



# OWLLIGHT

Q3  
2022

Where Inspiration & Inquiry Converge



## At the Races

JACQUELYN PATERSON

**“You’re out,” said Doc Pritchard to Jimmy John. “She ain’t right.”**

**J**immy John saw Doc Pritchard cross something off his clipboard and figured he was crossing Bamboo Curtain off the list of horses for the race.

“She’s scratched now, Jimmy John,” Doc Pritchard said. “You better take her back to the barn.”

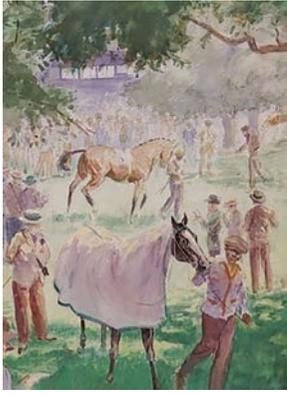
Jimmy John put his head down. Mr. Parker was goin’ to be upset.

It was 1936, a glorious Sarasota summer day with a good-sized crowd standing around the edges of the paddock watching the race horses parade by them in the hazy sun. The years of financial hard-

ship were starting to let up, and the crowd was eager for some horse racing excitement.

Mr. Parker had sent Jimmy John to take Bamboo Curtain to the paddock while he smoothed the ruffled feathers of the impatient owners.

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**At the Races** – JACQUELYN PATERSON

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**Sunwise** – KAY KING

The image on this issue's cover is *In the Paddock* by William Dowling, part of the Genesee Valley Council on the Arts New Deal art collection, and the chosen painting for their 2022 writing competition. The competition challenges writers to use a painting chosen by the staff at GVCA as inspiration for a short story. In support of GVCA and the selected authors, we have printed the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners of the 2022 writing contest. here. We will also post the stories online (along with the 3<sup>rd</sup> place story–Fair and Square by David James Delaney). You can also read all three stories (and learn more about GVCA) at [gvartscouncil.org](http://gvartscouncil.org).

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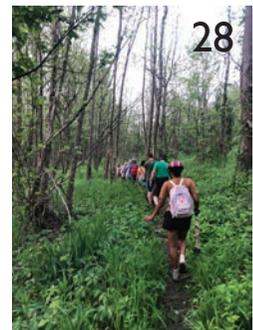
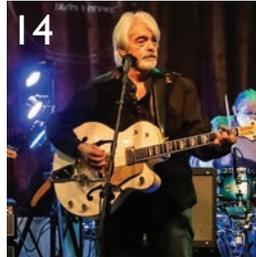
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# The OWL LIGHT

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## From the Editor

### Readers—the Heart of the Owl

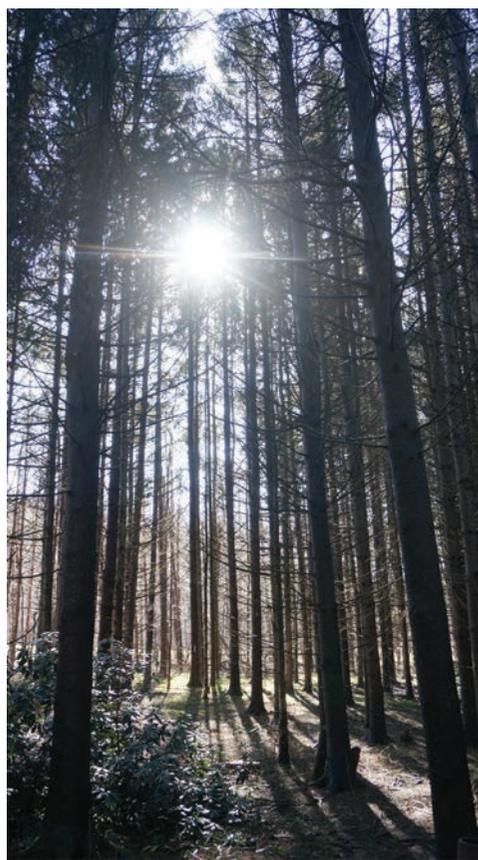
In April of 2022, *Owl Light* celebrated five years in print. Looking back, it is so amazing that we could build from a few early writers into a magazine filled with an abundance of diverse and wonderful voices. I was humbled—continue to be humbled—by how many people have chosen to be a part and have given so much.

Hoping to keep the literary light alive and strong as 2022 rapidly unfolded, we explored new ways to evolve and continue printing. So many readers have shared how much they enjoy the new quarterly magazine. We love it too. Longtime subscribers renewed and new subscribers joined in the *Owl Light*. Early sponsors continued to trust us to spread the word about their fantastic businesses and organizations and new sponsors joined in. With every affirmation, we poured more of ourselves into things—as did the many regular and guest contributors.

We had no illusions in 2017 when we published our first issue and have no regrets with the time and money invested in bringing the *Owl Light* alive, in carrying it through these past five years. If we could see a way of gradually stepping back while others stepped in, of keeping print sustainable, we would put in more time to make that transition. If someone else wanted to carry the *Owl Light* forward, we would share in the continuing journey. The reality is that few want to take on such a monumental project. Print is becoming less and less feasible and we simply can't imagine creating and sharing *Owl Light* or *Owl Light Literary* as digital-only publications (the path many small presses are taking).

So, dear readers, it is with sadness and a heavy heart that I tell you that our Q4 issue, out in early October, will be our final *Owl Light*. We are so happy that you have been a part of the journey and we appreciate all those who have supported us in so many ways. We hope you enjoy this issue and our final issue. As we have said from the very first issue (something that has become a bit of an inside joke but that really has proven true) “our next *Owl Light* will be the **best issue yet!**”

*D.E. Bentley, Editor*



The final *Owl Light* will be out in print early October. Our online site will stay live into 2023, with an archive of articles, stories, poems, and sponsors from our five plus years in print.

