he knew of such and such a unit and anyone by the name of Raymond Ebbs. The GI remarked it was and then asked why the question. “Well, I am his brother,” stated Uncle Alfred.

Then and only then did my uncles realize that each was talking to his own unrecognized, “war-weary” brother.



Merton E Bartels

Merton Bartels, a half century resident of Macedon in SW Wayne County, is a retired technical editor and proposal writer who has 30 plus years in the aerospace and transportation industries. Mert is an American history buff, an AF veteran, enjoys traveling and being active in the Wayne Writers Guild, plus loves to dabble in a myriad of writing styles. His philosophy is from his father: You cannot learn anything younger than you are today!

Telephone Talk from page 16

Smartphones can take over one’s life. I recently realized that as I went back to pick up my phone on the way to the bathroom. Heaven forbid I should miss a call (too much information?). There had been many years when there was no phone available in the bathroom, and somehow I survived. The phone might ring in the living room or kitchen and I wasn’t nearby and able to answer it. Not even a message or answering service was embedded in my early phones. Whoever called simply had to call back at a later time. What happened? When did “instant response” become a necessity?

Smartphones do cause concern when I notice people not paying attention to people, but rather to that device in their hand. Aren’t they missing some human contact and what will be

the long-term result of that? While sitting in a restaurant there is no need to wonder about anything as one can just ask the device what’s what. They can be downright dangerous when crossing the street when one is more engrossed in what the screen says than on the vehicle that is rapidly approaching.

So far, I am able to be with people without my phone always in hand. But there is often that urgent need to show a photo of a grandchild even though mine are mostly adults now. Or maybe you need to show a picture of a place recently visited, or a friend or relative who recently died, or a beautiful sunset, or a cute shot of your cat.

It’s a long stretch since the nosy neighbor listened in on those long ago 1940s conversa-

tions, and now I understand other forces much more concerning than Ethel may be listening. I don’t let myself think of that possibility for very long. Instead, I wonder how long before my smartphone can properly respond to my command, “Beam me up Scottie!” And further, where that command will take me.....

Barb Stahl

Barbara is a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, retired school library media specialist, and a western New York/Finger Lakes area lover who did a previous column for Canandaigua Daily Messenger. She loves her family, circle of friends, reading, writing, history, music, theater, and Tarzan the cat who critiques her articles. Contact: makinglemonadeOwl@gmail.com



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Canandaigua Police Dept.
Thompson Hospital (lobby)
Mental Health Clinic (County Complex)

Geneva:

Police Station
North Street Pharmacy

Richmond:

Town Hall
CVS Pharmacy

Farmington:

State Troopers

Clifton Springs:

Hospital (Lobby)

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Naples:

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Scam Alert Telephone Calling

Typically near the Christmas holiday telephone scams and frauds occur. Yates County Sheriff's Office has received complaints from Yates County residents who have received telephone calls from different scammers.

- (1) Caller identifying as agent for the Social Security Administration and advises that your account number has been fraudulently used and they will have to issue a new one and the agent will want to verify your current number and name etc.
- (2) Caller identifying themselves as representing the NYS Electric and Gas and that they will be forced to shut off your power if you do not make a payment immediately. Will seek your credit card number over the phone.

THESE ARE SCAM AND FRAUD PHONE CALLS. SOCIAL SECURITY DOES NOT MAKE PHONE CALLS LIKE THIS, NOR DOES THE NYSE&G OPERATE THIS WAY.

The caller is trying to get your identification information, or get a credit card number from you.

DO NOT GIVE OUT PERSONAL INFORMATION OVER THE PHONE OR MAKE MONETARY PAYMENTS THIS WAY.

Do not become a victim of identity theft fraud. Never give out personal information, bank accounts or social security numbers over the phone or internet. The DO NOT CALL registry still exists, and is a free call 888-382-1222 or www.donotcall.gov.

According to Sheriff Ron Spike, "It is best to immediately hang up, however if you become a victim please call local law enforcement to report a crime."

Food Pantries

Naples Open Cupboard - Every Wednesdays from 11-2 Harwood Lane - basement of Village Offices.
Serves people in Naples Sch. Dist.

Geneseo/Groveland Emergency Food Pantry
Tuesdays/Thursdays 10-2am, Wednesdays 4-6:30 pm
31 Center St, Geneseo (lower level CPC).
To donate, please drop items during scheduled hours (lower level).

Springwater Food Pantry - Wednesdays 6:30 - 8pm and Saturdays 9 - 11am.*
South Main Street, Springwater *Serves Springwater Canadice & Webster's Crossing area, but no one in need will be turned away!

Wayland Food Pantry - Wednesdays 4:30-6pm,
Saturdays 9-10:30am. Serving all in Wayland- Cohocton Dist. Bread and Baked Goods may also be picked up Sundays 9:00-9:30am. Lighthouse Wesleyan Church, 101 South Lackawanna St, Wayland - 585-736-7586
Info: www.enjoylwc.com/food-pantry

Hemlock Food Pantry - Thursdays, 10am - 5:30pm
Little Lakes Community Center - Around the back.. Serving people in the Hemlock area & others in need!

