



OWLLIGHT News



OwlLightNews.com

Where Inspiration & Inquiry Converge

May 2021



Jealous of Jerry

Jerry the Junco
just left the scene.
He'd been jostling about
in a tall evergreen.

He was there on the edge -
right on a tip -
at ease, in the knowledge
that he wouldn't slip.

His feet were designed
to help him endure
the powerful wind.
He was secure.

His chest feathers fluttered.
He was having such fun!
Then after an hour, he flew off.
He was done.

©2021, Beth Sleboda

Mother Nature's Equalizer

One springtime brought a bobolink
quite strong enough to lob a sink,

who stayed around throughout the summer
and so the season was a bummer.

He razed my cornfield in the fall,
eating ears and leaves and stalks and all,

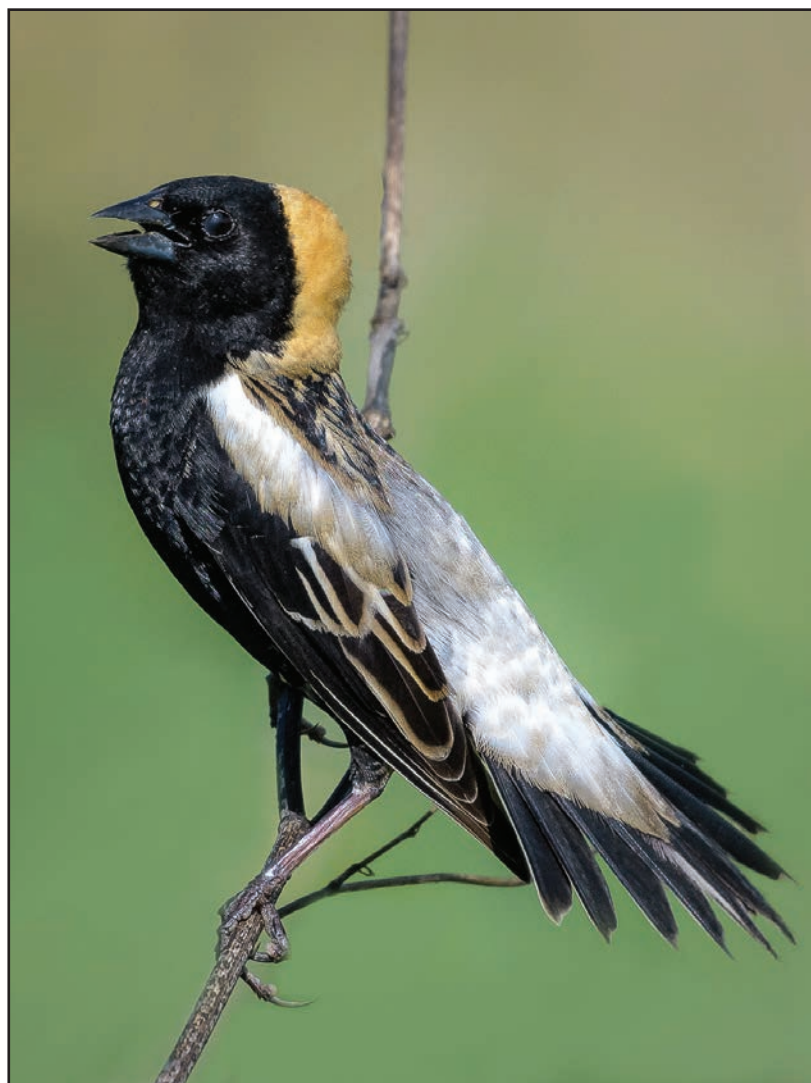
and then would perch on fallen logs
and terrorize the neighbors' dogs.

Every day he'd come and go
until the snows began to blow,

only then to leave me here
in queasy peace for another year,

in peace, that is, to sob and drink
till spring returned that bobolink.

©2021, William Preston



TOP: Dark-eyed Junco (1)
This wintering Dark-eyed Junco was behind my house and I caught this beautiful pose as the wind blew its feathers up making for a great shot. Shot taken with Nikon D500 at 1/2500 sec, ISO 100, Lens was a Nikon 200-500 with focal length of 750.

LEFT: Bobolink
I spotted him singing on a branch of a Rose bush from my trail in the field and had to get closer for a good image. I was wearing camouflage and I sat down in the tall grass and to observe him with hopes he would come closer. About 15 minutes later he flew up near me singing away! What a thrill when they are close up with their white rump and golden buff nape! They also have a distinctive jingling song! I love observing and photographing this bird! Shots taken with Nikon D500 1/2500 sec. ISO 500 Nikon 200-500 lens f 5.6, Photo Gear Designs Tracker. Photos by Paul English

More images on the Back

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FROM THE NEWSROOM

Correction: We are offering a correction / clarification to the book review "Upright Women," on page 5 of our April issue. Although Eleanor Roosevelt was a strong supporter of the packhorse initiative, she was not the founder. It was started much earlier by the Kentucky Federation of Women's Club with the support of a private benefactor.

Owl Light News is now available as a digital subscription. The cost is \$15 a year (on its own) or \$25 a year for both print and digital. If you are a current print subscriber and want to read us online as well, simply email me at editor@canadicepress.com and let me know, and I will add you to the online list.

Owl Light Literary: Turning Points—Summer 2021

See advance sale information on page 23
or order online at owllightnews.com/turningpoints/.

Turning Points is Canadice Press' first stand-alone literary journal. We want to take it slow and give it our best, given the challenges of 2020 that are continuing into 2021. We will post information about upcoming author readings (in person and/or via Zoom) once the book is released. Thank you to all who submitted writing. And thank you to everyone for your patience and support as we move forward with this exciting project. Stay tuned!

Letters to the Editor and Opinion Pieces

Letters to the editor and longer opinion pieces can be emailed to editor@canadicepress.com. We ask that letters be topical, with sound arguments focused on ideas and information that inspires discussion and fosters positive community growth. Open exchange and change requires a willingness on the part of many to share divergent thoughts and listen carefully; to explore the validity as well as the weaknesses in dissenting views. Short, concise letters under 500 words are more likely to be published. We look forward to hearing from you.



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Thank you to ALL of the incredible contributors (and behind the scenes folks) who make the Owl the Owl!

SUBMISSIONS—to editor@canadicepress.com

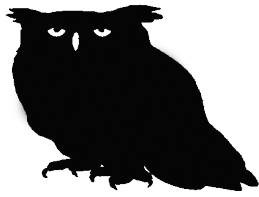
We are actively seeking submissions for front page feature articles. Articles should reflect on rural life in New York State. They should be timely, and the original work of the authors(s). Submitted pieces should be around 2000 words and include original images (photos or illustrations). Authors/artists will receive full credit (in print and online). We are also looking for reviews of local arts (visual, performing, literary...) as well as original short stories and poetry for Pen & Prose—our monthly literary arts section.

We accept submission on a rolling basis. Please specify the type of submission in the subject line of the email (i.e. news story, feature story, press release, poetry, editorial, opinion, fiction etc.). Include your name and phone number in the email, as well as a word doc attachment of the submission. Feel free to contact us in advance with queries, if desired. All submissions will be considered on a case by case basis for publication in future issues (in print and/or online). **The general deadline for all content for upcoming issues is the 10th of each month.** *Owl Light News* pages fill up FAST!

We place online content ongoing and welcome community press releases.

Four Years and a Lifetime Ago

After mentioning, in the April issue, the one year mark for puzzler George Urich, it occurred to me that many other such anniversaries have passed by without recognition (in part because I was too caught up in the day to day of the early *Owl* and simply did not have the time to count). Still, it is never too late to recognize contributions. In recognition of our four year anniversary as a small press, I thought it would be fun to look back and do some counting (although a simple count does not begin to capture the friendships that the *Owl Light* has offered up to us since our first issue in April 2017).



Many of our current regular contributors (monthly or bi-monthly) have been a part of the *Owl Light* since the beginning. Some of the earliest "lifers" are Joy Lewis (who writes our bi-monthly Richmond History); Dee Sharples (who continues to inspire us to look up with her monthly "Night Sky"); and Mary Drake (who gives us "The Monthly Read as well as the online YA Fantasy, *Where the Path Leads*.) Others joined later but have still put in their time, including Barb Stahl ("Making Lemonade"), Sam Hall with "Bee Lines," our mysterious "Conscious Crow," Doug Garnar, who gives us "Pathways to Democracy; and "Crafting Your Own Cuisine" (Eileen Perkins). And then there are our newer joiners: "Pakko the Pudgie Pigeon" (Piper Davis), "Etched in Stone" (David Pierce), and "Fantastic Flora" (Sally White). There are also previous regular contributors who have moved onto other things and are dearly missed (and remain as friends and readers), including Georgeanne Vyverberg—who offered us "The Village Gardener;" Sky Trombly—who offered us "Simple Sustainability;" Ben Haravitch—who shared "That Finger Lakes Sound;" Steve Cray—who served up humor and recipes with "Steve's Place;" and "Kade in the Kitchen" (my son, who is now spending his time as an installer for GreenSpark Solar). Others have stepped out and stepped back in (BTW, our "Homestead Gardener," Derrick Gentry, will be taking some time away from upcoming issues to homestead, and garden).

In addition to our regular contributors, there are many periodic contributors who have offered their support to the *Owl Light* for many years (one is Wendy Schreiner—who from our earliest issues has regularly submitted short poems, stories and reviews) and those who offer opinions. There were others who contributed in different ways—such as Laurie Phillips who outreached to advertisers and painstakingly placed labels for mailings (until Wayuga Press became our printer and took this on...thanks Wayuga too!); and Gary Catt, who helped put together some of our earliest issues. There are the advertisers—many of who have been with us from the beginning and continue to support us *every single month* (along with new regulars and periodic advertisers). There are also folks like Emily Pecora (who copy edits our issues) and Sally Gardner (who has helped many times with random inquiries from me and offers us a bi-monthly cartoon).

This simple overview only highlights some of what makes the *Owl Light* so special (and I may very well be leaving someone out—there are so many people who put their all into the *Owl* every month). *Owl Light* contributions go well beyond what is visible on the pages.

No thank you would be complete without mention of our subscribers! This *Owl Light News* issue (every "Owl") is for you! As a side note, our earliest paid subscriber (who is still a subscriber) is Stephen Lewandowski—who is also a periodic contributor of poetry and nonfiction (there must be some kind of reward for that).

Prior to COVID-19, I was starting to plan "Meet the Owl" events, where contributors and (other) readers could come together for live readings and to rejoice in what it means to live in this delightful region of New York State. Perhaps this will be a part of the "new normal," as more people get vaccinated (we just received our second shot). We will be having a reading(s) for the release of our inaugural (and much delayed) *Owl Light Literary: Turning Points* (Live and/or Zoom). Stay tuned for that (see page 23). Until we can get together, light a birthday candle for the *Owl* and make a wish on our behalf (and gift a subscription to someone else who might enjoy what the *Owl Light* offers).

We hope you enjoy the May issue, and we look forward to the year(s) ahead!
Thank you everyone for your ongoing support!

D.E. Bentley
Editor *Owl Light News*
and *T. Touris*
(partner in *Owl Light and Life*)

In Celebration of Songbirds

When two separate poems (and a second informative bird-related piece by monthly "Dragonfly Tales" columnist Steve Melcher, page 11) dropped into my inbox for May, I immediately turned to photographer Paul English for some related images. I met Paul as we walked along Canadice Lake, soon after we moved to the area. He had an intimidating looking camera, but we soon fell into step (our dogs had effectively scared away his subjects). We walked for a bit and talked—about his interests in photographing birds and his background in engineering. My favorite people to talk with are those that are able to combine their passions in meaningful ways, and that is exactly what Paul has done.

Paul's passion for photography led him, in partnership with another passionate photographer, Paul Yarnall, to found Photo Gear Designs—which designed and produces the PGD Tracker and the PGD Big Grip (and they now have both in stock!)

The PGD Tracker Kit offers a different way for wildlife, sports and motor sports photographers to track subjects that are hard to follow at high focal lengths and to preposition long telephotos on hard to locate distant subjects (like birds!).

The Big Grip (Photo Gear Design's newest product for photographers) is, as the name implies, a big grip lens shoe for holding telephoto lenses. It is available for the Nikon 500 PF, the Canon 100-400 IS L USM II, the Sony 100-400 G, the Sony 200-600 G OSS, the Sony FE 600MM F4, and the Sony FE 400MM 2.8. It will also allow your camera and lens to sit on a flat surface. The adjustable design is manufactured from aviation grade aluminum with an ergonomic carbon reinforced nylon grip and is secured to the lens collar with a stainless steel bolt and two stainless steel clamping screws for a tight lock (no risk of dropping your lens from inadvertently flipping the release button on the OEM shoe).

You can learn more about Photo Gear Design products (and about the two Pauls) on Instagram and Facebook @photogeardesigns.



SONGBIRD POETRY

Jealous of Jerry from Beth Ely Sleboda

Beth Ely Sleboda is an artist who uses words, music, and fiber to express herself, comment on everyday occurrences, and create moments of interactive fun. She plays the mountain dulcimer, guitar, Lakota flute, udu, and a variety of percussion instruments. She is a life-long resident of Livonia, who considers herself to be happily cursed.

Beth is now Livonia's official Poet Laureate: "By Village Board action, we named Beth Ely Sleboda "Our Poet Laureate"....this resolution was part of our Annual Organization.... Beth will be part of every special occasion...." Calvin Lathan, Mayor...Village of Livonia

Mother Nature's Equalizer from William Preston

William Preston is a retired medical science writer and current freelance editor who enjoys writing poetry; he especially enjoys experimenting with various poetic forms. He and his wife, Marti, live in Macedon, NY.

Letters to the Editor and Opinion Pieces

Letters to the editor and longer opinion pieces can be emailed to editor@canadicepress.com. We ask that letters be topical, with sound arguments focused on ideas and information that inspires discussion and fosters positive community growth. Open exchange and change requires a willingness on the part of many to share divergent thoughts and listen carefully; to explore the validity as well as the weaknesses in dissenting views. Short, concise letters under 500 words are more likely to be published.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Pathways to Democracy

School Interrupted: How Should We Teach in a Pandemic?

DOUG GARNAR



The COVID 19 virus has upended education (K-12 as well as higher education). Local governments, schoolboards, teachers and parents have been faced with difficult choices.

Among them:

- Do we keep schools closed to in-person instruction until the pandemic has subsided?
- Do we offer a hybrid of “distance learning” courses as well as physical instruction?
- Even if children are less prone to contracting COVID 19 what about the school staff?
- To allow in-school instruction will require \$s for more buses, ventilation systems, school rooms to meet social distancing guidelines, replacing faculty who either retire or do not want to continue teaching under these “pandemic conditions”, etc. Where will schools find the resources to meet these needs?