Canadice Press will remain and future projects are not out of the question, after a lengthy break! We have ended all auto send invoices. If your subscription is due (*check spam*), you can pay for just the final two copies. If you have any questions (or if your subscription ran into 2023 and you would like a refund) please call (leave a message) or send an email.

Thank you everyone for loving the *Owl!*  
*Darlene and Todd*

# PATHWAYS TO DEMOCRACY



DOUG GARNAR

## Public Parks and Gardens as Democratic Spaces

“Allow nature’s peace to flow into you as sunshine flows into a tree”

— John Muir

Many years ago, I spent some time in New York’s Central Park on my lunch breaks, while working for the NY Telephone Company during the summers. Years later I would travel to Louisville to visit my older brother. While there I would ride a bike every day to Cherokee Park. The common denominator between both parks is that they were among some 100 parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. Olmsted was a curious 19th century American (b. 1822; d. 1903) who among other things was a farmer, surveyor, world traveler, Civil War health administrator, and a fierce social critic of slavery. Olmsted is, perhaps, best remembered as the father of American Landscape Architecture. Among other things, he envisioned parks as a place for all social classes to enjoy the beauty of nature and as a catalyst for the human imagination.

Each of Broome County Public Parks embodies some of Olmsted’s guiding principles. In a 2021 *Owl Light* column I talked about the creation of a Children’s Peace Garden in Otsiningo Park. The garden, located near the children’s playground, is dedicated to the memory of all children murdered in war, acts of genocide, and domestic violence. In addition to flowers, herbs, a Linden tree, and several benches for people to sit on, it also has a little school lending library filled with children’s books that can be taken home to read. The garden is the work of the Veterans for Peace (VFP) – Chapter 90, Binghamton NY, and Broome County Peace Action (BCPA). The county has been very supportive of the garden since its inception.

The Peace Garden is also a catalyst for activities related to peace and social justice as well as fostering a love for nature. Recently, VFP/BCPA worked with the Theodore Elementary school to have their entire 3rd grade class (60



students) plant small red oak saplings in honor of Arbor Day. Preceding the actual planting, the students had a story read to them, *Mr Goethe’s Garden*. The book is a story of a growing relationship between an inquisitive young girl and the famous German playwright and scholar J. Wolfgang von Goethe. While a piece of fiction, it captures through observation the journey of plants from seeds to flowers and back to seeds. The book was well received by the 3rd graders and the following day, despite light showers, the children – with help from their teachers, some park’s people and people from VFP/BCPA – planted some 60 red oak saplings.



Left: Children planting trees; Above: enjoying the Peace Park. Photos by John Patterson



Left: Judy McMahon as Julia Ward Howe  
Above: Ed Nizalowski performing at the Mother's Day event at the Peace Park.  
Photos by Vera Scroggins

A second event held the following day near the Children's Peace Garden was the dramatic reading (by Judy McMahon) of Julia Ward Howe's 1870 Mother's Day Proclamation. Appalled by four years of a bloody Civil War, Howe's Proclamation was a plea to promote peace and to protect our beloved children. A flute transcription of "Spring" from Vivaldi's *Seasons* was played by Ed Nizalowski. Some 25 people attended the event. This is the second year VFP/BCPA have hosted this Mother's Day celebration at the Peace Park. VFP started reading the Howe Proclamation 15 years ago (first in downtown Binghamton at the Court House then a church and now the Park) so it has become a long tradition.



VFP/BCPA continues to add trees adjacent to the garden. Last August a Linden tree was bought and planted but it lost most of the top half of its leaves before the month was out. We are grateful that nature and the Linden shows us great resilience as this spring the tree has fully leafed out from top to bottom. We chose the Linden tree because it is a symbol of love and compassion and some Linden trees are over a millennium old.

On my first post Covid bike ride to the park, I spotted the park's resident snapping turtle, perched along the embankment where children a week earlier had planted red oak saplings. Such turtles can live 70-100 years and this turtle has seen some interesting civic uses of the park during its lifetime!

of their skin color. Just ten days later, nineteen students and two teachers were killed by an eighteen-year-old at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas.

Public Parks as democratic spaces can not end such tragedies but I take solace in Albert Schweitzer's observation:

"Never say there is nothing beautiful in the world anymore. There is always something to make you wonder on the shape of a tree, the trembling of a leaf." ❧

\* *Mother's Day was originally intended as a time to promote peace and protect beloved children from war.*

• Questions or observations about this column may be directed to Doug Garnar at [garnardc@sunybroome.edu](mailto:garnardc@sunybroome.edu)

## At the Races from front

Jimmy John walked over to the tree where he left his kit, threw a light sheet over Bamboo Curtain, picked up his kit and towel, and led the mare away from the paddock.

Ralph Sims, Bamboo Curtain's rider, was standing under a tree chewing a toothpick and watching this exchange, wondering what was wrong. They hadn't called for riders up yet, but Jimmy John was leading Bamboo Curtain away from the circle of parading horses, and it looked like he was heading back to the barn.

Damn, thought Ralph, there goes my ride. Again.

Jimmy John looked at Ralph as he walked by and shook his head.

"She don' look right. Doc done kicked her out," Jimmy John said softly. "Don' knows why she ain't right."

Ralph Sims shook his head in disgust.

Jimmy John led Bamboo Curtain along the gravel path back to the barn, trying to watch her walk over his shoulder.

She don' seem like he' self, he thought. She should' a' perk up when she got to the paddock and saw the othe' horses. This mare love to run. Run flat out eve'y chance she get. Ears pinned back, nose stuck out and runnin' with all her heart like her soul was on fire. But every time she come to the paddock, she get sent back to the barn.

Mr. Parker goin'be mad.

Jimmy John led Bamboo Curtain into her stall, peeled off the sheet, and ran his hands over her legs. Nothin'.