Honeoye Community Pantry - First Saturdays, 9-10:30 am. UCC church on 8758 Main St., Honeoye
Info: honeyefoodpantry@gmail.com

Sent by RavensPantry - Saturday's 9-11am 40 Spring St, Livonia, NY

Trinity Pet Food Pantry - 1st Sundays, 12:30-1:30pm
62 W. Buffalo St, Warsaw, NY

Meals

Honeoye UCC Spaghetti
1st Wednesdays, 5-7pm
8758 Main Street, Honeoye, NY (except July and November).
A portion of the profits donated to a different charity monthly.

Seniors

Community Coffee Hour
1st Wednesdays, 9:30-10:30am
- Free coffee! 62 W. Buffalo St, Warsaw, NY

Community Closets

The Open Closet
Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11-2 Harwood Lane - basement of the Village Offices. Offers people in Naples School District quality clothes etc.

Honeoye Community Closet - For more info. contact Kelly Sacchitella, Box 170, Honeoye, NY 14471

Community Meetings

Little Lakes Community Center
Open Community Meeting The first Monday evening-6:30-8:30pm-each month is dedicated to community input. All are welcome to join in, to learn about the organization and to ask questions and make suggestions.

Grief Share - Mondays, 5pm
Wayland Free Library, 101 W Naples St, Wayland Encouragement after the death of a loved one - non-denominational

ROcovery Fitness of Southern Tier offers free events with the completion of the membership form online at www.rocoveryfitness.org and at least 48 hours sobriety.

Shirley Kuecken



Honeoye: At age 95, Shirley passed away peacefully at her home on Wednesday, December 4, 2019 with her family by her side for a final sweet moment of Thanksgiving. She was born in Detroit, MI to the late William and Della Loud. In her teens they moved briefly to the Boston, MA area. Shirley was a graduate of the University Liggett School in Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan. She attended the University of Michigan briefly before pursuing her credentials as an orthoptic technician. She was working in this field when she was intro-

duced to John A. (Jack) Kuecken, whom she married in 1950. She followed John to Syracuse, NY, later Cincinnati, OH, and eventually to Rochester, NY. They have three daughters, seven grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren. Shirley and Jack celebrated 61 years of marriage before his passing in 2011.

Interment will be held privately at the family's convenience. Please consider a donation in her memory to: Guiding Eyes for the Blind, 611 Granite Springs Road, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598. To share a memory or a condolence, please visit: www.doughertyfuneralhomes.com.

Vida Lowery Edwards Todd

Naples/Livonia: Vida Lowery Edwards Todd currently of Naples and the Conesus Lake Nursing Home, Livonia. Vida passed away Sunday, December 8, 2019 at age 97. She was formerly of Heuvelton and DePeyster, New York.

Visitation will be held at the Naples Bible Church, 8833 NY 53, Naples, NY 14512 on Saturday December 14, 2019 at 11:00 AM followed by a Celebration of Life Service at 12:00 PM. Pastor Tom Street will officiate. The Interment at Chippewa Street (Ingham) Cemetery, Morristown, NY, at the convenience of the family.

Vida was born April 2, 1922 on the Ireland Rd., Brier Hill, New York to Byron T. and Erma McQueer Lowery. She graduated from Brier Hill high school in 1938. On September 19, 1941 she married Anson C. Edwards. He died September 9, 1981. On April 28, 1990 she married Edward Todd. He died July 14, 2009. She is also predeceased by her parents, three brothers and a half -sister; two granddaughters, a granddaughter-in-law and daughter-in-law.

She is survived by two sons: Lynn Edwards (Jill Walther) and Stuart (Diane) Edwards; her 10 grandchildren: Cheryl, Paul, Mary, Tim, Kim, Michael, Stuart II, Will, Angel, and Aaron; many great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren; 10 step children and their families; and three nieces and three nephews.

She was a member of the Heuvelton Presbyterian Church since 1960. In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to the Naples Bible Church in Naples, New York; the Heuvelton Presbyterian Church or to a charity of your choice. To send a condolence or share a memory please visit: www.doughertyfuneralhomes.com



In Memoriam notices in Owl Light News are \$50.

Livonia Kevin W. Honeoye

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Saturday, Jan. 11, 10 am

As the visible signs of life in nature recede, we will gather to explore various practices (e.g. simple meditation, gentle yoga) that honor the role of dormancy in our spiritual journeys.

Location: Honeoye United Church of Christ,
8758 Main Street, Honeoye

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From the Editor

Images of Years Past

In hindsight, creating a theme of “Just Des(s)erts while excluding politics as a sub-theme was probably not a good idea. Still, creativity has often bloomed from the ashes of authoritarian rule – be it governments, classroom norms or thematic artistic restrictions. A poet recently commented to me, “I don’t do themes.” The reality is, I don’t do themes either, at least not well. The ebb and flow of our lives often does not align with this...or that...specific dictate. That said, it is a timely theme and some people came through with worthy interpretations – despite restrictions and busier than usual schedules this time of year. We offer those within these pages, as a reflective transition into 2020.