Consider the following problems:

- Distance learning may not be an option, as Wi-Fi/computer access may be limited by geographic and economic factors.
- For economic reasons parents who can still work may not be able to stay home to help children using a distance learning venue.
- How do we handle students with physical/mental disabilities using distance learning?
- Other issues include millions of students who received free/or low-cost meals; teachers are trained to notice signs of child abuse or suicide risk. Again, in a distance learning venue how do we deal with such problems?

The National Issues Forums Institute (nifi.org) has recently developed a draft framework to promote community deliberation focusing on the question of how we should teach all our children now while keeping them safe. The following draft framework looks at three options:



The three options include:

OPTION ONE Put Health Concerns First

This option says that our children’s health should be our top priority.

Action 1—keep schools closed and offer remote learning until vaccines are more available and all school staff have been vaccinated.

Action 2—give parents the right to choose either in-school or remote learning or a combination of both depending on their family’s needs and risks.

Action 3—give teachers the choice of teaching in-school or remotely from home.

Action 4—employers should offer parental leave until the pandemic ends so all workers have time to help their children with school.

The primary drawback of this option is that remote learning can harm children educationally/emotionally, especially those with learning disabilities or who are already struggling. It makes our unequal education system even more unequal as more children fall behind in their studies, go hungry, or are left without adult supervision and support.

Note: 40% of all teachers and 41% of all adults living with school-age children have high risks factors (heart disease, advanced age, Type 2 diabetes, and cancer) for severe COVID-19 disease.

OPTION TWO

Put Learning and Emotional Well-being First

This option argues that in-person learning is irreplaceable and we should do whatever it takes to open schools for in-person instruction.

Action 1—open schools with predictable five-day schedules and mandatory mask rules.

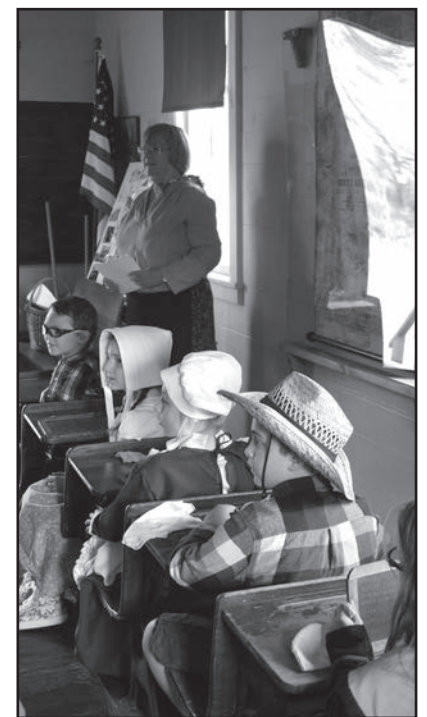
Action 2—require teachers to teach on-site as other essential workers do.

Action 3—invest in making schools safe by renting classroom space to allow better physical distancing and by improving ventilation and sanitation.

Action 4—open schools but cancel sports, chorus and any activity that includes physical closeness, shouting, or singing, which can spread the virus.

The primary drawback to this option is that many school districts lack funds to improve ventilation, to hire additional staff, lower class sizes or add other safeguards to often older, cramped facilities, putting children, teachers and communities at risk.

Note: 86% of all pediatricians say that COVID-19 vaccinations are not necessary for schools to reopen if schools use other basic safety measures such as masks.



Honeoye Central School Students visiting the Abbey Road one room school house in 2017 (file photo).owllight-news.com/inspiration-and-empathy-at-abbey-road/

OPTION THREE

Focus on Children Most Likely to Fall Behind

Very young children miss out on the critical early years when they learn to read. Special education students forget hard won skills. A child who has lost a parent or family member loses part of an important support system. The coronavirus has hit communities of color and low income especially hard and they must be given extra attention.

Action 1—bring back the earliest grades first; young children learn reading/ other basic skills best with in-person instruction, and they are less likely to spread the virus.

Action 2—open schools to offer in person instruction to special education students, low-income children, English language learners and others left behind by remote learning.

Action 3—offer summer school and after school classes to students who have fallen behind.

Action 4—create permanent enrichment programs such as arts and music as well as offer counseling and mentoring programs that give children who have suffered from poverty, racism, or other forms of abuse an equal chance at a good education.

A primary drawback is that the pandemic has affected all students educationally and emotionally. To put special focus on some would be viewed as unfair and would undermine broad support for public education.

Note: During fall of 2020 about half of white students had the option of in-person instruction while only about a quarter of African American and Latinx students did.

Continued on page 5

Social–Emotional Well-Being More Important Than Academic Rigor...At Least Right Now

Students (and Teachers) Need Time To Transition from Isolation to In-Person

OPINION from **D.E. BENTLEY**

Our childhood home was ten minutes from an Ivy League University. It was a world of opportunity and a world of learning that was so close and, yet, until high school, totally out of reach. Before that great escape, I lived, for the most part, isolated. There were trips to town for the dentist and doctor, an annual ritual, but few other outings outside of school. Our childhood was not a time or place of soccer moms, and, even if it was, economics would have made that impossible. Our single car—always in need of repair—and our parents’ dueling work schedules added to the isolation. Our earliest educational opportunity—beyond the book club books that came addressed to us (thanks to a mother who, after long shifts waiting tables and tending to domestic duties, would read to pass the time and escape the mundane, and offered us the same escape)—was a book mobile that would pull into the store in town. The store—sandwiched between the post office to the west and two churches and a community center to the east—was several miles away. This still seemed like an adventure.

I have thought more about this recently as the debate continues around remote v. in person learning. What would have been different in my world if I never went to school in a physical setting, where I had to interact with others. At times I believe it would have been better—way better—as I never really fit in with that state-imposed socialization and was mostly miserable in public school. Still, especially given that my schooling was before the Internet, without that big yellow bus to pick me up and cart me from point A to point B, I would have had zero practice at socialization. And, really, there is so much more to it than that. I was exposed to people (especially teachers and other adults) who shared worlds beyond the world I knew. I was exposed to ideas and possibilities that offered a different future for me than that of my parents.

School Interrupted from page 4

The recent Biden COVID Relief Act has addressed some of the financial problems. Over 25% of the population is now fully vaccinated but while the numbers continue to grow there are some citizens who say they will not take advantage of free vaccination. To suppress the COVID-19 virus will probably require at least a 75% vaccination of the citizenry.

I served on a schoolboard between 1979-88. Rarely did more than 10-15% of the eligible voters cast a ballot for a schoolboard candidate or for the school budget. Perhaps we might view the COVID-19 pandemic as not just a crisis but as a time of opportunity—a time when senior citizens, parents and young people take a greater interest in their community schools. The events leading up to January 6th have raised very serious questions about our democracy. The early 20th century social thinker and philosopher, John Dewey, argued that at the heart of all education was preparing the young to be engaged citizens. Dewey’s observation may be more on target today than at any earlier time in American history. ✎

Those interested in the full draft issue guide can obtain it by going to nifi.org. NIFI would like very much for citizens to use this guide in their communities and to send the results back to them. Citizens who wish to do this or have questions/observations about the draft guide should contact Doug Garnar (NIFI Ambassador) at garnardc@sunybroome.edu

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.
Doug Garnar at garnardc@sunybroome.edu

Anyone interested in this draft forum should contact Doug Garnar—garnardc@sunybroome.edu. He is also willing to help those interested in running this forum in their local community.

As a teacher, much of my career was spent working with students who were marginalized and socially isolated. Some were in alternative school settings—settings where students who learn differently are often channeled out of mainstream educational settings; either through lottery systems where “lucky” or influential parents can choose for their children urban “magnet” schools with better student-teacher ratios and, often, more engaged educators, or through disciplinary systems that allow students to be “placed” in special settings (when teachers are unwilling or unable to teach them in more traditional classroom settings). I also taught in an adolescent mental health unit, where I served as a conduit between students and schools, the only connection to school during periods of hospitalization.

The majority of my time teaching was with students behind bars. This is an isolation that exceeds all others when it comes to young people. They are shut off from their communities almost fully, and the facilities within which they are housed are often located in rural areas far from their (primarily) urban neighborhoods, making family visits challenging. I shared this isolation: each school day I walked through a gateway of razor wire and then through a series of entryways that slammed shut behind me. Still, without that educational lifeline (a “glue” for many of the students I taught) the isolation would be even more profound. The last place where I taught was a maximum security facility for adolescent males that was located on the fringes of the same rural community where I grew up. I cannot even begin to imagine the devastation and setbacks that have happened in these educational settings as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. It is evident that the children—including children behind bars—who were already at a disadvantage prior to COVID-19 due to socio-economic barriers—in both isolated rural communities, often lacking wireless infrastructure altogether, and inner-city poverty centers—are at a far greater disadvantage now.

You must forgive me if, up to this point, I have neglected to focus on academics—what education administrators consider crucial in the designing and implementation of curriculum (and testing). According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, in 2017, the percentage of adults (ages 16-65) performing at Level 3 or above (with a scale of 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest) in literacy was 48 percent.* Literacy is what we often (rightfully) focus on, as it is in being able to read that we can acquire the knowledge and skills required to function in our rapidly changing world, and yet many adults are not proficient in this most basic skill. Humanities are now (sadly) a diminishing part of our national education focus—with a greater emphasis being placed on STEM (that is, science, technology, engineering, and math). Schools have always focused on preparing students to be workers, and in a society where educational access is key to economic well-being (which potentially yields greater equity in housing, healthcare, cultural enrichments and, ultimately, happiness) this remains an important outcome. Still, it is not what we need to focus on first at this point in time.

The reality is that any time a student—any student—steps into a classroom, educators often have little if any knowledge of what has transpired in the life of that student prior to that moment. This is even more true now when many families are facing unprecedented challenges, including housing losses, and students and teachers are, in some cases, meeting face to face for the first time. A student who is hungry, anxious, frightened, or disengaged *simply cannot learn*. For students who have been extremely isolated during these long months (especially students who already struggled socially) transition time will be paramount to success. If leaders in education place undue emphasis on academic rigor—and transfer these pressures to teachers who will then transfer it to students—the consequences will be devastating. The number of students who dropout will increase, as will the number of young people who harm themselves or others.

Remote learning offers many opportunities, including opportunities for cultural enrichment and one-on-one learning that might not be available to students in crowded or less wealthy educational environments (it is important to remember that some publicly-funded schools in the United States have Olympic-sized swimming pools, full-sized football fields, tennis courts and large performing arts centers, while some others struggle to provide up-to-date textbooks for their students). Nonetheless, remote learning does not provide students, especially isolated rural students, opportunities to learn social skills that are crucial to success. In person teaching—provided administrators recognize and allow them time to adequately address children’s social-emotional as well as academic development—offers greater potential for a holistic education that focuses on individual and community well-being. I could (and perhaps will) write an entire book on how we should restructure schools—based on my many years teaching disadvantaged young people. For now, I challenge educators to meet students where they are at as they transition to hybrid learning modes and back into physical classrooms. I urge administrators at all academic levels to allow teachers the time and resources required to focus on students’ needs, and to recognize students’ social-emotional well-being as the first step toward learning and academic competency. ✎

*nces.ed.gov/fastfacts

Side Street Sounds

Orchestrating Optimism with Planned Summer Music Events

STEVE WEST



The range of emotions that musicians and music fans have felt in the past year has at various times included concern, fear, anxiety, frustration, anger, and confusion. The Canandaigua Business Improvement District (BID) is hoping to add one more to the list this summer: **optimism**. With Covid-19 vaccination rates continuing to climb, there are plans to bring live music back to downtown Canandaigua in several locations.

The Central on Main will return on May 14 to the area between the Canandaigua Chamber of Commerce and Simply Crepes. Conceived last year as a way to support local restaurants, the Central on Main is a large outdoor dining area where patrons can order food from over a dozen local restaurants. Under current restrictions, the space can seat up to 125 diners at a time. Live music by local musicians will accompany the dining experience every Friday and Saturday evening, weather permitting. As of this writing, there is still some discussion about making Friday an Open Mic Night in order to give more musicians the opportunity to play.

The Canandaigua Farmers Market will be opening its twenty-first season on June 5. The market runs each Saturday from 9AM to Noon. There is an opportunity for buskers to perform at the

market. Interested musicians can find more information at canandaiguafarmersmarket.com/buskers.

The Canandaigua City Council has given preliminary approval for a summer concert series to be held at Commons Park on Main Street. As of this writing,

the lineup has not been finalized. The logistics of when the concert will be held and how necessary safety precautions can be maintained are still being worked out.

Finally, after being cancelled last year, the Canandaigua Arts and Music Festival returns July 16-18th. BID Director, Denise Chaapel said, "It will look different this year, but we're very optimistic that the numbers are headed in the right direction and we'll be able to have the festival as planned." Musicians interested in applying for inclusion in the festival should visit canandaiguaartfestival.com

Of course, all of the above events are subject to cancellation on little or no notice if the Covid-19 situation changes for the worse. Still, the fact that plans are being made this year is an improvement over last summer. As restrictions on restaurants and other live music venues continue to ease, optimism is on the rise. The live music scene may never be what it once was, but to paraphrase Mark Twain, news of its death has been greatly exaggerated. 🐦



The Central on Main Image courtesy of Denise Chaapel

Steve West gigs (online performances and Live shows) and other info. can be found at: stevewestmusic.com/

SAVE THE DATE!!

Rollin' with SUPERMAN VII

Memorial Ride and Celebration of Life for

Austin Paul White

Saturday, June 19

"It's a Great Day to be Alive"



NEW LOCATION!!

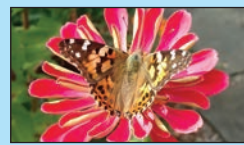
Hemlock Fair Grounds

Proceeds go to Scholarships at HCS

Details to follow

Honeoye Public Library

BOOK SALE May 8th, 9-1



Butterfly Garden will be planted June 5th. Stop by or visit honeoye.owwl.org/ for a list of plants that can be donated.

Facebook live!

Reading with Jimbo—Tuesdays
Directed Draw—Saturdays



HPL will be closed
May 31st for
Memorial Day

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Small Town Hound

Destination Points South

Æsc

Most of our trips as of late have not been to a specific place or area, but rather in the truck...out of the truck...in the truck...out of the truck. Last issue was destinations points north. This issue is destination points south. Not far south, still in New York State, the state I live in. This time around our travels took us from Naples to Penn Yan then onto Dundee, Watkins Glen and Interlaken, then back home. A second trip took us to Corning. Some of these places were new to me; some I had been to before. Our travels were all, or mostly, about what my human called “running errands,” and we had run errands to some of these places before. Our first stop was in Naples, to take a walk and see a human friend. The walk was along a street then across a bridge. I got to go down by the water a bit after we walked across a big wooden bridge (much easier than the logs I use to cross over the stream behind our house). After the walk, I waited in the truck for a bit while the humans chased around some chickens. I like our chickens and do not chase them, but this might have been a bit too much for me to ignore entirely, so I was glad I was in the truck where I could watch but not touch.