"What the hell is going on with this mare?" boomed Mr. Parker over the stall half door. The owners, Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie, appeared behind him, glowering.

"We've had it," Mr. Ronnie said, in Mr. Parker's direction." This mare is useless. We never should have bought

her, and I blame you for picking out a bad horse."

Mrs. Ronnie, lips pursed, was behind Mr. Ronnie nodding her head in agreement, the flowers on her hat flapping in concert.

"Wait a minute," said Mr. Parker. "She's really a fast horse. There's something wrong. I need to figure it out."

"You're darn right there's something wrong," said Mr. Ronnie. "You picked a bad horse. This is the last time I go to the paddock to get embarrassed in front of my friends who came to watch my horse race. This is the third time that mare has been thrown out. I want her gone."

"Wait," pleaded Mr. Parker. "Give her a chance. Let me figure out what's wrong."

"I know what's wrong! This horse was a bad investment. I want my money back."

Mr. Ronnie said. "You better get me what I paid for her. In the meantime, she's on your tab."

"Wait," pleaded Mr. Parker. Jimmy John could hear the starter's gun in the distance and the roar of the crowd as the race started. Mr. Ronnie pointed a finger at Bamboo Curtain, looked at Mr. Parker and said, "Gone." He took Mrs. Ronnie by the arm and they strode away.

Mr. Parker turned back to Jimmy John and repeated, "What the hell is wrong with this horse?"

"Don' know, boss," said Jimmy John calmly. "You know she fast. She don' look right, but I ain't find nothin'."

Mr. Parker shook his head. "I'm not paying for a truck to take her home. You'll have to lead her," said Mr. Parker.

"Yes Boss," said Jimmy John. He knew there was no sense arguing when Mr. Parker was stirred up like this.

It was five miles back to the farm, a long walk for a mare that didn't feel right.

Jimmy John looked at Bamby, his pet name for her, and noticed she was sweaty around the middle. She had peed twice since she got in the stall and drank all her water; the bucket was empty.

That was odd.

Now that Jimmy John took a closer look at her without the sheet, he noticed that her middle was big, sticking out like she was going to have a baby, but she wasn't pregnant and hadn't looked that way yesterday.

Why was she drinking all that water?

Jimmy John sat down to watch her for a few minutes and fell asleep against the front of the stall.

It was dark. He heard voices. For a minute he wasn't sure where he was. His legs had fallen asleep. Bamby was sleeping standing up in the back of the stall. He could just make out the shape of her head in the dark.

"It worked," Jimmy John heard a male voice say as he walked by the front of the stall. "I got to the hay again and snuck in the water."

A second voice said, "We would have been screwed with that mare in the race."

"Don't worry," the first voice said. "They don't know what's going on."

"Good," said the second voice as it faded into the distance. A few minutes later Jimmy John heard an old truck fire up and pull away.

Jimmy John recognized both voices.

He sat still for another ten minutes until he was sure they were gone and no one else was around. Got to the hay. What did *that* mean?

He spoke to Bamby so as not to startle her when he got up. It took a few minutes for his legs to wake up, but once they did, he rose to his feet and looked outside.

No one was in sight. There was almost a full moon, enough to see that the race grounds were empty.

Jimmy John hooked a lead rope to

Bamby's halter and started the long walk home.

She stopped to pee twice on the way home.

Jimmy John was starting to form a theory.

The next day, Bamby seemed more like herself, streaking a round the pasture and challenging the other horses to play.

A few days later, Ralph Sims was due to work a three-year-old on the farm. When Jimmy John saw Ralph, he headed over to talk to him.

"What's wrong with that Bamboo Curtain mare?" asked Ralph.

"She been wate'logged," said Jimmy John.

"I know you know better than to give her water before a race. How did she get waterlogged?" asked Ralph.

"Oh," said Jimmy John, "I think she had a little bitty he'p."

Ralph whistled softly.

"Does Parker know?" asked Ralph.

"Nope," said Jimmy John.

"You gonna tell him?" asked Ralph.

"I got an idea," said Jimmy John. He spent the next ten minutes explaining his plan to Ralph.

It took a lot of talking, but two weeks later Ralph had convinced Mr. Parker to give Bamboo Curtain one more try at the next race meet in the interest of getting her sold.

Jimmy arrived at the race meet grounds the day before the race to allow Bamby to settle in. He prepared her stall and generally made his presence known until late afternoon, when he made a point of leaving.

After dark, he crept back and slept in the front of her stall.

About 3 am, someone lobbed an arm load of hay into Bamby's stall.

Jimmy John waited for the footsteps to retreat and then touched the hay; it was wet and felt gritty. He smelled the grit and touched it to his tongue, salt. He removed the hay and

replaced it with one flake of clean hay.

Jimmy John moved into the empty stall next door to Bamby.

At 3:30, someone entered Bamby's stall and filled her bucket with water.

When the footsteps retreated, Jimmy John went into the stall and emptied the bucket, then returned to the stall next door.

At 4, someone filled Bamby's water bucket again.

When the coast was clear, Jimmy John emptied the bucket again.

At 7, Jimmy John stood up in the stall next door like he had been in there cleaning, wheeled the cart out and checked on Bamby. No swollen stomach.

The race was set to go off at 10 am.

Jimmy John spent the morning grooming Bamby and staying within sight of the stall.

When a couple of competitors wandered by and asked how Bamby was doing, Jimmy John nodded and calmly answered, "She mighty fine."

About 9:30, Jimmy John tacked up Bamboo Curtain and led her over to parade around the paddock before the race.

Doc Pritchard watched her closely when she entered the paddock, prancing with her head held high, kicking out every now and then in a display of good spirits.

"Looks good," said Doc Pritchard with a nod.

Jimmy John smiled and nodded to Ralph Sims, who nodded back.