Since publicizing the theme, I, too, have been trying to wrap my brain around what exactly it means to get ones just deserts (not so good) or just desserts (deceivably delightful). Everyone—alright, almost everyone—deserves happiness amidst the hilarious folly of fate. In the end, our characters are defined as much, if not more, by the hardships we’ve overcome as by the moments of sheer bliss. We progress incrementally, redefining our expectations along the way. Perhaps as a way of guaranteeing some success, my new year resolutions are often broad, allowing me to apply them liberally to various aspects of my life, or not. This year’s resolution is, simply, to “lighten the load.” Challenging to do as a sole proprietor of a free press.

As we change and grow, replacing some images and ideas of the past with newer ones, we also try to stay in touch with and better understand who we are, deep down. A recent tear apart of a picture frame provided moments for relevant reflection. The frame is a lightweight, unadorned, oval enclosure of molded black-painted metal, slightly worn. The image behind the glass is a watercolor of a brown, white, and black bird sitting on a moss nest assembled on a branch that clearly shows signs of decay. The bird is looking outward, as is aware that someone is watching. The artist has painted a fern in the background. After bending back the metal tabs that held in the glass, I tipped the contents onto my hand. The glass, rather than being cut into a perfect oval, as one

might expect within a contemporary frame, was made somewhat oval with a series of straight cuts and chipped off corners. The mat below it was unbeveled, hand cut, perhaps with a small pair of scissors rather than with a mat knife. Below this was an image that had been replaced by the watercolor—something that I would imagine being hung in the bedroom of a teenage girl on the path to self-discovery. It was a cut-out image, trimmed to fit within the confines of the frame. After cleaning the inside of the glass, I reassembled the frame piece by piece, leaving all as it had been. Here, in this simple act of changing the image within this frame, that adorned the plastered walls of a farmhouse on a hill, was the turning of a young woman into an older woman—with unfolding passions and dynamic aesthetic sensibilities.

Our progression though the decades—if fate has offered us decades during which to live our lives—is marked by small changes. More than any other time of year, the new year offers us moments for reflection and inquiry, to better understand these past layers. For *Owl Light News*, changing out the images—to use the analogy of the disassembled picture frame—has always been more important than “finding” an identity. There are some themes that reemerge with each issue: the seemingly magical workings of the natural world; rural life in New York State; inspiration and creative expression as a catalyst for personal



and societal change; building a better world; and human rights—including the right to be the unique persons we are. This expansive of a literary “identity” for *Owl Light News* hardly provides an easy pathway towards “lightening the load.” (See note on Page 2 about how contributors can help lighten the load). Nonetheless, we are excited about the year(s) ahead. Based on the number of free copies that get picked up, increases in mail subscribers and other contributions,

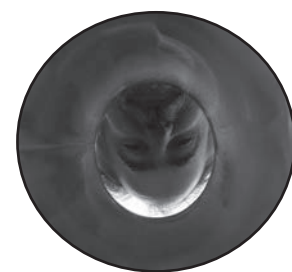
and increases in advertiser interest, our readers are too. Owl-light—the time between night and day (when looking closer reveals what might not have immediately come to light)—is a time of change. (Owl-light is a real word, BTW.) We are starting the year with a slightly different look, and a redefined slogan: “Where Inspiration and Inquiry Converge.” The “mission” that first inspired *Owl Light News* remains the same.

D.E. Bentley, Editor *Owl Light News*

The Light Lens

Mistakes were *not* made

by T. Touris



As a young lad I was informed by my older sister that the Dairy Island, our neighborhood ice cream stand, would sometimes give away “mistakes.” Such a mistake might be a chocolate milkshake incorrectly produced when a malted shake was ordered, or a sundae with unrequested nuts on top.

During that time, when the days and summers still felt long, maybe after a backyard wiffle ball game, I would sometimes tag along with my brother and friends and we’d walk to the stand where I was sure a slightly ill-formed banana split awaited me.

Upon arriving at The Dairy Island of Misfit Desserts, I would sheepishly ask, “Do you have any mistakes?”. The server, usually a teenager earning a summer paycheck, would then use



all their self-control to not roll their eyes and tell the little twerp at the window to get lost. “No. No mistakes today.” would be the reply. I would then pull out a couple quarters newly mined from the depths of the living room

couch and settle for a small twist or a cone of mint chocolate chip.

The summers passed and the mistakes never showed. My hopes of bagging a lopsided mound of hot fudge covered vanilla sweetness were replaced by the bitter taste of sustained disappointment and a gnawing suspicion that my sister was full of something other than chocolate custard. Still, to this day, during the all too short summers, I can feel the pull of the local ice cream stand, calling me to step up to the window and claim my mythical mistake.

T. Touris

T. Touris is a wanna -be-retired-computer-programmer. He spends his free time designing and working in wood, while dreaming up the next Light Lens.