Speaking of chickens, our next stop was in Penn Yan, where my human has taken me before, when I was a wee puppy. The place—called Lakeview Organic Grain—has bags and bags of the food that we feed our chickens at home. We went inside first, and the two women there loved me up totally. They could not get enough of me (people often comment on my coat coloring; I am what is called brindled, but this is not always easy to see in my photos because my coat is so dark). Anyway, they pet me and raved about me, and I remembered my manners and did not jump up at all. While we were visiting and exchanging green pieces of paper, another human who I had not met was loading the food bags into our truck. She passed us on the steps and pet me some as well. This is something I am really proud of: she seemed a little hesitant and she had had a bad experience with a dog when she was little. So, I am glad she said hello and I was okay to pet. I have to be careful with this and my human watches me when I say hello. I love people but can get crazy when I get too excited. I am still a puppy but am BIG (like 90 plus pounds) and although I am super friendly and am getting educated, I am a dog and all dogs have the potential to bite. I tell you this as a reminder to always ask humans before petting their canine friends. If you see me with my human, please *do* ask, as I love, love, love humans!



Even errands can be an adventure sometimes and they present opportunities to visit with people I have met before—and to meet new friends.

Anyway, moving on. After the grain store stop, we went to Dundee. I had been here before as well. This time we were picking up jars from Wixson Honey, to put honey in. This part I do not totally understand really. I just know that when we head out for walks on our road we stop and check the honey stand and the honey stand is full of these jars filled with honey. The jars get filled in our basement. I must say, I love honey. I sometime get to lick up spills before my human gets to them. Still, I do not know where the honey comes from. It has something to do with the area out back that is filled with these boxes. Bees fly in and out of these boxes after visiting flowers. My humans do many cool things, and this is one of them.

Continued on page 19

The Light Lens

Big Blue

T. TOURIS



Try to recognize and honor the service certain objects in my life have provided. Past honorees have included a lost stainless-steel mug that dutifully kept my morning coffee hot well into the afternoon and a favorite sweatshirt that provided exactly the right body heat retention—until it became so worn and full of holes that it didn't.

This year, my award goes to Big Blue, the KitchenAid® mixer that mixed, whisked and beat twenty-some years of batter and doughs. Upon entering a kitchen full of blue, acrid smoke I knew the Cobalt Blue workhorse's career was over—Blue's motor was blown.

Just like I'd never be able to send a racehorse to the glue factory, I couldn't bring myself to send Blue to the scrap heap. Onto eBay to find Blue a suitable and dignified retirement.



KSM90BU - KitchenAid 4.5-quart stand mixer

This classic beauty mixed many a dough and batter before its motor succumbed to an overly stiff bagel dough. You could restore it to its Cobalt Blue grandeur with some new (or used) motor parts. Hoping someone can give it a new life.

Let the Bidding Begin!

Day 1: Opening bid: \$5.00

Day 2: Things are warming up, 2 more bids, high bid: \$6.50 – 14 watchers

Day 3: Now it's getting interesting. 8 bids. High bid: \$19.50 – 22 watchers. The gleaming Cobalt Blue is simply too hard to resist. I have a sneaking suspicion some bidders or lurkers aren't even interested in fixing it but just want to put it on their countertop as a work of art.

Day 4: Only three more bids pushing it to \$26.00. Easter Sunday probably put a bit of a damper on things. Tomorrow will be the big closing. The excitement mounts.

Final Day:

3 hours until closing: 14 bids, high bid \$38.00

2 hours left – no activity – everyone laying low for the final minutes of bidding frenzy.

1 hour left – no activity – getting nervous.

26 minutes to go – no activity – are you people nuts! Cobalt Blue! Come on!

12 minutes – unbelievable – still \$38 – must be collusion – rigged.

5 minutes – still at \$38. The world is full of morons!

2 minutes - \$38 – the big ending. Now it starts!

1 minute - \$38 – Last minute lurkers will now swoop in.

0 minutes – Yes! – 17 bids – Winning bid: \$48.00

Big Blue was sent his way via UPS to a new home. Hopefully with some TLC he can be back to doing what he loved. Keep mixing it up Big Blue! 🐾

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.

Bee Lines

Supersedure and Hot Hives

SAM HALL



As many other beekeepers I think do, I have a few colonies placed in urban neighborhoods in back yards behind friend's houses. For these colonies I choose the gentlest bees in my apiary. I currently have one of these colonies that I need to do something about. It has become very aggressive, or in beekeeping vernacular a "hot hive." Going anywhere near it causes the bees to come out en mass and sting. Cannot have this in a backyard setting.

My guess is that this colony went through a supersedure. This is where the workers sense and then know that the old queen is failing to do her job as competently as she had been, very often due to age. It can be that she is running out of sperm from her mating flight or it might be injury. In any event they need to have a vibrant young queen. Unlike the swarm queen cells that will usually be found on the bottom of the center brood frames, the supersedure queen cells, of which there might not be more than one or two, are found often times near the center of the frame.

After the queen from the supersedure cell has emerged and been mated and returns to the hive and starts laying, her mother is still there. For the next few days or longer the mother and daughter will both lay eggs. Unlike queen sisters, mother and daughters do not fight. For a few days or a couple of weeks there will be a great number of eggs laid because there are two queens laying eggs. This will boost the population of the colony considerably when the new bees emerge. Eventually the mother disappears, and the



Swarm catching begins with a box..The box is placed at an optimal location and height and is often charged with a lure to entice a swarm looking for a new home.

young queen will be the only one in the colony.

I believe in the case of my hot hive, the supersedure queen mated with some less desirable drones from a "hot" hive.

My plan is to remove the "hot" queen together with a couple of frames of sealed brood and a frame of honey and put them in a 5 frame nuc and take them to the farm in Gorham and develop a full colony from them. Unfortunately, hot colonies are often the best honey producers.

The remainder of the colony I will let set for 24 hours and then put in a caged queen. After 3 or 4 days I'll check and see how they are doing with her. Honey bees will normally feed any caged queen but may kill the same queen if she is released without going through an introductory period.

It is my hope that at this time of year the colony will be more receptive to accepting a new mated queen (which I will purchase from a commercial producer, probably in California) as there are not enough drones flying here to mate a new queen. In fact, I'm just starting to see drone brood.

This is also the time of year to start thinking about swarming. The earliest swarm I ever heard of was April 17th. I was never able to confirm it and quite frankly doubt it. In anticipation of the swarming season I have obtained three swarm traps. A picture of one is at the top of this article. I will bait them with "Swarm Commander" which is a commercial product that works quite well. It will actually pull a swarm in the air down to it.

Two of my traps I will place in the City of Canandaigua and the third at the yard in Gorham. Hopefully I'll get lucky. If not, it's been a fun try. The best book on swarms is Tom Seeley's Honeybee Democracy which I cannot recommend highly enough if you are intrigued by swarms and swarming as I am.✿

"Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." Proverbs 16-24.

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." Samhall@Rochester.rr.com

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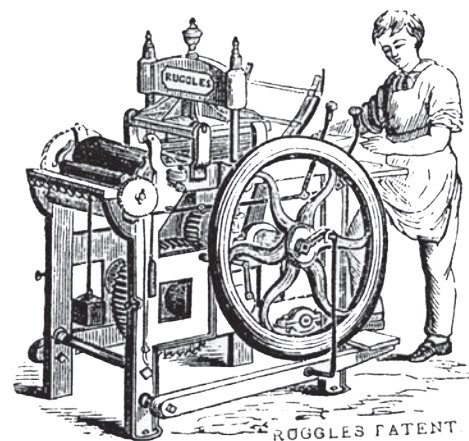
Each summer we publish a monthly listing of area farmers' markets. If you are a community market organizer, please *email relevant information (market hours & location & contact info.) to: editor@canadicepress.com.

*updates by the 10th for inclusion in the next month's listing.

Our market listing will begin in the June 2021 Owl Light News, will continue throughout the summer, and is free for community markets. (We can also place paid ads in print and online for farm and market businesses - owllightnews.com/owl-advertising/)



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Dragonfly Tales

Odonata Sanctuary, The 2020-2024 New York State Breeding Bird Atlas, Phenology, and Signs of Spring.



STEVE MELCHER



Hey Birders!

One way I encourage families to get outside is through the wonderful hobby of 'birding'. No longer the realm of the bird watching twitcher in khaki shorts and pith helmet, birding has become the fastest growing outdoor activity in America. More than 45 million people say they watch birds as a hobby according to the findings of a survey produced by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife service, adding nearly \$80 billion to the US economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has prevented folks from traveling far and wide in search of adventure so many have chosen to set up a bird feeder and look out their kitchen window and observe the world of evolved dinosaurs.

One extra step you can take as a birder in your very own neighborhood is to become involved in the *New York State Breeding Bird Atlas*. The atlas occurs, just like pandemics and Harvest moons, on Friday the 13th, every 20 years and this is the third rendition. This atlas will help to improve our understanding of the changes in bird behavior due to climate change.

Henry and Phenology

We know from reading nature essays of the past, like those of Henry David Thoreau, that birds are leaving or arriving sooner or later than they did in the past. Thoreau saw birds that are no longer in his native state of Massachusetts and there are many that are native there now that he never observed. Although Henry, an astute observer, encountered muskrats and foxes in Walden's woods, he writes, "The bear, wolf, lynx, wildcat, deer, beaver, and marten, have disappeared". Henry probably never saw Eastern coyotes, Starlings or a Mallard or even a Red Bellied Woodpecker on his daily saunters around Walden Pond. Climate and habitat change are major factors in the shift in what we see today. Thoreau wrote seasonal observations about the blooming of flowers and the arrival of birds in the spring; when they started building nests and when the birds fledged and migrated south again.

The author Louisa May Alcott, a Concord resident, wrote that Thoreau "used to come smiling up to his neighbors, to announce that the bluebirds had arrived, with as much interest in the fact as other men take in messages by the Atlantic cable."

This science of observing biological events is called Phenology, not to be confused with Andy Vaughn's ever-popular Phrenology—which measures the bumps on your head to predict your character and mental abilities. An easy phenological event for all of us to observe is the arrival of birds in the spring. Although some Canada Geese may overwinter here in the Finger Lakes, the arrival of skeins of V's in the sky harbor the beginning of spring. One aspect of phenology is the observation of not just when the birds arrive but their change in behavior. Birds begin singing in the spring...for a reason. That silent cardinal that came to your

snow covered feeder is now singing his heart out to claim his territory and set up housekeeping. Interestingly, owls are one of the first birds to mate in our area. By the time you read this in May, bluebirds are busy laying eggs but Eastern Screech Owls have already fledged. Warblers have arrived with the blooming of the hawthorns and the abundance of insects. Redwing Blackbirds and Tree Swallows are still dive bombing you when you get too close to their nest. Birds sing their songs of spring to attract a mate, defend their territory or maybe, just because the juices are flowing and singing is the best way to get it all out.

What are your harbingers of spring? Have they changed since your childhood? Was it the first Monarch Butterfly or Ruby Throated Hummingbird, or perhaps the first daffodil or Trout Lily? The return of the robins and bluebirds was always a sign for me but they are here year round now. Their behavior changes in the winter though. Robins will gather together in nomadic flocks during the winter searching for fruits such as crabapples, hawthorns, holly, and juniper. Then, if you pay attention, you'll see their behavior change. In the spring, robins disperse from their flocks and resume their diet of bugs and worms. Many robins will still migrate up from the South, males arriving a few days ahead of the females, eager to start a new family.

Timing is so important and shows us how nature is intricately interconnected. What if an insect eating bird arrives before the insects? What if flowers haven't bloomed yet and the insects have hatched and there is no pollen to pollinate? A wonderful example of phenological timing is the relationship between a marine arthropod that hasn't changed in 450 million years and shorebirds that I studied on the Eastern Shore back in the 70's. The horse shoe crab spawns on the beaches of the Delaware Bay and the Red Knot depends on unearthing the eggs as fuel to continue their 4,000 mile journey. If the horseshoe crabs don't show up at the right time, the shorebirds starve and population plummets. We called this a 'phenological disruption'. Today, the phenomena is known as 'Phenological Mismatch'. In today's world of climate change awareness we are realizing that the shifts in climate are disrupting interspecies synchrony with detrimental consequences to ecosystems. For instance, most of our food depends on pollinators arriving at the right time to do their job. If the timing is 'disrupted' by increasing catastrophic weather, in the future, we may not have fresh food on our table that season.

This winter we had a 'superflight' of hungry winter finches. Every species of boreal finch 'irrupted' (a sudden change in the population density) and researchers are calling this year a 'superflight'. Pine Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, Crossbills and Hoary Redpolls moved south in search of food along with many other birds like Blue Jays, Bohemian Waxwings and Red Breasted Nuthatches. What caused the lack of food in the North? One theory is that trees evolved to cycle their mast-crop production (fruit of the forest trees and shrubs such as nuts, seeds and acorns) in order to limit the food supply of seed eating squirrels, preventing overpopulation resulting in the squirrels eating all the seeds. Unlike squirrels, fortunately birds can fly south long distances in search of another restaurant.

Awareness is a key.

Awareness and Observation follow each other. Maybe you can observe without being aware, I'm not sure. But you can observe without knowing. You can observe a bird or plant blooming without knowing the species of bird (there are amazing apps for this - Merlin and iNaturalists are just two). Awareness is key; it's the starting point. Bill Drury's mantra, professor of ornithology at Harvard, was to 'Pay Attention!'. In other words 'engage'. The pandemic, according to the 'Medical News Today', has significantly increased the time folks spend outdoors. If you're spending time outdoors why not engage in nature and pay attention. We're fortunate to have four glorious seasons, each with their own ways of saying hello and goodbye. If we pay attention and wait for the return of the Barn Swallows, we'll become more aware of the tragedy of not seeing the swallows return and demand to know why. Citizen scientists, paying attention, and recording those seasonal events (phenology), have become valuable tools in understanding our changing climate. By recording what we see and hear now compared to what we heard and saw helps us plan for a future; a future that depends on folks that care enough to pay attention.

Continued on page 22

For Every Success, Many Blistering Defeats

OPINION from KURT STAUDTER

“We had to lose this election in Bessemer for people across the United States to succeed, our time will come around again, and next time, we will win.” Emmitt Ashford on CNN after the count was announced at Amazon in Bessemer, Alabama

America loves an underdog. There’s no doubt that now-a-days, and in light of the pandemic, the American worker needs to organize more than ever. Old-school unions and their leaders have been under attack since the 1970s, and the rules of the game have been carefully stacked against workers through the years. Today one is more likely to hit the lottery than to form a union in a right-to-work state. Many unions today are desperately doing everything they can to keep their members, let alone organize new ones.

The fight to form the first Amazon unionized warehouse in the U.S. was a long-shot at best. The final vote was 738 for, and 1798 against. This was a hard-fought campaign that captured the imagination of union member wannabes all across the nation. If it could be done in Alabama it could be done anywhere. If there’s a single thing to be gained in this defeat it’s the unprecedented involvement of President Joe Biden.