Jimmy John led Bamboo Curtain around the paddock until Doc Pritchard yelled, "Riders up."

Mr. Parker stepped up and gave Ralph Sims a leg up onto the mare's back.

"All set?" Mr. Parker asked Jimmy John with a wink.

"All set, Boss," Jimmy John said, "and I hopes you bet a packet on her."

"Heck, I got your wages on her and

the price to buy her," Mr. Parker said with a smile.

Jimmy John could hardly control Bamboo Curtain while leading her up to the starting line. When Ralph nodded, he let go.

There were six horses in the race. Their toughest competition was a big bay stallion named Charger, who had been favored to win lately. He was often featured before the race in the middle of the paddock as the favorite.

Charger's groom, Chester, had the horse's mane and tail braided, all spit-and-polished for the race.

Charger's owner was a lawyer who owned several race horses and used the race community to troll for clients for his legal practice. The lawyer expected to win. But he was looking pretty worried, pointing at Bamboo Curtain and elbowing his trainer.

Ralph could barely hold Bamboo Curtain at the starting line.

It took a few minutes to get all the horses pointed in the same direction in something that resembled a line.

The starter's gun fired and the horses became a blur of pounding horseflesh and thundering hooves.

Once the horses were off, the crowd cheered and rushed to the fence along the side of the race course.

The race was a full two miles over a huge turf field on the side of a gently sloping hill. It took two laps of the course to complete the race. The finish line was in front of the crowd.

Ralph had a fight on his hands to keep Bamboo Curtain under control.

Charger had gone straight to the front of the field, as was his preference.

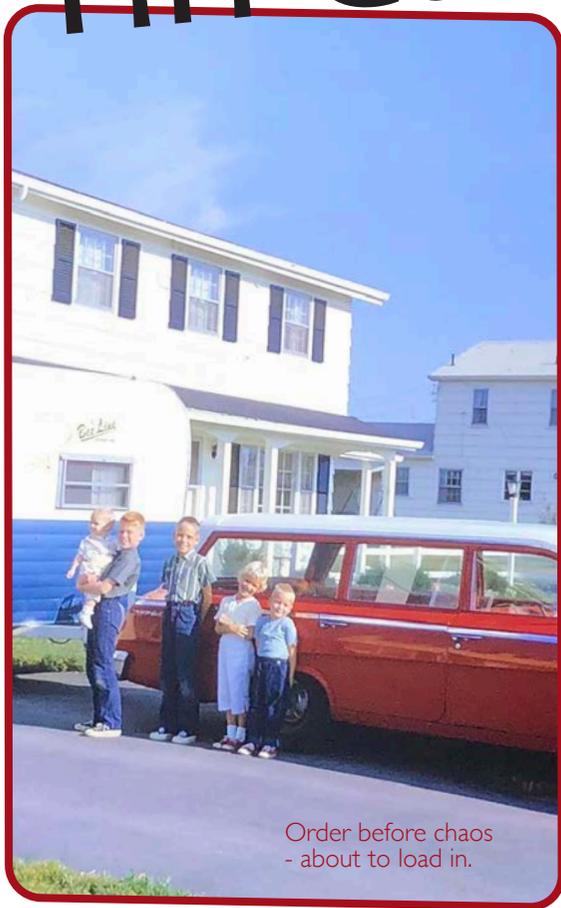
The first quarter of the race was riders jockeying their horses to find the ideal position while they ate up the ground.

Bamboo Curtain held to fourth place as they swept by the cheering crowd halfway through the race.

Continued on page 19

# Tin Can Optimists

ANNE RUFLIN



I have no idea what they were thinking, or perhaps thinking had nothing to do with it. Maybe Dad, just past his 40th birthday, was having a sort of midlife crisis — craving an adventure beyond tedious business trips between Rochester Products and the GM factory in Detroit.



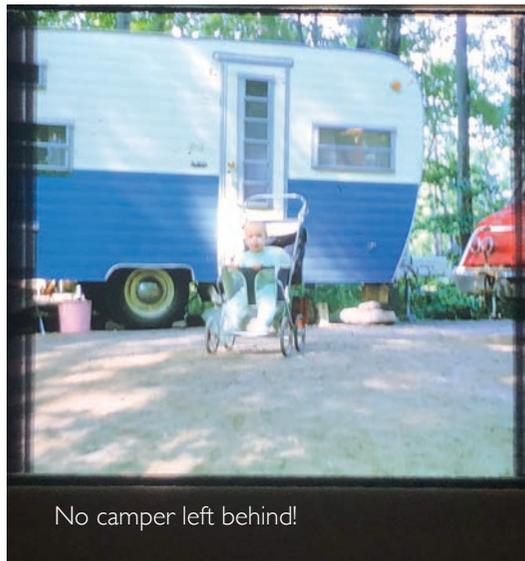
Maybe Mom, having spent a significant part of the past decade either pregnant, giving birth, recovering from childbirth, or attempting to civilize the five wild beings she had birthed, was simply exhausted and willing to do anything to get out.

Perhaps the brochure Dad picked up on his way home from work for the rental of a 1965 Bee Line 13-foot Hornet Travel Trailer is what hooked them: “*Make a BeeLine Escape*” and “*Leave Home and Like It!*”

And so, it was done. The trailer was rented for the last week of June, just after school let out and before peak summer prices. Our campsite on the shore of Lake Ontario was reserved. Our first family vacation was about to happen! We were going to be real Tin Can Tourists!

My parents, elated at the prospect of finally getting away and certain of the wonderful memories they would create, delved into planning the trip with gusto. Using a combination of welding, wiring, and the ever-ubiquitous duct tape, Dad rigged up our cherry-red Chevy station wagon with a trailer hitch. Mom masterminded filling her allotted 180 square feet with enough food, clothing, toiletries, towels, toys, and accessories to sustain our family of seven for a week — since once there, she would have no access to shopping or laundry. Her packing consumed our dining room table for days. Under no circumstances were any of us kids to add to or take away from the sacred packing pile. Even the cat knew better than to touch it.