Not since Ronnie “Raygun” put his hand on the scale in firing the air traffic controllers and the PATCO union has a president come out so forcefully for one side or another. Finally, a Democrat that not only stands up for unions, but actively takes sides.

Given all we do for Democrats—through the years no single group has worked harder or devoted more resources to elect Democratic Party candidates than the labor movement (every election cycle we’re the first to staff phone banks, go door to door on “lit drops,” get our supporters to the polls, and raise enough money to be somewhat competitive with the

limitless corporate donations. If it weren’t so tragic, you’d have to laugh at how the Republicans have worked so hard at eliminating union money in campaigns but have done even more to open the floodgates for a tsunami of corporate donations. Remember: according to Republicans Money = Free Speech.

A lot of the Republican/Corporate free speech is now directed at defeating the Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act.) This is the first substantial piece of labor legislation that supports workers since the current system was cemented in 1947 with the Taft-Hartley Act. All through the 1930s and 40s it was a heyday of the labor movement, and after Taft-Hartley in the 1950s where one-in-three American workers had a union card in their back pocket, one saw union density decline to the point that today it’s one-in-ten. If you want to know why the American worker isn’t sharing the awesome wealth created in this country just reread the previous sentence.

Already passed by the House, the PRO Act now awaits certain death in the so-called “do-nothing Senate.” With no way of turning a few Republicans, the act will die with a lack of 60 votes. Of course, corporate America has been paying the Republicans to remain an obstacle to the passage of this pro-worker legislation, and what’s worse, is that we’ve even seen some Democrats take the payoff to vote against their core constituency.

What’s in this bill that has the united corporations of the world all in a tizzy? For starters there’s a more rigorous definition for what constitutes a contractor. According the IRS “The general rule is that an individual is an independent contractor if the payer has the right to control or direct only the result of the work and not what will be done and how it will be done.” Recently corporate American has further

blurred the lines between contractors and employees, and we’ve seen an explosion of the gig economy. Would these gig workers like more pay, benefits and paid time off? Who wouldn’t, but contractors don’t get these bennies.

Now this is a game changer – The PRO Act will eliminate the 27 right-to-work states. These laws have been passed in states in the name of economic development, but all it provides is for employers to make their workers work for less. Designed to eliminate a “closed shop” where you must join the union, by not requiring union membership but giving you all the rights and pay that comes from membership, you essentially starve the union for resources. This makes it harder to negotiate and enforce contracts, and the ultimate slap in the face, the union is forced to vigorously fight grievances for these non-members. If they don’t then they’re brought up on charges before the National Labor Relations Board by both the employer and non-member employee. There’s no winning!

Perhaps the most important aspect of the PRO Act is that it makes it easier to form a union rolling back some of the requirements of Taft-Hartley. Like what happened in Alabama, corporations will no longer have the ability to one-on-one “educate” employees about the evils of unions. If you want to take seriously the enormous wealth divide in this country, then the first step is to make it easier to join a union. In 2018, 65% of Americans supported unions, and 58 million would join a union if they could. Those numbers are even higher today.

We lost the battle in Bessemer, Alabama, but if the PRO Act were to become law, we’d win the war. We’re all set in Vermont (where I am) – Our whole delegation supports the PRO Act, but those of you in New York State and elsewhere that have never written to your senator now’s the time. Once again, we’re looking at legislation with bipartisan support. Most Americans want it, almost half of Republicans want it, and the only way workers get their share of prosperity is if we get it. 🍻

Editor's Note:: If you are interested in this topic, also check out the movie *Nomadland* (2020).

Kurt Staudter, Springfield, VT. Over the course of thirty years Kurt’s career working for National Grid and New England Power has given him a unique perspective on the Connecticut River: From operating the Bellows Falls Hydro Plant in the 1990s, to his job now in Substation Operations & Maintenance, every day his work takes him someplace along the river. He is an elected Executive Board Member of IBEW Local 486. A longtime activist and political columnist for the Vermont Standard, Kurt along with his wife Patti also ran the Vermont Brewers Association representing the growing number of craft breweries in the state for almost seven years. He has a Bachelors of Arts degree from the National Labor College, and participated with a fellowship in the Harvard Trade Union Program.



ELECTRONIC WASTE COLLECTION EVENT

Saturday, June 5, 2021
8:00 am to 2:00 pm

Bristol Highway Facility
6740 Co. Rd. 32, Canandaigua, NY

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Registration open May 10th - June 2nd
To pre-register call: (585) 394-3977 x427

The event is limited to 500 residents who pre-register

Materials Accepted at this Event - Residentially Generated:

Computers (including laptops, desktops, tablets and e-readers), Televisions, Microwaves, Small scale servers, Computer peripherals, Monitors, Electronic keyboards, Electronic mice or similar, pointing devices, Fax machines, document scanners, and printers (less than 100 lbs.), Small electronic equipment, VCRs, Digital video recorders, Portable digital music players, DVD players (including projectors with DVD player capabilities intended for home-use), Digital converter boxes, Cable or satellite receivers (including digital media receivers), Electronic or video game consoles.

FREE and open to Ontario County Residents ONLY



Materials NOT Accepted at the Event:

Alkaline batteries, Smoke detectors/Carbon monoxide detectors, Devices containing liquid mercury (thermostats, switches, medical devices, thermometers), household appliances, liquids/oils, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, refrigerators, fluorescent lamps, and tape media (DVD's, VHS, CD's, cassette tapes, floppy disks, SD cards, etc.)

For information and other recycling events visit:
OntarioCountyRecycles.org

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Ontario County



Spring Rural Roads Safety

The Yates County Sheriff Reminds Motorists to Take it Slow on Rural Roads

On rural roads, does less traffic mean less hazards? According to Yates County NY Sheriff Ron Spike, special rural hazards do exist, especially in the springtime when slow moving vehicles (SMV) like farm machinery and agriculture equipment are using the roadways to get to fields for plowing, cultivating and planting. These slow movers bear the bright orange/red reflective triangle that is an indication of traveling less than 25 mph. In addition, if the SMV can travel between 25 and 40 mph it also must have the speed indication symbol (SIS) emblem. Motorist need to understand the importance of sharing the road with this equipment that is traveling at a slower pace. Typically, rear end collisions can occur when a car encounters an SMV from behind, and the motor vehicle driver fails to perceive the "closure collision time," causing a dangerous situation to occur. 80% of SMV collisions occur in daylight hours when the SMV is struck from behind. Farm tractors, farm equipment and animal drawn vehicles (buggy), as well as bicycles cannot easily maneuver out of the way of traffic, or speed up like motor vehicles can. Motorist need to immediately slow down when encountering the SMV triangle symbol and be alert for an unexpected turn into a field. Patience is virtue, and do not pass until it is safe and legal to do so. It is important to know your traffic environment, as some areas of the state are more prone to SMVs sharing the road than others. Additionally motorist need to be aware that distracted driving has become a major issue nationwide, and the risk increases in rural areas when encountering an SMV. Rural area driving requires full attention and focus. Cell phone use and texting is illegal and dangerous. It is important to wear seat belts, to observe the speed limits and warning signs,

A motorist traveling at 55 mph approaching a farm tractor traveling at 15 mph takes only seven seconds to travel 400 feet and collide.



to be aware of animals, especially deer and livestock, and be alert for SMV's on the rural roadways. "When traveling across rural New York State this spring, we encourage motorists to slow down when approaching farm equipment and all SMV's," said Sheriff Spike.

DEC: Residential Brush Burning Prohibited in New York State Through May 14

Burn Ban Decreased Spring Wildfires 37 Percent Since 2009 Ban Reduces Wildfire Risks, Protects Lives and Property

Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Basil Seggos today reminds residents that with spring approaching and conditions for wildfires heightened, residential brush burning is prohibited March 16 through May 14 across New York State.

"While many people associate wildfires with the western United States, the start of spring weather and the potential for dry conditions increases the risk for wildfires in New York," DEC Commissioner Seggos said. "New York prohibits residential burning during the high-risk fire season to reduce wildfires and protect people, property, and natural resources. The ban has been extremely effective in reducing the number of wildfires, and we're encouraging New Yorkers to put safety first."



Even though much of the state is experiencing rain, warming temperatures can quickly cause wildfire conditions to arise.

DEC will post a Fire Danger Map rating forecast daily for the 2018 fire season on its website and on the NY Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife App available on DEC's website. Currently, fire conditions in most of the state are low risk.

Open burning of debris is the largest single cause of spring wildfires in New York State. When temperatures are warmer and the past fall's debris and leaves dry out, wildfires can start and spread easily and be further fueled by winds and a lack of green vegetation.

New York first enacted strict restrictions on open burning in 2009 to help prevent wildfires and reduce air pollution. The regulations allow residential brush fires in towns with fewer than 20,000 residents during most of the year, but prohibit such burning in spring when most wildfires occur.

In the eight-year period since the ban was established, the average number of spring fires per year decreased by 36.7 percent, from 2,649 in 2009, to 1,677 in 2016.

Campfires using charcoal or untreated wood are allowed, but people should never leave such fires unattended and must extinguish them. Burning garbage or leaves is prohibited year-round.

Some towns, primarily in and around the Adirondack and Catskill parks, are designated "fire towns." Open burning is prohibited year-round in these municipalities unless an individual or group has a written permit from DEC. To find out whether a municipality is designated a "fire town" or to obtain a permit, contact the appropriate DEC regional office. A list of regional offices is available on DEC's website. ❧

Violators of the state's open burning regulation are subject to both criminal and civil enforcement actions, with a minimum fine of \$500 for a first offense. To report environmental law violations call 1-800-TIPP DEC (1-800-847-7332), or report online on DEC's website.

Honeoye Middle School & High School Livestream Play! *Our Place* – A One Act Play by Terry Gabbard

Who: Honeoye Central School District
Featuring student director–Heather Brown (10) – and eleven Student Actors (grades 6-12): Tori Armstrong (12), Mollie Asquino (9), Julianna Braun (6), Lucia Fugate (12), Avery Hohn (9), Lucy Lombardo (6), Cypress Rohrbach, Haydn Schultz (10), Summer Sherman (10), Natalie Tompkins (11), Emily Zweig (11)
Director: Kaitlin Fisher
When: May 7th and 8th @ 7pm
Where: LIVESTREAM – Visit Honeoye Website for ticket info.
What: *Our Place* A One Act Play by Terry Gabbard



Some of the cast during rehearsal for *Our Place*– Emily Zweig, Lucy Lombardo, Julianna Braun, Cypress Rohrbach, Summer Sherman.
Photos courtesy of Corinne Adams

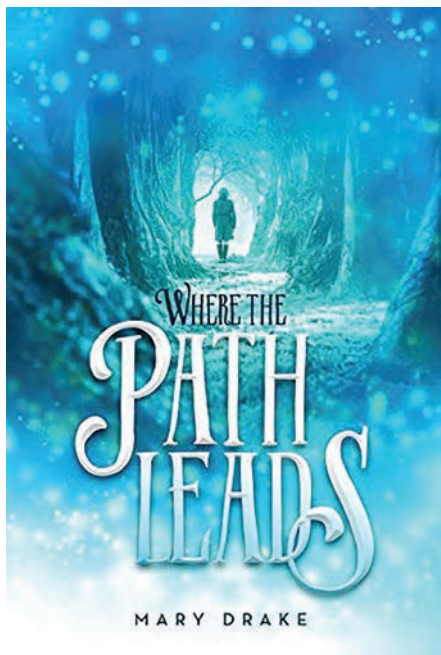


Synopsis: The play is composed of five scenes and an epilogue, all of which take place on a dock. Each group of characters that comes to the dock claims it as "our place" for a variety of reasons. The play concludes with all characters returning to the stage for at least a part of the epilogue in which the characters express their point of view of what the dock - *Our Place* - means to them.

Cast members Lucia Fugate and Avery Hohn rehearse for the May 7th and 8th LIVE performances.

Why: This year has been so difficult with covid restrictions and things being cancelled or limited. It's so nice to have students back on the stage acting again. The play allows students to continue to work on their acting skills and participate while also following school covid guidelines. Students have been doing a great job focusing on vocal inflection, empathy in character development and purposeful movement.

This play by Terry Gabbard is being produced by special arrangement with The Dramatic Publishing Company, Inc. of Woodstock, Illinois.



Where the Path Leads – YA FANTASY by MARY DRAKE *Chapter 14: Mistress of the Creatures*

In the last chapter, Emily abandons her work in the stifling summer heat for the coolness of Blackwood forest. But only privileged people are allowed in the forest, and when she unintentionally causes an accident, her reaction is to flee.

When she finally stopped running, Emily leaned against a tree to catch her breath and calm down. Shadows were lengthening in the forest, which now seemed deathly quiet. No more horn. Oh God! Was Arthur's brother dead? She was afraid to think about it and covered her face with her hands. She hadn't meant to startle the horse, but she shouldn't have been there. All she had wanted was a little rest, and she hadn't thought anyone would notice or care.

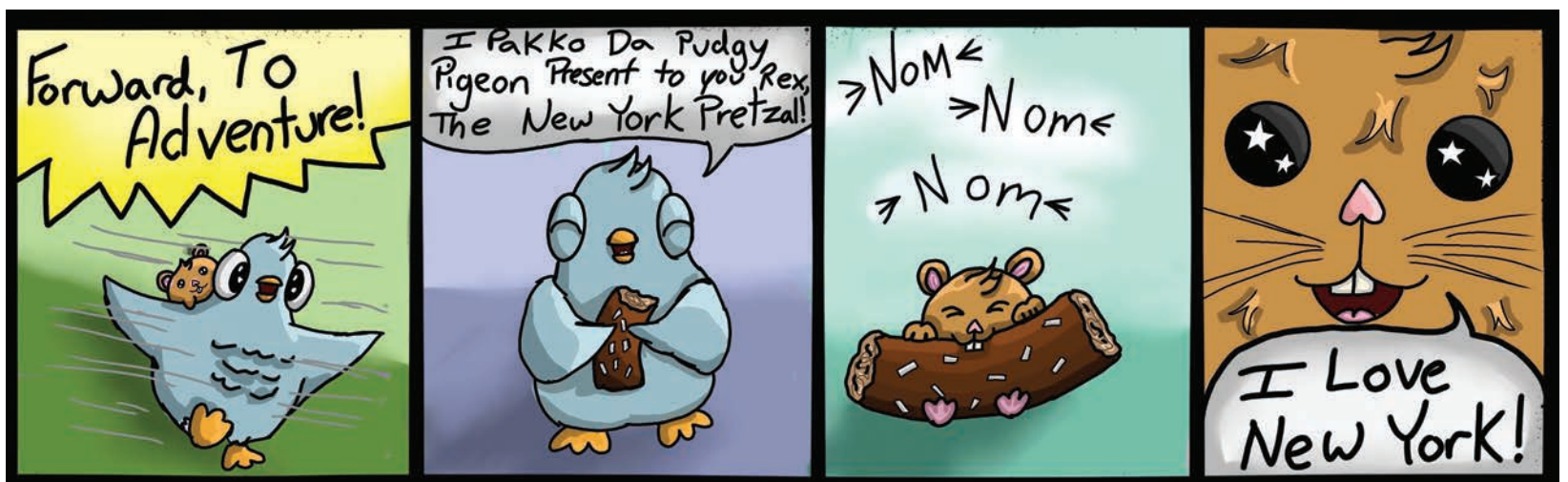
Now what?

Continued online...

Read Online: www.owllightnews.com/where-the-path-leads-chapter_____.

If you want to find out more about the book, go to marydrake.online. Available as an ebook on Amazon and soon to be released in print.

PAKKO
DA
PUDGY
PIGEON!
PIPER DAVIS



Piper Davis, author and illustrator of Pakko Da Pudgy Pigeon is in the 12th grade. She loves art, writing, photography, and making people smile. She hopes you enjoy this comic strip series! If you are interested in seeing more from her feel free to check out her socials; Youtube: Wandering Phoenix Productions, And on Instagram: @wandering_pheonix_productions.

Crafting Your Own Cuisine

EILEEN PERKINS

RECIPE Stir Fry is distinguished by its quick cooking at high heat. Contrary to how supermarkets portray the “appropriate” ingredients for such dishes, in their frozen food aisle, stir fry does not depend upon what are considered to be oriental ingredients. True, the oriental wok popularized the stir fry method in the U.S., years ago, but really it can be made with caramelized goodness in a fry pan, too, and that’s what we are using here. Because of the speed at which the food will be finished, make sure to have all ingredients and tools ready before beginning to cook. Read the recipe through first, and double check to be sure you have assembled what you need. 🍴



Eileen Perkins 2021

Stir Fry is distinguished by its quick cooking at high heat. Beyond that, there is an infinite number of protein, vegetable, and fungi varieties that can be added and explored.

Eileen Perkins is a native of Rochester N.Y., who cooked professionally, in a wide range of venues, for many years, before moving to the Finger Lakes. She and her husband owned and operated “Eileen’s Bakery an’ Soup Kitchen”, a business that emphasized vegetarian cuisine and the craft of artisan baking. Recipe adaptation for people with special dietary needs is a passion she enjoys sharing. Among Eileen’s current priorities is preservation of food from the garden, developing more comprehensive communication skills, her Falun Gong practice, and educating compassionate people about human rights in Communist-ruled China, and elsewhere.

COOKBOOK REVIEW

THE FOOD LAB

Better Home Cooking Through Science

By J. Kenji Lopez-Alt

If I could just, in the blink of an eye, imprint in my mind the contents of any cookbook, this would be my choice today. It was hard to write about this book. I found it just too captivating to choose what to share and what to omit. Hopefully I can pique your curiosity sufficient for you to investigate it for yourself.

I obtained it through our public library system but actually became acquainted with the author’s work via YouTube-*Kenji’s Cooking Show*, to be specific. I was previously unfamiliar with his prestigious list of accomplishments, including his food column on the “Serious Eats” website and blog. Kenji’s culinary career is an interesting read in itself, but I found it especially useful to know that this particular book won the 2016 James Beard award for General Cooking. Initially, I only knew that his YouTube approach to cooking caused me to find him not only skillful and entertaining, but also endearing (His last name is a blend of his and his wife’s pre-marriage last names. Plus, he is a stay-at-home dad for the couple’s toddler, *and* they’ve decided to keep their tender little one away from the prying eyes of *YouTube* strangers. I like that.)

Spring Shrimp and Vegetable Stir Fry

(Serves 2-4)

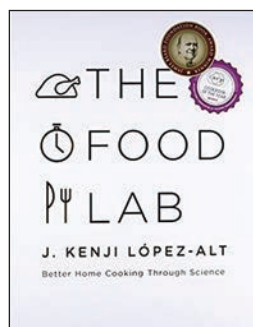
Ingredients

- 3/4 -1 lb. raw shrimp, cleaned, shelled and well dried (if you prefer to not use shrimp, chicken or marinated tofu, patted dry, may be substituted with adjustments in cooking time)
- 2-4 Tbsps. grapeseed or other neutral flavored, high heat tolerant oil (divided)
- 1/2 cup yellow onion, large dice
- 1/2 cup sweet colored bell pepper, diced
- 3 cloves fresh garlic, sliced
- 6 scallions, white and light green parts, diced
- 1 lb. fresh asparagus, cleaned and cut into large pieces
- Large handful of snow peas (snip to eliminate tough stem end and remove the string that runs the length of the pod by tugging from the opposite end)
- 1 Tbsp. sherry
- 1/2-1 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- Pinch to 1/4 tsp of chipotle pepper (start with a little heat, add hot sauce if you like it hotter at the table)
- 1/4 cup water (optional)
- 1 Tbsp. raw sesame seeds (or substitute toasted ones and skip step one)
- Cilantro, chopped
- Tamari soy sauce to taste (optional)es *and/or* kalamata olives.)

Procedure

Heat large fry pan on high heat for 1-2 minutes. Pan is ready to begin when a drop of water sizzles into oblivion. Turn heat to low and add sesame seeds to dry pan stirring continually until toasty brown, about 2 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside. Turn heat back up to high and add half the oil, and carefully tip to coat pan. When oil is hot, not smoking, add onion and scallion, cooking for about 2 minutes, continually stirring, then add garlic and cook 1-2 minutes more until garlic is brown. Remove all to a large bowl with a slotted spoon, draining as much oil as possible back into the pan. Heat the fry pan on high for several seconds, to bring the oil temp up to hot. Carefully place the shrimp in the pan and cook on high for one minute, then using a flat tool to capture all the shrimpy goodness that might be stuck to the pan, flip to cook the other side for a minute. The shrimp should be opaque in color when done. (If you find the pan a little dry you can add a little bit of water.) Put the shrimp in the bowl with the onions. Add a sprinkle of salt and stir. Return the pan to the high heat, add rest of oil, heat several seconds, then add asparagus, and stir fry for about 2 minutes; finally comes the sesame oil, red pepper and snow peas, which you can cook along with the asparagus to taste. Add sherry, and then combine all in pan to heat, stirring continually. It sounds like a lot of steps but they are simple ones, and it comes together fast. You can always turn the heat down to medium if you feel like it’s getting ahead of you. The high heat insures that the ingredients develop the flavorful umami, which goes with searing. Salt to taste.

Season with tamari soy sauce and hot sauce, if desired. Top with sesame seed and cilantro.



Book in hand, I see that his forte seems to be demonstrating how to coax out of food the very best it can be, with the assistance of science. The Introduction of this book is contained in the first 81 pages! Surely every recommendation he makes regarding tools and ingredients, was well considered and tested. If one is looking for a gift to give a person who loves food, a bounty of ideas are to be found among the tools of the craft he recommends in this chapter, and I can imagine each might earn gratitude for years to come. (Although first and foremost, I recommend this book as a gift!)

Although reading it from front to back is a good idea—since the material later on refers back to principles explored earlier—cross referencing enables one to easily jump in anywhere and do great. Personally, I can imagine starting at the front and still be engaged when reaching page 918, but I admit, I am really into food. Even if one is not so much, the recipes are enticing. Here are a few for you to use for judging content and delivery: The World’s Most Awesome Sticky Bun, Crispy Oven-fried Bacon, Pan-Roasted Fish Fillets, Putanesca-The Best Spaghetti for a Night In, Ultra-Goopy Stovetop Mac ‘N’ Cheese, Kale Caesar Salad, The Small Crowd Pleaser: Easy Herb Roasted Turkey Breast with Stuffing.

Realistic food photos are sprinkled liberally among easy to follow verbiage. The book is not only useful, it’s downright inspiring. If nothing else, do get to know Kenji on his blog: seriouseats.com/editors/lj-kenji-lopez-alt. You’ll have fun! 🍴

The Night Sky

Visible Planets and Eta Aquariids Meteor Shower

DEE SHARPLES

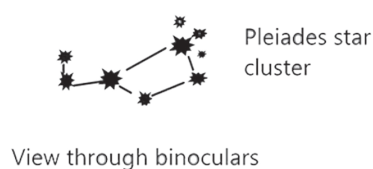


May brings warmer temperatures for observing the sky, but with sunset much later now, we'll have to wait a little longer for the evening show to begin. In astronomical observing, we always have the same characters, but they star in a different performance every month.

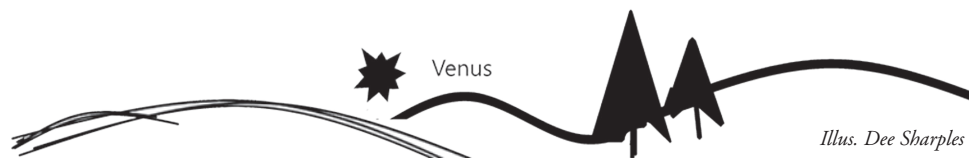
This month a well-known planet returns to the evening sky. Venus, the 2nd planet from the Sun and the brightest and easiest to spot, is back again in the western sky shortly after the Sun sets. At the beginning of the month just as the sky darkens, it's dazzling at magnitude -3.9 but lies very close to the horizon so you'll need a viewing location free of obstacles like trees and houses. It can be found higher in the sky as the month progresses. On May 12th, a one-day-old Moon will be slightly more than one degree from Venus, which is exceedingly close. Hold your little finger out at arm's length and it will barely fill the gap between the two.

Mercury, the smallest planet in our solar system and the one closest to the Sun, joins Venus in the evening sky. On May 1st and 2nd, Mercury shines brightly at magnitude -1.2, about four degrees below the beautiful Pleiades star cluster. If you have binoculars, turn them toward the pair for a stunning sight, with the Pleiades looking very much like a miniature dipper.

Looking west after sunset May 1-2



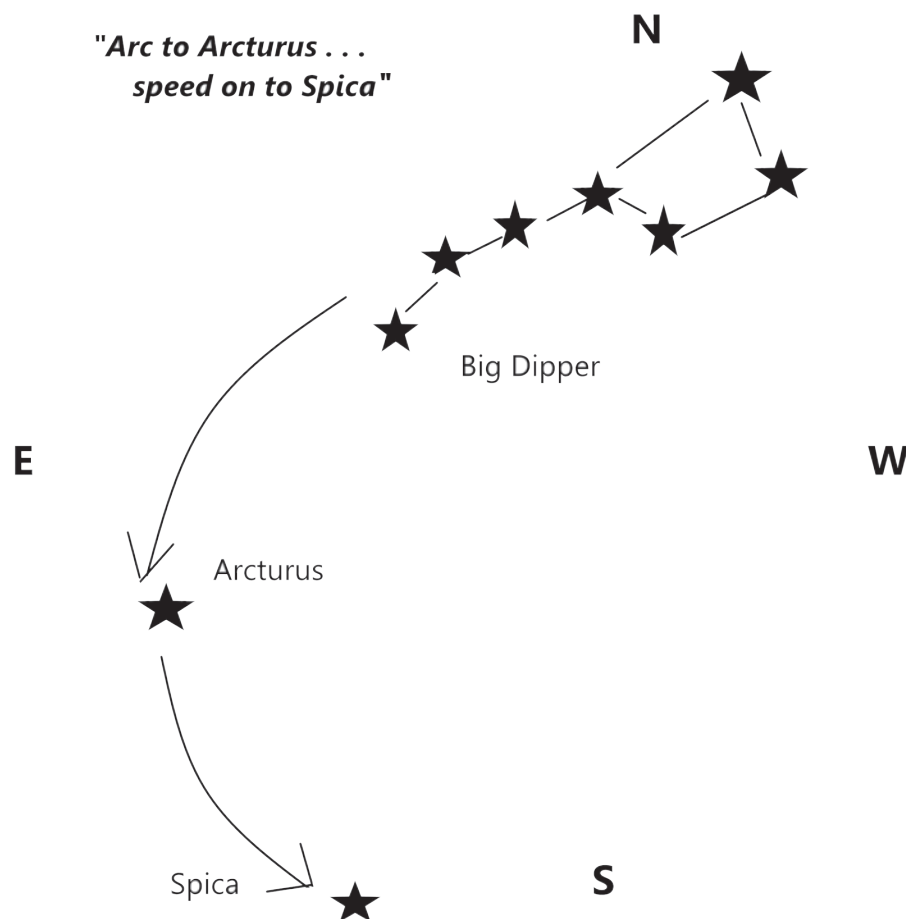
Mercury



On May 13th, the Moon joins Mercury where the two will be 3.1 degrees apart. They'll remain above the western horizon for an hour after sunset and you'll see beautiful Earthshine illuminating the dark portion of the Moon. By this date Mercury will have begun to dim and continues to do so for the rest of the month.

Saturn rises in the southeast around 3:00A.M. on May 1st shining fairly brightly at magnitude 0.5. Brighter Jupiter follows 45 minutes later at an easily spotted magnitude -2.2 and continues to brighten to magnitude -2.4 by the end of May. You can see the two planets until the Sun begins to rise and illuminates the morning sky.

"Arc to Arcturus . . . speed on to Spica"



Illus. Dee Sharples

The Eta Aquariids meteor shower can best be seen around 4:15A.M. on May 6th. The meteors will appear to originate from the constellation Aquarius low in the eastern sky about three hours before dawn. Bright Jupiter will be located in that same area of the sky, along with a crescent Moon which rises at 4:15A.M. Although these conditions will reduce the number of meteors you'll be able to catch crossing the sky, the fast-moving meteors often have persistent trails of light and are worth seeing.

A lunar eclipse occurs on the morning of May 26, but unfortunately for observers living on the east coast, the Moon will have already set 30 minutes before sunrise. On the west coast, observers will see the Moon turn a bright shade of orange/red as the eclipse reaches totality at 4:11A.M. PDT.

After the sky is quite dark around 10:00P.M., look toward the south for the bright white star Spica almost halfway up from the horizon shining at magnitude 0.98. Higher above it and slightly to the left is the even brighter orange-yellow star Arcturus, the 4th brightest star in the night sky, glowing at magnitude -0.04. Arcturus anchors the constellation Bootes which looks very much like a giant kite in the sky soaring almost overhead by the end of May. If you turn around and face north, you will see the Big Dipper high in the northern sky. Try out that mnemonic phrase and see if it works: "Follow the arc (of the Dipper's handle) to Arcturus, then speed on to Spica" following that same curvature.

Becoming familiar with some of the stars and constellations in the night sky will make them old friends who will return to visit you every year. ✨

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: -3.9

Jupiter: -2.2 to -2.4

Mercury: -1.2 (dims to 0.1 by the end of May)

Arcturus: 0.04

Saturn: 0.5

Spica: 0.98

Dimmest star visible with the unaided eye: 6.0 to 6.5

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°. Also use this method to measure how far apart two objects are from each other in the sky.

Richmond History

Barns! Barns! Barns!