On the designated Saturday morning, Dad went and picked up the camper while Mom lined us up for post breakfast inspection. Teeth brushed? Check. Hair combed? Check. Bags packed? Check. Dad rolled in. We kids stood back. This was not a time to offer help. Instead, we watched, observing Mom's skills in "making do" and Dad's engineering brilliance as they stuffed the camper and car to the brim. Even baby Joan's full-sized highchair and stroller were tucked in someplace. Finally, we could get in and go! Seatbelts and car seats were not a thing back then, so we kids just crammed into any open nook available, including on top of baggage or each other's laps. We could have been the promotional poster for Ralph Nader's newly published book *Unsafe at Any Speed*. That just



added to the excitement.

Fully loaded and hooked up, the car sagged and the engine coughed as Dad put it into gear. Mom's hand went to her mouth. Was it too much? But the groaning did not worry Dad any more than the prospect of being confined with his bustling family in a 13-foot trailer for a week. We were off!

The little camper was meant to be a step up from a tent and promised to sleep up to four people. This limit did not deter my parents with their family of seven. Baby Joan was not quite a year old, and Dad expertly wedged a wood

slat across the opening of an upper shelf to create sort of a "cubby crib".

The dinette turned into a small bed that could sleep my brother Scott and I, ages 4 and 5. There was a bench seat that jackknifed into something almost the size of a twin bed, which my parents decided could fit them both if they slept head to foot instead of side by side. Sleeping bags and air mattresses were brought along so my brothers, Tom and Mike, ages 9 and 10, could sleep in the back of the station wagon. While leaving your young sons to sleep unattended in the back of a car would get you arrested today, in 1965 that was no problem.

I'm sure my parents imagined we would simply spend hours at the beach or playing in the woods, a fun outdoors adventure. We wouldn't even notice the small, cramped quarters of the camper, because we would rarely be in it. But Mother Nature did not cooperate. On our first walk to the beach, wind blew hard and sand quickly filled our shoes, our hair, our eyes, our mouths, and our clothes. Tiny pebbles stung our legs and made us cry. It was too cold and wavy and windy to swim, so we hung around the campsite, slapping and swatting at the relentless black flies and mosquitos and playing in the dirt. Within hours we were all filthy and bug bitten, and we stayed that way for the duration of the trip.

Mom sprayed our campsite so often with a giant can of bug spray, that we ate, slept, and played under a persistent cloud of DEET. It stayed unseasonably cold. Dad tried to cheer us with campfires, but the campsite wood was damp and green and refused to burn hot, even when doused with lighter fluid. Our eyes burned with toxic smoke; our marshmallows barely toasted. Our woodland adventures

Continued on page 11

**Bee Line**   
**13 FT. WASP**

**WASP SPECIFICATIONS**  
 Overall length 13'; Width 5'6"; Interior height 5'2"; 3" tubular frame; Double construction throughout; Completely insulated; Two-tone exterior color at no extra cost; 7 large opening windows; Roof vent; 5' poly foam furniture with deluxe fabric; Large wardrobe; Mirror; Birch plywood interior; Canvas bunk; Waste tank and pump; Gas light; Large ice box; Stove canopy.  
 Options: Gas refrigerator; Furnace; Full screen door; Extra canvas bunk; Bunkover also available.

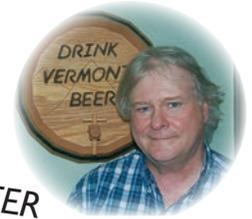
**13 FT. HORNET**  
**HORNET SPECIFICATIONS**  
 Overall length 12 ft.; Width 78 inches; Interior height 5 ft. 8 inches; Roof clearance 7 inches; 6"0x15 tires; Finest quality construction includes 3" tubular frame; Double constructed floor; Pre-finished aluminum exterior with five opening windows; Ceiling vent; Gas light; Two burner stove; Sink with drain; Poly foam furniture; Water tank; Full wardrobe; Large ice box; Mirror; Sleeps five with optional canvas bunks.

**Bee Line**  
 Make every week-end a vacation

**ONLY 78" HIGH! STORES IN MOST GARAGES!**

# NOT WHAT I EXPECTED!

KURT STAUDTER



## The Marijuana Laws they are a-Changin'

In my retirement I've gotten to spend time doing things I would never had done while I was still working for the electric company. Working for National Grid meant a commercial drivers license and being in a pool for random drug and alcohol testing. You'd get told in the morning that you're guilty, now go to the clinic and give your sample and prove you're innocent. If you tested positive: well, you didn't want to test positive. You could lose your job, and there was nothing the union could do to help you.

Here in Vermont the marijuana laws changed and opened up the rules to include recreational use in addition to the already legal medicinal use. So the summer before retirement a friend of my son's gave me some seeds, and much to my surprise they grew. By the end of the season my two legal mature plants had tons of flowers (buds) and after harvest I had more pot than I've ever seen in one place. My wife Patti just rolled her eyes and remarked, "It's like living with a high school kid from the 1970s."

In Vermont, like recently in New York, the legislature has provided for a recreational marketplace, and then, turned it over to newly formed Cannabis Control Boards to write the rules. Towns around the state voted to permit a retail cannabis shop, and we're slowly marching towards the October 2022 date for retail recreational sales. In New York this year is also the go-live date for the recreational market.

You'd get told in the morning that you're guilty, now go to the clinic and give your sample and prove you're innocent.

In my second year of growing I had the best crop yet. They were tall, bushy, and had the most wonderful smell. Then something happened. The leaves turned yellow and fell off, and all that was left were the flowers. Harvest was a bust. I would later learn that it wasn't a pest, but a lack of nitrogen that KOed my plants.