By JOY LEWIS

Tarzan was not as tough as he claimed to be. With a flying tackle to the knees I brought him down, sat on his chest, and pinned him to the ground. Score one for the Girls. Tarzan, Captain of the Boys, was my cousin Tom. On his side were his brothers Steve and Bruce and my brother Rob. The Girls were myself, my sister Wendy, and our cousin Bonnie. Each team had its own crenelated fort of hay bales in the barn loft. In and out of the haymow we chased one another, up and down the ladder and through the stalls on the ground floor of the barn and into the yard. Prisoners were taken and points were scored. I have such memories of playing in a barn!

I did not grow up on a farm, but I was blessed with an abundance of cousins and friends who did. Most of my experiences in a barn or farmyard were as a playground. At Aunt Gene's we raced one another across the cavernous barn floor and climbed to the top of the silo just to peek inside. At Uncle Frank's we constructed elaborate fortifications of hay bales and drank out of rain barrels. At Uncle Charlie's we petted the horses and helped with the harnessing gear, then clambered aboard a straw-covered wagon for a ride around the block. At the Kozas' we swung from a rope tied high in the barn rafters and tiptoed across narrow beams, practicing walking a tightrope. Of all the barns I knew as a youngster, it was only in Uncle George's barns that I ever did a lick of work.

George Bancroft (1926-2015) bought a farm in Ossian in the 1950s. Before that, in the early years of his married life, he worked as hired man for his uncle, Dick Farrell (my grandmother's brother), on his Richmond farm. The farm on the southeast corner of Shetler and O'Neil Roads is still owned by Dick's family. Dick's father Jud Farrell bought the farm on the opposite corner in 1935; Jud's son Charlie later owned that farm and now Charlie's granddaughter lives there.

Some years later Uncle George had his own farm in Ossian where he specialized in raising sheep: Dorset, Suffolk, and Columbia. For many years his was the largest sheep farm in New York State. He also had cows and pigs and chickens and horses – and a spotted pony named Popcorn. There were seemingly endless acres of corn and alfalfa and open meadow.

In the cow barn my cousin Nancy showed me how to coax a reluctant Holstein into a stanchion then to quickly snap shut the gate. We washed a dozen udders and attached the milking machine. Cleaning out the gutters after the cows were released outside was not my favorite job. Bottle feeding the orphaned lambs was more to my liking. On hot June Saturdays Wendy, Rob, and I worked with our cousins to store hay bales in the mow; my siblings and I thought it was a lark. Nancy, Charles, and Phyllis knew it was work!

There is always work to do on a farm. Childhood memories of playing in a barn ought not to obscure that truth. Barns, first and foremost, are workstations on a farm. More than two hundred years ago, when most of Richmond's families were farmers, the barns they erected were made of hewn logs. One of the first log barns in Richmond of which we have a record is that of Gideon Walker, who came to town in 1804.



The English barn at 3971 O'Neil Road was built by Luther Stanley about 1840. This is a view as it looked in 1876. Photo courtesy of Joy Lewis



The barn at 3971 O'Neil under the ownership of Dick Farrell about 1968. The barn burned in the mid-1980s. Photo courtesy of Joy Lewis

Within a decade of the early settlers' arrival were the first sawmills established. Sawn lumber, now readily available, facilitated construction. Much of this region was peopled by incomers from New England, where the English barn predominated. This was a building of three bays, thirty to forty feet long, with gable ends, an outer skin of narrow vertical boards, and a roof topped with hand-riven wood shingles. The central bay consisted of a threshing floor with wide hinged doors, front and back, opening outward. The bays either side of the threshing floor served as feed storage or to shelter livestock during the winter. The English barn was a constant in Richmond for more than half a century.

After the Civil War a new type of barn began to appear on the farms of Richmond – the gambrel-roofed structure which many consider the epitome of barn-ness. Its spacious interior accommodated



The plank-frame barn on Abbey Road at the corner of Pierpont, built by George Wood in 1907, was the first of Wood's barns built in this area and one of the few still standing.

Photo courtesy of Joy Lewis

a large mow under the rafters for hay storage, while the lower floor lodged a variety of livestock. The angle at the peak of the roof was called a "gambrel" as it resembled the gambrel bar used in the butchering of hogs. Many an English-style barn was remodeled in the 1870s to retrofit a gambrel roof. And in the decades following, new barns were apt to follow the iconic form. In the first two decades of the twentieth century George Wood of Richmond built fifteen plank-frame gambrel barns throughout Richmond, Bristol, Naples, and Canadice. One still standing is the Pierpont barn on the northwest corner of Abbey and Pierpont Roads.

My appreciation of barns is fueled as much by memory as by family lore: learning which barns in Rush, Henrietta, and Livonia were built by my ancestors; sharing the loss when Uncle Dick's barn burned; knowing the local barns where my parents and grandparents worked on a daily basis. In the late 1930s my maternal grandfather, George H. Bancroft, operated a farm on Poplar Hill Road in Lima. A few years ago, I noticed the barn had collapsed. With permission of the landowner my husband scavenged several timbers from the old barn and made them into picture frames for me and my mother, allowing the life of that barn to continue holding and sharing memories. 🦉

Joy Lewis has served as Town of Richmond Historian since 2013. She offers reflections on the history of Richmond, NY in every other issue of *Owl Light News*. The Honeoye-Richmond Historical Society Museum will be open for the summer beginning Memorial Day. 585-229-1128 - historian@townofrichmond.org

Honeoye-Richmond Historical Society Museum Open for the Summer Beginning Memorial Day Weekend

Open Saturday mornings, 9:00 to 11:30

The museum provides a wonderful & enlightening glimpse into the past and is open free of charge. (donations are appreciated).

There are several new exhibits, including a display of the Hemlock Fair and an exhibit on Richmond barns.

The museum is located at 8690 Main Street, Honeoye, NY (in the back section of the Richmond Town Hall). We ask that you wear a mask when entering the building. Information: Town of Richmond Historian, Joy Lewis, 585-229-1128 - historian@townofrichmond.org



The Monthly Read

That Vacation Feeling

A Review of *Leave the World Behind* Rumaan Alam

Leave the World Behind
256 pages
HarperCollins
(2020)



MARY DRAKE

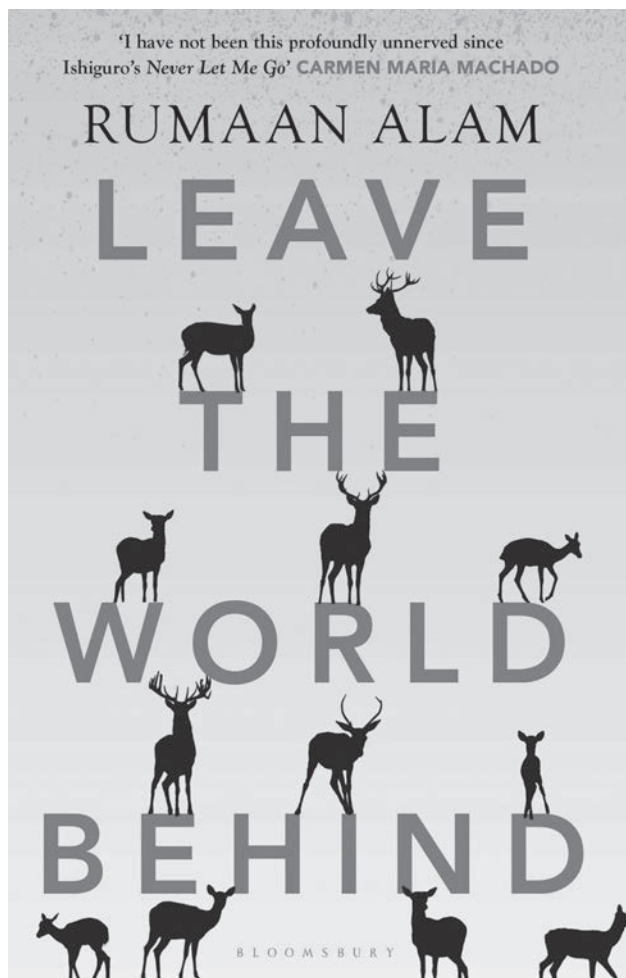
Going on vacation is a chance to get away from it all. We're lulled into a different mindset in which we *Leave the World Behind*, which is the title of Rumaan Alam's 2020 book about a couple and their two teenagers who do just that; they leave New York City for a vacation in the country. They find the perfect house to rent for a week. Finally, Amanda and Clay have the leisure to re-ignite their sex lives, the kids enjoy the in-ground pool, and everyone revels in delicious food. All is drowsy contentment, until . . .

A knock on the front door cracks open their fragile daydream. Granted, the knock comes late at night, when they're all tired from having fun and when darkness makes everything seem a little more dangerous. But it's just Ruth and G.H., an older black couple fleeing an unexplained blackout in NYC for the safety of this house, which they claim to own.

What follows is a study in human suspicion, class distinctions, and race relations. Could this couple be dangerous con artists? How likely is it that black people could own a house like this? Amanda and Clay wonder if they can continue their vacation with strangers in the house, or should they go home? But despite their initial uncertainty, they are all unintentionally drawn together by the noise. It happens while Amanda and G.H. are chatting in the hot tub, talking about work, money, approaches toward life, when something unexpected happens that changes their lives forever. They hear

a noise...so loud that it was almost a physical presence...they'd never heard a noise like that before. You didn't hear such a noise; you experienced it...You could fairly say that their lives could be divided into two: the period before they'd heard that noise and the period after.

It's a noise that signals something we all fear—the beginning of the end. If the recent spate of apocalyptic, disaster novels is any indication, we humans are obsessed with our own demise. Alam's book has been compared to other dystopian novels, like *The Road* (2006) by Cormac McCarthy, where the Earth is nothing but a scorched hull, burned to ash; *Station Eleven* (2014) by Emily St. John Mandel, in which almost everyone has died from the "Georgian flu"; *Severance* (2018) by Ling Ma, featuring a zombie apocalypse brought about by the "Shen flu"; and *Silence* (2020) by Don DeLillo, when all digital communications blink out and the characters are left to ponder what life has meant to them. If this year of the pandemic has done anything, it's made us consider our demise. Fiction provides a way of working out our fears of death and disruption; it's an outlet for our uncertainty and a way to imagine how we'd cope.



Alam's novel, however, is different from other disaster novels in that the characters witness—if only in an auditory way—the disaster occurring. But they're unsure what they've "witnessed." The suspense of finding out what caused the power outage along the eastern seaboard and what was the source of the life-altering noise keeps us reading. We're riveted to see what the characters will do when they begin noticing deer migrating by the thousands, when tropical flamingoes improbably land in their New York swimming pool, when they stop hearing cars or planes or sirens.

At first, they do nothing, continuing their daily chores of fixing meals and making beds, as if the world hasn't changed, until one of the teens begins to suffer alarming physical symptoms. Will they help each other or bail out? It's some comfort that Alam has their better instincts prevail:

Amanda went and stood in the kitchen, unsure what to do next. Ruth followed because she was moved to reassure her. That damnable instinct. She had to help. They were colleagues not as mothers but as humans. This—all this—was a problem to be shared.

At least within the same house, the problem is shared. When they leave to find help, G.H. insists that his "friend" Danny, a contractor who worked on their house, "of all people, would understand what

was happening, and have, if not a solution, a strategy." Instead, Danny doesn't know any more than they do, and he tells them "What you do is your business. . . . I'm locking my doors. I'm getting out my gun."

We want to believe that we're all connected, and Alam fosters that belief by having a third-person narrator who slips in and out of the characters' minds as the action is occurring. But in addition to what the characters are thinking, there's an occasional, omniscient voice that lets us know how bad things really are, that commuters are suffocating in a subway stalled underground, that someone famous died from an automobile accident because no ambulance could navigate the clogged metropolitan roads, and that others, too, are beginning to suffer mysterious symptoms.

Ironically, it's the youngest member of this haphazard group who knows what to do: "Rose had read books, Rose had seen movies, Rose knew how this story would end, and Rose knew they shouldn't panic, but prepare," and to that end she goes off seeking food and supplies they will need.

Rumaan Alam is such a master of detail that he can make a simple run to the grocery store reveal more about a character than pages of explanation. Early in the book, Amanda goes shopping and we're told that she buys things like blueberries, specialty mustard, organic hot dogs, premium vodka, real maple syrup, Ben and Jerry's "politically virtuous" ice cream, and coffee filters made of recycled paper. Wow. What better way to reveal that she's health conscious, environmentally aware, and affluent enough to put her money where her beliefs are. She's also a concerned mother, since she buys several brands to please her family's varied preferences, but not such a good mother that she doesn't have sexual fantasies about the bag boy. "Vacations did that, didn't they," she thinks, "made you horny, made everything seem possible, a life completely different than the one you normally inhabited." She has no idea—how could she?—how radically different everyone's life is about to become.

This is Alam's third novel, the first two being *That Kind of Mother* and *Rich and Pretty*. *Leave the World Behind* was nominated for the 2020 National Book Award and Netflix is working on an adaptation starring Denzel Washington and Julia Roberts. It's something to look forward to and *Leave the World Behind* is well worth the read. 🦉

Mary Drake is a novelist and freelance writer living in western New York. Visit her online at marydrake.online to learn more about her books. See her YA story excerpt from *Where the Path Leads* on page 12.

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POEM from MERTON E. BARTELS

Eruptions

Spring is the time signifying rebirth
Time for humans to shrink their girth
While raking leaves off Mother Earth
Bending and sweating and acquiring thirst

Soon we notice something in focus
Not very tall or wide, but like Hocus
Pocus, magic from below is crocus
Brings smiles daily to all of us

Tulips of Easter skyward arise
Of many colors is no surprise
Yellow and white evidently signify
With other colors a panorama nearby

Trees displays their colors to our sight
Rosebud show shades of pink, alright
Dogwood blossoms loom big and white
Forsythia is yellow in day or moonlight

As hairy vine poison ivy begins to grow
Clover white pedals not ready to show
Dandelions in fields cling ground low
Altogether, plants make our spirits glow

©2021, Merton E. Bartels



D.E. Bentley

SUBMISSIONS—to editor@canadicepress.com

We are actively seeking submissions for front page feature articles. Articles should reflect on rural life in New York State. They should be timely and the original work of the authors(s). Submitted pieces should be around 2000 words and include original images (photos or illustrations). Authors/artists will receive full credit (in print and online). We are also looking for reviews of local arts (visual, performing, literary) as well as original short stories and poetry for Pen & Prose—our monthly literary arts section.

We except submission on a rolling basis. Please specify the type of submission in the subject line of the email (i.e. news story, feature story, press release, poetry, editorial, opinion, fiction etc.). Include your name and phone number in the email, as well as a word doc attachment of the submission. Feel free to contact us in advance with queries, if desired. All submissions will be considered on a case by case basis for publication in future issues (in print and/or online).

The general deadline for all content for upcoming issues is the 10th of each month. Owl Light News pages fill up FAST!

We place online content ongoing and welcome community press releases.

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 and AF veteran who enjoys traveling. He is active in the Wayne County Writers Guild and loves to dabble in a myriad of writing styles, including poetry.

During these rapidly changing times, find us online!

OwlLightNews.com

Our online site offers regional Arts, Environment, and Community press releases, along with postings of special online-only feature articles and select print content.

Fantastic Flora

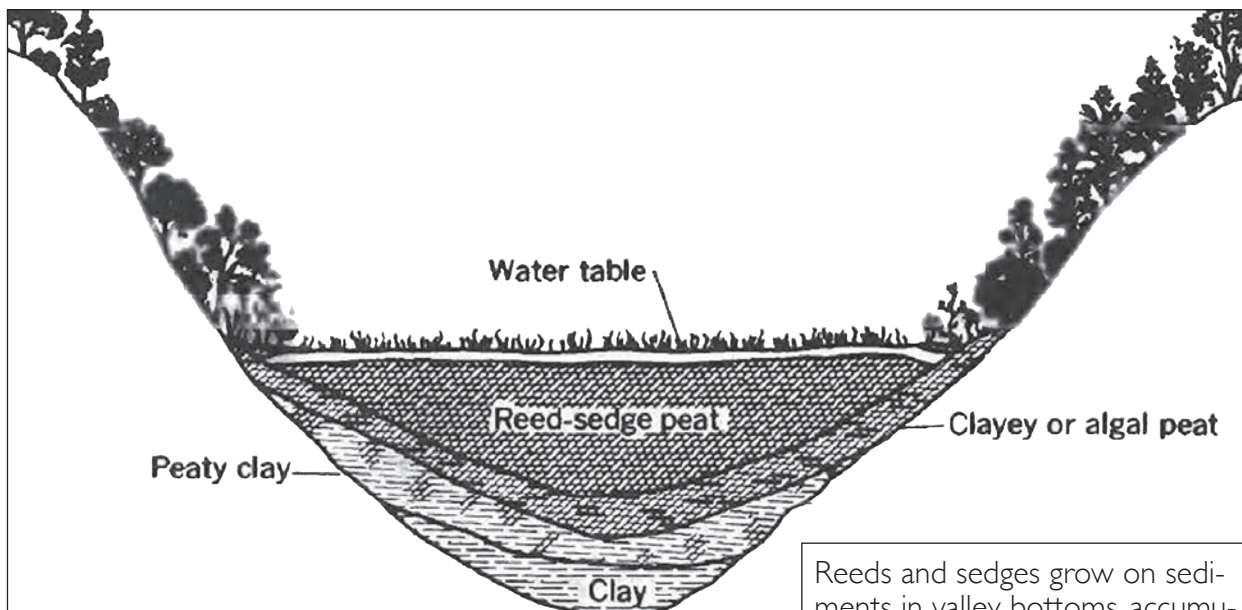
Hidden In Plain Sight – True Sedges, Genus *Carex*, Sedge Family (Cyperaceae)



SALLY L. WHITE

If it seems the world is full of grasses, that is not far from truth, but some of those long green leaves we encounter are not grasses at all, but sedges. With some 5,500 species worldwide, more than 2,000 members of this family are “true sedges,” belonging to the genus *Carex*. (A genus is a collection of related species.)

“Sedges have edges,” students are taught in college botany courses, but I recently learned the sequel of that little memory cue, which helps us distinguish further: “Sedges have edges, rushes are round, grasses have nodes right down to the ground.” That’s a simplification, but you can often roll a stem between your fingers to assess its shape. You’ll find grasses are round or possibly flattened a bit, but never “edgy.” True sedges are triangular in cross-section, a quick and helpful test. (Let’s leave rushes out of it for now.)



Reeds and sedges grow on sediments in valley bottoms, accumulating as peat, an organic product quarried for sale to gardeners, who appreciate its water-holding abilities. Valley wetlands act as giant sponges, slowing the release of water downstream. (Reeds are large grasses that also occur in some wetlands.)
From USGS Survey Bulletin 1317-B.



Pond's edge, Sept 1, 2020

All that is green is not grass: Behind the cattails, among the goldenrod, sedges are lurking, but the eye does not find them easily.



In New York, we reportedly have about 215 species of true sedges (including hybrids), or roughly ten percent of the world’s total. Ninety percent of them are native, but a third of those are uncommon to rare. I don’t expect to sort out more than a few of the obvious ones, but at least I can often tell they’re sedges; perhaps that’s enough. (Anything more would require patience, and a microscope.)

We can be excused, I trust, for thinking of sedges as wetland plants. That’s where we’re most likely to see them and where they occur in expansive communities, sometimes with rushes and reeds. Waving gracefully at the edges of ponds or filling in marshes and fens, these grass-like plants become the visual matrix for more ostentatious flowering plants, the ones we tend to notice. Wetlands dominated by sedges are often called fens and have played a significant role in New York landscapes. In our area, sediments deposited in glacial valleys created habitat for sedges and other wetland plants.

Most Finger Lakes are in valleys deep enough to persist as lakes, but smaller ones become wetlands in time. Changes in the water table create long cycles of sedges and other wetland plants, growing then being killed by floods, slowly accumulating the layers and layers of organic matter we call peat, or muck. As much as 80% organic, that “muck” is a great carbon sink in these days of climate concerns. In southeastern New York, reed-sedge peat 15 feet deep has accumulated at a rate of one foot every 1,500 years; ours may not be as deep, though thousands of years old.

A century ago, Potter Swamp (Yates and Ontario counties) was a forested wetland attracting many species of birds. Beginning in 1894, Verdi Burtch and Clarence Stone began making regular visits to assess its wildlife, especially the Great Blue Herons who nested in a rookery there. By 1930, they talked of making it a bird sanctuary; others spoke of a wildlife refuge. Even today the distinction between a “refuge” and a “sanctuary” is not evident from the names. “If the state wants a place to raise and then shoot ducks,” said Mr. Burtch, “I would just as soon they do it someplace else.”

By 1932, Dr. Eaton of Hobart was making annual trips to Potter Swamp, with bird lovers from Geneva, Rochester, Buffalo, and Syracuse. His May 1932 visit attracted 200 people, who together reported 166 species of birds. Mr. Burtch’s idea had enough momentum to generate protests. A letter to the editor of the *Chronicle-Express* thought the land better suited for “muck gardening.”

Carex, May 31, 2020

Most true sedges, genus *Carex*, have a distinctive appearance, a “look” to their texture and color that helps us pick them out in the landscape. In this photo, yellow-green sedges in the left foreground mingle with rushes.

Charles Oswald wrote: “The Potter swamp is possibly one of the finest pieces of undeveloped agricultural land in the eastern states....

Continued on back

Small Town Hound from page 7

We also stopped briefly at Cobblestone Springs in Dundee. My human was hoping there would be someone in, since we happened to be in the area. It is a beautiful place and all the people there were warm and welcoming when we visited before. I stayed in the kitchen while my human took a tour. They have classes there too and sometimes people stay overnight to relax and think. They also have nature trails which I hope to walk on sometime.

From Dundee it was onto a place called Watkins Glen. My human said she used to go to a place called Hidden Valley (which sounds fun; I could have found her I am sure). This time we stopped and walked a bit and waited a while outside at a table for an order of chicken tacos (she gave me a bit) from a place called El Rancho Mexican Restaurant & Grill. One other time when we were here, we stopped at another place called Seneca Sunrise (I stayed outside) to get coffee beans in a bag (my humans grind these and put them in a pot in the morning, right before I get fed).

Our next stop was a place called Laughing Goat Fiber Farm where I said hello to two herding dogs. I love the working dogs best, and I could tell these dogs did a great job on their farm. I am a little embarrassed about why we stopped here (although it was a fun stop). You see, I have a bit of a glove fetish and when my human leaves gloves around I ...well...eat them. These were very special gloves from our friend Len and so I did not chew them. I did eat them whole. Realizing my mistake, I also threw them up whole (I know...like really gross from a human perspective). Anyway, the gloves survived, and my human washed them, very well. But since they are wool and fit tight to begin with, they no longer fit after the washing.

Monsters Face Grove! (22 students at SUNY CCC created these spooky monster self-portraits Oct. 2020 under the direction of Professor Dave Higgins)

My human did not want to tell our friend. So...she went to the farm and bought a new matching pair. I think my human did ultimately tell the story to Len and he still loves me up when we see him. He is great that way. I wish that all humans were nice to dogs and that all dogs had forever homes and felt loved.

The last stop, and the best part, was when we stopped to see our friend Len. First the humans had lunch inside. Then they went to work outside. My human kept cutting branches off a tree for me to play with. There were many branches, and Len took some of these out around the back of his house to clear them from the yard. Every time he went there, I followed him, to make sure he did not get lost. Then, after that was done, we all took a walk along the road where he lives. This was a great thing to do before my human said, "up in the back," and I jumped up for the ride home.

During another recent trip south, my humans took me to a wooded area (after they spent some time in a big, busy building and left me in the truck for a bit). The place (Spencer Crest Nature and Research Center) had paths through the woods and ponds. My humans walked around looking at signs—talking about nature and numbers—while I waited patiently. There was a place in the woods with all these big made-to-look-scary faces. * I sometimes jump



When off leash, I roam the swamps of Canadice and build confidence in skills—like log walking. at things that surprise me, so I think my humans thought that I would jump at all these faces. I knew they were just painted and paid them no mind.

One more exciting thing happened recently (a bit of dog gear endorsement here; you can see images on fb@canadicepress). I got a new collar and leash. Sporting new gear for the times I can't be off leash makes me feel special. This gear is made by a company called ©Mighty Paw, in Rochester, NY. Heh, I know this is a lot of information from a dog but, well, I am not an ordinary dog...I am the Small Town Hound!

Æsc is the "Small Town Hound—Finding Creative Venues and Adventures in NYS." He lives with his two humans and his two canine companions, Winnie and Mars, in Canadice, NY. When not writing, his favorite pastime is finding people.

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Rumor has it this big guy is a sweetie!

Rumor may look familiar to you if you follow us (fb@bchumanesoc). He was posted on February 5 because he had been found outside, cold and scared in the town of Maine.

Unfortunately, Rumor became a stray and we are now looking for his new forever home. Since coming here, Rumor has had a gentle and sweet disposition. He seems like somewhat of a space cadet and can often be found looking up at the sky or looking back at the person walking him, as if to say, "I forgot you were there for a minute!"

Rumor would do best with a family with teens and no little kids. He seems to like the dogs he has met, but sadly was not a fan of cats. Rumor is fun, spunky and takes treats so gently. And to tug on your heartstrings he makes the cutest puppy eyes! Walks are by far one of his favorite activities and don't be alarmed when he bounces up for a hug mid walk. The love this guy has to give is just too much to bottle up?? Please consider opening your heart and home to this big goof.

If you'd like to meet him, please make an appointment on our website bchumanesoc.com

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Do you have a story about your pet that might interest other pet owners? Or a pet in need of a home? Feel free to share (along with a picture). Email to editor@canadicepress.com

Making Lemonade

What Next!?

BARB STAHL

What Next!?

"Hello, how are you? Have you had your shot(s) yet?" Recently I have had many conversations on Zoom or in-person (while socially distanced with a mask on) that all began exactly like that! Discussion about the weather has taken a much lower priority.

What's next? Now where do we go from here? Top on my list is to see family members and collect long overdue hugs. The ones from out of town are working on getting vaccinated so they can begin to determine potential dates to travel. It is, indeed, something wonderful to anticipate.

Even fully vaccinated I know we still need to continue wearing a mask in groups—those variants are worrisome. Will I get back to my three days a week exercising in the water aerobics classes? How about theater performances and/or concerts? Not for a while. Will we continue our dancing with Zoom? Through Zoom dancing I have made friends who live long distances away so will those connections end? Travel? How about at least one-day bus trips?

What about my hippie long, white, thin hair? Should I get it cut? How much?

Some fully vaccinated close friends will be dining together at a home so that's huge. Now I am concerned about my table manners—or should I say potential lack of them? Where do we place our used silverware on our plates? Was that at 3:15? No, a YouTube discussion shows the proper placement in

the United States of used silverware to be at 4:20. Boy, plopping them down on my placemat was not socially acceptable for the past year. I guess I have to stop wearing a napkin as a bib when I'm out which also means that I must go back to being extremely careful while eating soup or other easily spilled foods. Also, looks like I have to hunt for my tweezers and practice applying lipstick.

Life will never be the same. But, how close will we be able to come to what we considered to be normal prior to March 2020?

Road trips will be great to do. A good friend strongly urged me to get photos of homes where I have lived in my past to accompany my family history narrative. (Yes, I am slowly getting back in the groove of writing that.) Also, visiting graveyards will be important. I know I could have done those things even during the height of the pandemic, but I chose to stay very close to home.

Will my volunteer life pick up once again? It should, as there are numerous "undone" research questions to answer. I can see that part of what happens when one spends so much time alone is that getting back out into the world can take some "talking to oneself" and probably just plain "get up and get going."

Will I tend to fly more than drive?

Even Tarzan wonders if I'm going to be out and about a lot now as he has gotten very used to our constant companionship.

I will be turning 80 years old in May. Yep, I did

have to sneak that information into this. It is quite a concept for me so I thought sharing the news might help my adjustment. Those decade birthdays are always difficult (unless you are turning ten or twenty) and 80 certainly sits way on top of the "difficult" category!!

You have undoubtedly noticed this piece contains more questions than answers. However, I sense that I will not be the only one in that predicament. A year was a long time to spend alone—unless Zooming with a group, or meeting folks sitting on a porch, in a garage, or on someone's driveway. I will forever be thankful for those opportunities. Some of the "what's next" answers will hopefully come in the next few months. Also, a huge question that may not have an answer any time soon is "what about the variants"? What will their affect be when one has been fully vaccinated? My guess is regularly administered boosters.

My wish for you, my readers, is that you keep well, keep smiling, and keep making lemonade (including real lemonade, see recipe below), now that the weather is turning toward summer when such delightful drinks are more appreciated!

Barb Stahl 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



Real Lemonade!

A delicious & refreshing summertime treat!

Add (1) cup sugar to (1) cup water in a small saucepan.

Stir in (1) tsp lemon zest (wash all lemons well first).

Heat on medium, stir as needed, until the sugar is fully dissolved.

Place in the refrigerator to cool.

Squeeze the juice from 6-7 lemons.

After pouring through a course sieve (remove the seed but not the pulp) add the lemon juice to the cooled simple syrup.

Add water to dilute to desired taste. Enjoy!