So, where did I learn this? You're not going to believe it, and there's a wonderful irony here, but after decades of the war on drugs, it was the federal government that during the pandemic was providing money for career training. I'd already taken a class from the University of Vermont on artisanal cheese through the program, and now I signed up for a Cannabis Plant Biology class. And you guessed it; it was not what I expected.

Do you remember the first time the subject matter in school was so challenging that you were almost overwhelmed? While the cheese class was full of great information, it was somewhat fundamental. It only went for a month, and things like tastings are subjective, with no right or wrong answers. The Cannabis class was going to run for eight weeks, and in the first week we were treated to the optional download titled, *The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research*.

I was going to have to dust off my thinking cap for this one.

First a little background which is where the class started. Fact 1: Cannabis and hemp are the same plant. The only difference is a definition provided by the federal government. In order to be classified as hemp a Cannabis plant must contain less than 0.3 percent THC, or the major psychoactive component. Fact 2: Conventional wisdom says there are three species of Cannabis, Sativa, Indica, and Ruderalis, but according to scientists, because the plant is pollinated by the winds there has been so much interbreeding that genetically the plants are indistinguishable. The fact is that there is just one Cannabis species, and selective breeding has led to strains with different attributes. For example: Some breed for higher CBD content, while others breed for higher THC content. To be declared as a separate species one also has to breed exclusively with the same species and with Cannabis there's interbreeding.

The new cannabis industry is currently going through some growing pains. The federal government doesn't recognize it as an industry yet, and makes it hard to do research to answer important questions. For example: What level of pesticides on smoked marijuana is safe? Reform of the cannabis industry is happening on a state-by-

Continued on page 11

## Tin Can Tourists from 9

were limited to trips to the bathhouse—following a muddy and root-filled footpath to a low cinderblock building where snails lived in the showers and some sort of mold inhabited the toilets. None of us dared ask what made the floor so slick.

The two younger kids did their fair share of crying and whining at the discomfort of it all. The three of us old enough to complain did that, too. I complained—with the fault-finding particular to age five—about the risky nature of putting baby Joan on a shelf, that Scott kept finding dead things to poke at with a stick on the road, and about sleeping on a bed that was really a table.

Mike and Tom complained—with the tumbling ferocity particular to young boys—about the horrors and grave discomforts of sleeping in the back of the car. Finally, Mom and Dad traded places with them. And the next morning Mom and Dad agreed with the boys' initial assessments. The shadows and sounds of the night woods were creepy. The car was not level and there was no way to get comfort-

able in it. Still, the slanted back of the creepy station wagon was better than the jackknifed camper bench bed, so Mom and Dad slept in the car the rest of the week, leaving us five kids in the Beeline.

By the end of the week none of us was speaking or crying anymore. Dad was smoking double his normal number of cigarettes. Mom's lips had compressed into a stoic line. There was no use in complaining. We had settled into life as tin can refugees, sullen and silent.

As we packed up and pulled out, Mom broke the silence. "Won't it feel nice to be in our own beds?" Dad laughed, "yes, sometimes the best part of a trip is how great it feels when it's over."

Although that was to be our one and only camper trip, having a summer adventure the last week of June became a family tradition. Year after year my parents would find another trip of a lifetime, and year after year their tin can optimism remained unspoiled—full of humor, adventure, and resilience. Eventually we kids learned to open it up, take a heaping spoonful, and savor it. ✎

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## Marijuana from 10

state basis, while every state is playing catch-up with determining best practices. One great example of the differences between New York and Vermont is that in New York they're running an effective ad campaign to educate the public on the subject. The New York "Cannabis Conversations" include topics like locking up your stash and keeping it safe from kids, don't let passengers smoke in your car, and also discouraging kids from use while their brains are developing. My side of the state line is doing nothing to educate the public.

Not regulated as a drug or a food by the feds, it's considered a dietary supplement. Read that as it's like the Wild Wild West. Right now there is no regulation and enforced quality control for the cannabis industry. Recent high profile investigative reporting has uncovered CBD oil product labeling inaccuracies at an alarming rate. Let's just say that the likelihood that the label is correct happens well, less than

half of the time.

One would hope that there is better testing of the medicinal supply; yet there are also documented cases of contamination with mold found in medicinal supplies. Also, like what was mentioned earlier, there are no national standards for the levels of pesticides or heavy metals. While the laws in most states provide for some level of testing, what are needed are national standards for what's safe. Here's where we see a Catch-22: while all sorts of testing is needed, there are just a handful of labs that do this work. Here in Vermont we have three labs, and one is run by the state and doesn't take outside samples. A quick aside: as part of the class, my final project was to write a business plan for a testing lab, and the initial projections are quite promising. Yet, like everything in this new industry there are just too many unknowns.

We had two great professors that took the lead in this class, Biologist Dr. Monique McHenry, and clinician Dr. Linda Klumpers, and lots of wonderful guest lecturers. However, the best part

of this class came because of my fellow students. While I'm just a beginner at this, there were so many very talented growers from all over the country in this class. Perhaps the biggest eye-opener is the fact that so much of the generally accepted knowledge about Cannabis is anecdotal; slowly because of the federal control of research, as more scientific papers get written we are now sorting fact from fiction.

There was also a preview of the next big thing in the way of medicines from Mother Nature: Doc Klumpers gave two wonderful lectures on fungal chemicals and psilocybin, better known as "Magic Mushrooms." I couldn't believe how much research has been done already, and what a promising drug this might be for curing chronic depression. Early research shows a connection with psilocybin rewiring the brain to be less susceptible to bouts of depression.

While the first Cannabis scientific papers that I read were over my head, as I read more they began to make more

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# SMALL TOWN HOUND <sup>Æsc</sup>



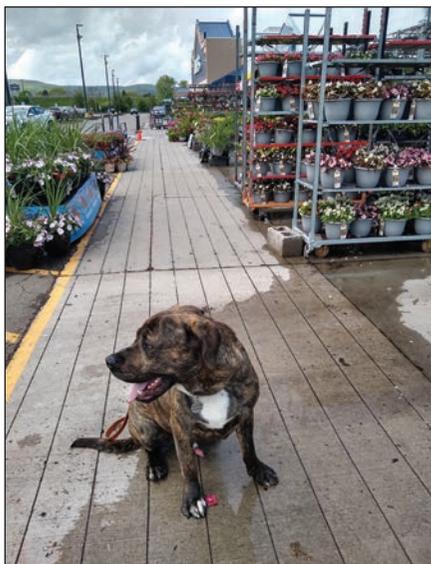
## Travels to Ithaca and Home Sweet Home

I have a somewhat low agonistic threshold — not to be confused with agnostic (although I am still debating whether or not I believe in a higher Dog). Low agonistic threshold is a fancy way of saying that weird things freak me out. Things like piles of icky smelling stuffed animals at the thrift store (scent overload)! Or too much traffic along a roadway (urban overload). Given this, I like quiet, open spaces best. My humans are great with this. They still take me tons of places but they watch me and give me time to become familiar with new things.

This defines, at times, the places we visit. I do get to go on road trips and our recent travels took us to Ithaca, NY. My main human (not that I have a favorite) is from this area and she sometimes enjoys a visit. In this case, the humans were looking for some thin slate (red) and a kind of clay to fix the bridge between the little and big ponds. We stopped at the Ithaca Agway for the clay ( which ended up taking up some of my back seat space when it started raining on the drive and the clay needed to come inside). Some of my favorite places are grain stores (we often go to Penn Yan for the chicken grain) and this was no exception. I loved walking around inside and checking out the new chicks and walking along the loading dock.



Agway in Ithaca Photos D.E. Bentley



Lowes in Big Flats, NY.

Speaking of plants, my humans love to collect them (and yell at me when I pee on the special ones). The only thing they like collecting more is piles of rocks. So, these obsessions lead us to places like RTI Auctions in Geneseo. There are people and much excitement when the auctions are live (almost too much sometimes).

We went from there to the Lowes in Big Flats, as they seemed to be the only place with red slate. I love walking around in these big home improvement places. There is room to roam and so many people – I love people! My human uses the rows to work with me on my heeling and obedience skills—left, right, left, left, sit, drop, wait...it really is more fun than it sounds and there are doggie treats involved. I waited outside the garden center at the Lowes while the humans added weight to the truck.



Above and Top Right: Me at the RTI Auction site.



Lately when we have visited there were only a few people there and we just walked around and looked at things. I got to climb up on some rocks too... always fun. Sometimes, when they find more rocks, plants, or other things that they want but don't want to move, we get a visit from Karl the truck guy. He is clearly into dogs (although the humans were away when he last visited, so all I could do was wave a paw from inside the fence).



My most favorite outings ever are the walks with Winnie closer to home. We visit Canadice Lake regularly and look out at the water. The last couple times we have enjoyed watching the goose families swim about. Of all the places we travel and visit, this is where I most feel at home (because it is, in fact, my home). I am a truly lucky dog! 🐾



• [facebook.com/SmallTownHoundNY](https://facebook.com/SmallTownHoundNY)

Mentioned in this piece:

**Ithaca Agway & True Value**  
213 S Fulton St, Ithaca  
[ithacaagway.com](http://ithacaagway.com)

**Lowe's of Big Flats**  
913 County RD, Rt 64, Elmira  
[lowes.com/store/NY-Elmira/0530](http://lowes.com/store/NY-Elmira/0530)

**RTI Auctions**  
6502 Barber Hill Rd, Geneseo  
[www.teitsworth.com/](http://www.teitsworth.com/)

## DAVID MICHAEL NIXON

### Your Sister Builds

You hear the sand open  
as your sister wields the small trowel.

She is building an elaborate  
castle, shaping it with trowel and hands.

She does not hurry, for the waves  
are hours away. She does not slow.

When she is done, the castle will stand  
in her mind, even after the waves.

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**David Michael Nixon** has had poems in many periodicals and some anthologies. He has had four chapbooks and two full-length books of poetry published. He is also an a cappella singer. He lives in Rochester, New York.

### Water Carrier

No water jar would balance on my head,  
but I can lug a bucket almost full,  
perhaps one in each hand, if not  
brimming. Though grace is good and strength,  
a stubborn will can heft the load,  
until grace comes.

I knew  
nothing blossoms  
without both sun and rain,  
but you were here, so I just brought  
the dirt.



# SIDE STREET SOUNDS

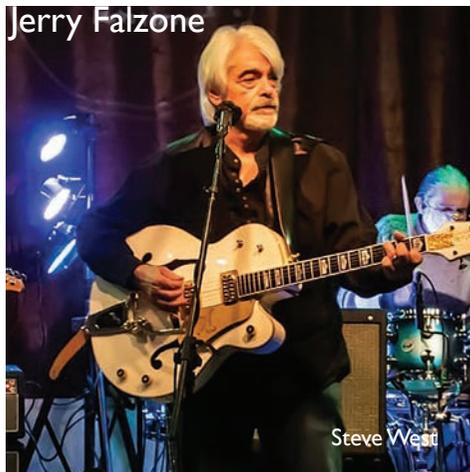
STEVE WEST

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

## Backstage Stories

Musicians are, at the heart of it all, storytellers. Some tell stories about their own lives and experiences, while others tell stories that are strictly works of fiction. A well crafted song can take the listener on a journey as vividly as any work of prose. This column is not about that.

When a group of peers in any profession gets together, talk often seems to turn to strange experiences.