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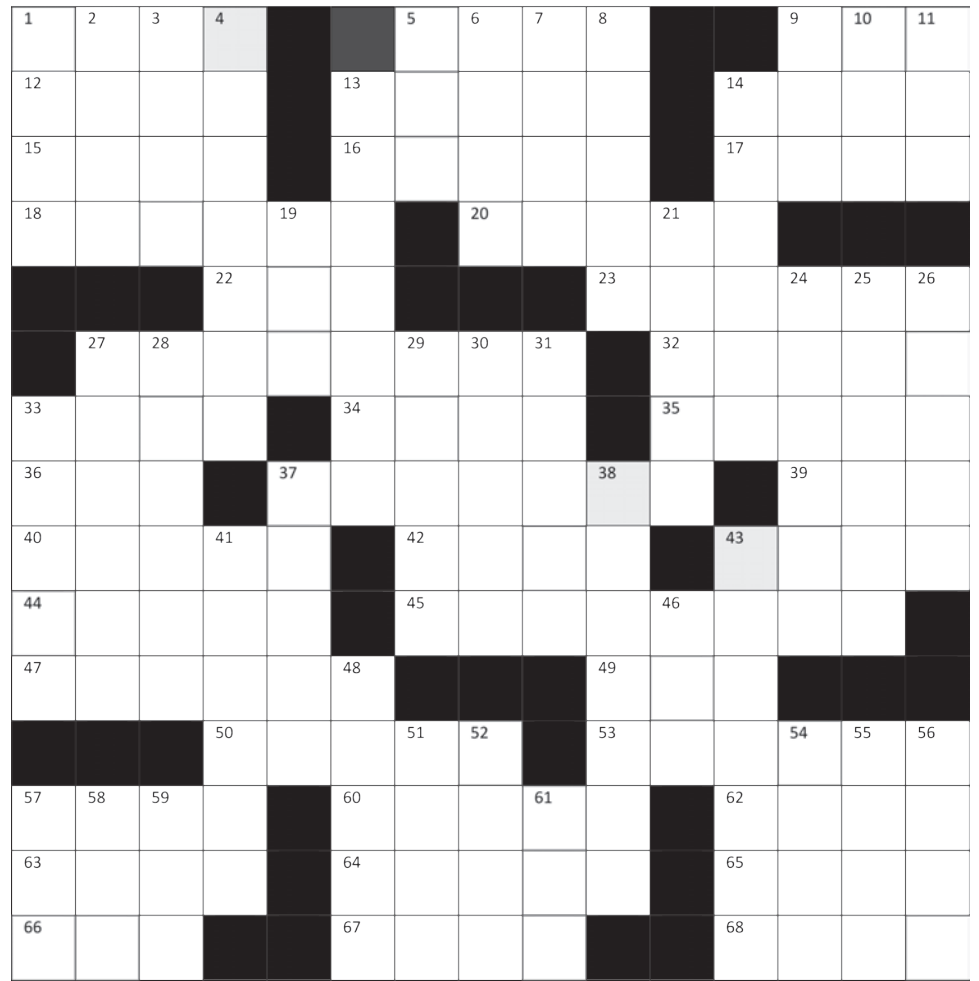
Owl Light Puzzle 13 – By GEORGE URICH

ACROSS

- 1 He loves, in Latin
- 5 Part of an element
- 9 Admirer
- 12 College a part of Clemson University, Abbr.
- 13 Electricity supplier, _____ grid
- 14 Officer was going to _____ the violent demonstrator
- 15 About
- 16 The luck of the _____
- 17 One of the cardinal directions
- 18 Leave
- 20 Sides
- 22 The most common English word
- 23 Test for acid, _____ paper
- 27 Antiseptic, with 45 Across
- 32 Hawaiian volcano, _____ loa
- 33 A line fastened to a corner of a sail for reefing
- 34 Sharing one's intimate thought and feelings, _____ e my Soul
- 35 "Jumbo" giving CPR, _____ ephant
- 36 Coastal inlet
- 37 Part of a flight and 4 "Monopoly" properties
- 39 Home security company
- 40 Imitate or copy, _____ te
- 42 Large Native American tribe
- 43 A very long time
- 44 It's in the lobe, _____ g**
- 45 Element that is part of water
- 47 Deposit on teeth in which bacteria proliferate
- 49 Expression of encouragement, _____ boy
- 50 City in central New York
- 53 Element with the symbol C
- 57 Against
- 60 Zorba the _____
- 62 Friend in Liverpool

DOWN

- 63 Requirement
- 64 _____ Johnny, Introduction to late night show
- 65 Choir member
- 66 Banned pesticide
- 67 Shrek in one
- 68 An inert gas
- 1 Sulfuric _____
- 2 Horses hair
- 3 Old folks lobby, Abbr.
- 4 A place for a play
- 5 Main artery, _____ ta
- 6 Silly or foolish person in London
- 7 Platinum loop used for making cultures
- 8 What a youngster might call actor Holbrook
- 9 Gov't organization controlling air travel
- 10 Mule's sire
- 11 Bottom line
- 13 Where coal miners head at the end of a shift
- 14 Check out one of two bands of a radio
- 19 Greek letter before Sigma
- 21 Silent actor?
- 24 Chemical agent causing genetic mutation, _____ n
- 25 Not like Genesis garden
- 26 Result of mixing an acids and a bases
- 27 Adjective describing something that is essential or basic
- 28 Italy and Germany are members, Abbr. and Atmosphere that seems to surround a person or thing
- 29 What Johann S. would say meeting Tarzan in the jungle
- 30 I type of farm
- 31 Made a mistake



- 33 An ogler
- 37 Brazil
- 38 What a pool player does to play another game, he _____
- 41 A state of matter
- 43 Person who is involved with red sea weed to make a gelatinous substance
- 46 Person helping another person who is supervising the rehab of a patient with a stroke, Abbr.
- 48 Four plus six minus two
- 51 New Orleans cooking, _____ le
- 52 Aviation prefix
- 54 Bundle of hay or cotton tightly wrapped
- 55 Preminger
- 56 An inert gas
- 57 Plus
- 58 Nick name for Edward
- 59 Hebrew letter that sounds like t
- 61 Ending for sat or car



George Urich is a retired Xerox engineer living in Canandaigua, NY. He solves and creates crossword puzzles to keep his brain active. A new puzzle will be shared each month, for the puzzling enjoyment of Owl Light readers. Email George at gurich@frontier.com



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The Conscious Crow

Springing Awake

When we become too encumbered with the details of human existence, lose our way and forget to take notice of "the bigger picture" that is in the background of every moment, we have the fortuity of remembering who we really are by returning to nature. To remember where we came from. And remember what truly matters in life. We are surrounded by infinite, glorious reminders that continue to bring us back to our essence, serving as a reflection of our innate truth. As buds bloom this spring- once more- we are gifted the opportunity of witnessing a new beginning and birth of yet another cycle. It is magic to watch it all happen before our eyes. A new spring offers the opportunity for a start fresh and return to reality. It beckons us to stop all our thinking, pause our incessant worrying, return to our center and utmost essential Being. It is curious that we spend so much time and energy running around in circles in our mind with thoughts, justifications and, distractions. Bob Marley in "Fussing and Fighting," references our essential nature, how we ought to live in peace and harmony, but "instead, we're fussing and fighting like we ain't supposed to be." Though we lose our way, there is always a light and nature can lead us back to our core.

Seasons go on changing, winter cascading and melting into new and with this, a fresh wave of life being born heeds the beauty of simplicity. To be. Simply pause. Gaze at the blooms. Breathe in the rain. Honor the life-giving sun and fully cherish these majestic moments. Spring is a humbling gesture of renewal, hope and beauty, bursting with an aliveness that is all around. The sacredness and preciousness of life is a gift we are offered, present in every flower that blooms, every storm that rolls throughout the sky, every star that greets our gaze, and every wave of fresh air we are fortunate enough to breathe into our lungs. Sunny days hold the promise of happiness and joy, creating an overwhelming opportunity to seize the brilliance when it greets us with its power. These countless impermanent reminders in all of nature whisper us awake when we need healing, gently ushering us back to the depth of our Selves, pointing us back to the notion that nothing lasts forever, so - savor - every minute of it. Stay present because it passes along. Slow down and find your way back home.



Nature is miraculously instantaneous, and yet also patient and slow. Everything occurs in an organic manner in perfect timing. Lao Tzu says, "Nature does not hurry and yet everything is accomplished." It is vital for us to take a hold of these fleeting moments as they greet us. To follow nature's lead in a slower, more conscious way and witness the beauty of life that is available to us. We are meant to celebrate these countless transient, divine moments that come along our path and soak up nature's limitless medicine while we can, because this too shall pass, as it all does. We never know when it will end and we are naive to think we have forever to enjoy it. Over and over again, things change and as we continue this uncertain, unpredictable, fleeting dance with life, we must stop to smell the roses before they're gone.

Pema Chödrön in her insightful book, "Awakening Loving-Kindness," speaks how "...if you live your life as if you actually had only a day left, then the sense of impermanence heightens that feeling of preciousness and gratitude."

Let us be grateful for what we have, instead of getting so wrapped up in our manic humanness and choose to honor our extensive essence that is so much a part of nature. Every moment lies an opportunity. Growth is everywhere. It is our choice whether we choose to sprout these seeds of awakened consciousness or not. Our journey begins wherever we are, and now is the perfect time and place to start. Chödrön speaks to the potentiality in our human journey by thoughtfully offering "Every time you're willing to acknowledge your thoughts, let them go, and come back to the freshness of the present moment, you're sowing seeds of wakefulness in your unconsciousness... you're sowing seeds for your own future, cultivating this innate fundamental wakefulness by aspiring to let go of the habitual way you proceed and do something fresh." So, here's to springing us back awake, and returning to our essence as much as we can possibly remember.

The Conscious Crow—Reminding you to Grow

Birders' Atlas from page 9

A Skein in the Sky – Why Geese Fly in a V

If you notice a flock of geese flying in a V shape (known as a skein) overhead you may see the leader shift from time to time. They all know they way, they are just taking turns leading. When the vanguard in the V gets tired he or she takes a break and another goose takes over so the skein may look like it's constantly shifting. Researchers have found that the birds will share the tiring lead position in their V formations. Just like cars racing around a track, the bird following another gets a little extra lift from the wake of the bird in front of them. You may have also noticed that one side of the V is usually longer than the other. This was determined by scientists at MIT (Joseph Rosenshein) to be a mathematical phenomenon due to the correlation between the number of geese and the length of the side of the V.

"One swallow does not make a summer, but one skein of geese, cleaving the murk of a March thaw, is the spring. ... By this international commerce of geese, the waste corn of Illinois is carried through the clouds of the Arctic tundras, there to combine with the waste sunlight of a nightless June to grow goslings for all the lands between. And in this annual barter of food for flight, and winter warmth for summer solitude, the whole continent receives as net profit a wild poem dropped from the murky skies upon the muds of March." ~ Aldo Leopold, "March," in "A Sand County Almanac"

NYSBBA - New York State Breeding Bird Atlas

New York is divided up into over 5,000 atlas blocks, each roughly 3x3 miles square. We need help from birders—beginners and seasoned—to complete the inventory over the next five years. Odonata Sanctuary is located in a Priority Block called Honeoye Falls CE. Several beginners as well as 'elder twitchers' have helped count species and look for signs that that a species is actually nesting in our block. For more information on how you can get involved go to the Breeding Bird Atlas website at: ebird.org/atlasny/about.

Steve Melcher is the primary caretaker, hoof trimmer & poop scooper at Odonata Sanctuary, Mendon. His studies included using members of the Order "Odonata," as bio-indicators 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](https://fb.com/OdonataSanctuary).

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Advance sale copies may also be ordered using the form on page 23! Follow facebook.com/canadicepress for updates and information about publication/delivery schedule and readings by the authors.

Solution to Owl Light Puzzle 13 (found on page 21)

1	A	2	M	3	A	4	T			5	A	6	T	7	O	8	M			9	F	10	A	11	N
12	C	A	A	H				13	P	O	W	E	R						14	T	A	S	E		
15	I	N	R	E				16	I	R	I	S	H						17	E	A	S	T		
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63	N	E	E	D						64	H	E	R	E	S			65	A	L	T	O			
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Songbirds from Front



One of my favorite spring birds is the Baltimore Oriole! When they make an appearance it is always amazing to see them. To photograph them well can be challenging though, and to get these shots I used a jelly feeder below this old stump which made for a perfect setup. They land up higher on the stump and then when the coast is clear they fly down onto the feeder. Good light, concealment in a blind and patience are all required to get these images. Shot taken with a Nikon D500 1/2000 sec. f/5.6 ISO 640. Lens was a Nikon 500 PF and Photo Gear Designs Big Grip and PGD Tracker.
Photo by Paul English



Indigo Bunting (1)
This beautiful singing Indigo Bunting was taken at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in a field on East Road just above May's Point. I used a Nikon D850, 2500 sec. f/4.0, 300mm 2.8 lens, and Photo Gear Designs Tracker. When the sunlight hits this bird it is a beautiful blue, in the shadows they almost appear black.

See more images online at owllightnews.com/songbirds-a-celebration/

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Sedges from page 18

We would consider it a great mistake to have it tied up by the federal government for any kind of conservation purposes.” Such arguments prevailed, for Potter Swamp became some of the most productive agricultural land in the region. Unfortunately, its story was repeated in other mucklands.

The promoters of “Save Bergen Swamp” were more successful, beginning in 1935 when garden clubs helped create the Bergen Swamp Preservation Society. The Society is still active, and in time 2,000 acres of the Bergen-Byron Swamp in Genesee County were designated as the nation’s first National Natural Landmark in 1964. More than 10,000 acres west of Bergen Swamp was designated the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge in 1958, but much of the “Great Tonawanda Swamp” (glacial Lake Tonawanda of 11,000 years ago) had been converted to muckland farming. A complex of state wildlife management areas adds another 8,000 acres of protected area, most of it wetlands, between Buffalo and Rochester.

I was fascinated by Potter Swamp (in Yates and Ontario counties) when I heard about it, and now I’ve concluded it is our twelfth Finger Lake, hiding in plain sight. When filled with water, “Potter Lake” would have been twice the size of modern-day Honeoye Lake. Like the ghostly arm of Y-shaped Canandaigua Lake, 15,000 or 20,000 years ago it probably held a shallow basin of open water, collecting sediments from Flint Creek. Eventually reeds and sedges (and when the water level lowered, trees) would have filled the valley we know today as Potter Swamp, a “muckland” that’s not been a swamp since it was drained more than 50 years ago.

Everyone who enjoys observing nature can be grateful that other “swamps” in Western New York escaped that fate. Across our region, we can still observe wetlands at the southern end of most “fingers,” Honeoye Inlet Wildlife Management Area and Queen Catherine Marsh being nice examples. We have Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, a stopover for migrating birds, at the north end of Cayuga Lake—all great places to look for sedges and other wetland plants. Chances are, though, you can find fascinating sedges in your backyard, or as close as the next lake or pond. Don’t forget—check for edges when looking for sedges! 🦉



Carex, May 31, 2020

Sedges are as attractive in ornamental plantings as in the wild, especially when in flower. Brown male and green female spikes are visible on this plant, in separate inflorescences (a group or cluster of flowers arranged on a stem that is composed of a main branch or a complicated arrangement of branches).

All sedge photos courtesy of Sally White.

Sally L White, a recent transplant from Colorado, is still adjusting her botanical expectations to this new environment. Although she grew up in the Southern Tier, that was before she studied botany in college and grad school. Much is familiar but she finds even more to remember and relearn. This column is part of her effort to expand her understanding of our local flora.