Although it may seem as if many musicians put everything into their music, some of the best stories they tell are reserved for their fellow musicians after the amps are turned off and the audience has gone home. When a group of peers in any profession gets together, talk often seems to turn to strange experiences. At least I imagine that's the case with any profession. I can't rightly say I've ever seen a group of insurance actuaries sitting around laughing about the data they've been collating, but I digress. When you get a group of musicians together, sooner or later the conversation will come around to weird gigs. I recently asked some of my musician friends to tell me about their weirder experiences.

Jerry Falzone performs with his band, Liar's Moon, and is the owner of *One Eye Pup* promotions. In the 1980s he toured with the band, Pearl.

“My strange stories have more to do with getting to a gig or staying in a band house when I was on the road. We were scheduled to play at a club in Rousses Point NY on Lake Champlain. The band house was on the second story of the club where we were playing. When we arrived we noticed that in the main lobby area, the ceiling was filled with these yellow furry spiders. There were somewhere in the area of 100 of them. We couldn't let that happen so we got some kind of bug spray and eliminated the 'problem'. That is until the following night when the lobby was filled with perhaps a thousand other bugs. I realized that the spiders were keeping the insect population at bay. I have rarely killed a spider since then.”

Singer/songwriter Lisa Bigwood has been on the folk scene for several decades. She has released numerous albums and won several awards for her work at folk festivals.

“My record company sent me by mistake to a heavy metal conference in Philadelphia. I was kind of horrified. When I played



my set in some basement metal bar, I said, 'ok, people always complain to me that my stuff is too sad, too dark, tell me to smile more. But I think you can maybe take the worst that I've got, so I'm going to play all of the worst for you. See what you think.' I did, and they LOVED it. It was very freeing."

JoAnn Vacaro

Image courtesy of Carla Coots



Coots  
Insight Photo

Steve Lyons has been a guitarist on the Rochester music scene since the 1970's, most recently with Our Own Worst Enemy.

"I was on a tour of the Carolinas with The Legendary Dukes in the 1990s. We were supposed to play at a fancy club which suddenly closed. We ended up playing on flatbed trailer in the middle of a go-kart track. We had to load in between races from outside the fence. People came in pickup trucks to see the races. They'd honk their horns and flash their lights when we finished a song."

JoAnn Vaccaro is a guitarist and singer with the band, Hypnotic Clambake. She has also released several solo albums to critical acclaim.

"One of the weirder gigs I had was when I was playing with the group on a cruise ship. The Norovirus had come on board and we literally watched people get sick right in front of us while we played. (No, it wasn't our music, it was surely the virus). After that set I remember just running to the opposite side of the ship and dousing myself in Purell. It was also really weird to see the staff in hazmat suits with sanitizer backpacks spraying everything down at night. This was years before the pandemic, so it was an even weirder experience.

Many of my weird gig memories involve the cruise ship. Onboard there was a "crew" tv channel and the only movies that played (on repeat) were Titanic and The Poseidon adventure. Someone had a very sick sense of humor."

John Sachelli currently plays blues under the name Genesee Johnny. He hosts Son House Blues Night at The Record Archive on the last Thursday of each month.

"About 20 years ago, I was in a prog-rock band called Crystallon. We were the second band of a three band show at The Penny Arcade. The group that opened before us was two guys about 19, very early 20's. They played two or

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## Marijuana from II

sense, but this is just the beginning. I'm now getting new papers all the time, and long sought answers to questions are finally being revealed. Also, instead of trusting hearsay and non-scientific websites, there is a growing movement within this industry for greater professionalism and more collaboration with the scientists.

Recently, proposed changes at the federal level have renewed interest in this as a potential industry. The opening up banking will bring more investors, states are eagerly looking at Cannabis revenues to plug budget holes, and as more research is done the unknown will be revealed. Also, all Cannabis

products need to be tested for quality and accuracy; otherwise it will get the reputation as being just a modern day snake oil. This is especially true of the medical market where accuracy on the label is needed for proper dosing.

This is all new and very exciting, and instead of running headlong into this for a quick bump in taxes, (Don't worry, you'll get the money,) we should look at this as the creation of a new industry. We need to tread carefully here. Strict standards for quality control need to be set, and this can't be so over-regulated that we kill off the goose that's laying the golden eggs.

As a kid coming of age in the 1970s I always thought I'd see legalized Cannabis by the end of the decade, instead

we got the Dragon Lady and Ronnie Raygun's racist war on drugs. A half century later we're still waiting. Back a few years ago I was in Colorado and went into my first dispensary. Buzzed into the second floor office and a well dressed young lady rolled back the glass and pleasantly asked, "Will that be medicinal or recreational?"

Now in our two states we're going to get to answer that question. Just like with alcohol or any mind altering chemical there is the potential for abuse, and there's no doubt that some folks will take our new freedom to dark places. For the rest of us, it's the fact that it's legal that gives us all one less reason to be paranoid. Enjoy! ☘



## Artemis – NASA’s Next “Giant Leap”

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was established on July 26, 1958, and has engaged in countless exciting space missions over the past several decades. Many people are familiar with their well-known missions to the Moon and Mars: the Apollo program and specifically Apollo 11, an historic achievement when humans first stepped onto the surface of the Moon. There were also several Mars rover missions which successfully landed and explored the dusty, dry, cold surface of the red planet: Sojourner, the size of a microwave oven and the first vehicle to drive on the surface of Mars; Spirit and Opportunity, twin rovers whose performance and scientific discoveries far exceeded their original planned missions; Perseverance the most recent rover, along with Ingenuity its helicopter sidekick, both currently exploring the planet in unique ways. A great resource to learn more about all the NASA missions through the past 64 years can be found on their website at: [nasa.gov/missions](https://nasa.gov/missions).

Now NASA is embarking on an ambitious new mission to the Moon . . . and then to the planet Mars! Named Artemis, approximately 10,000 scientists, engineers, and technicians have worked on this history-making project.

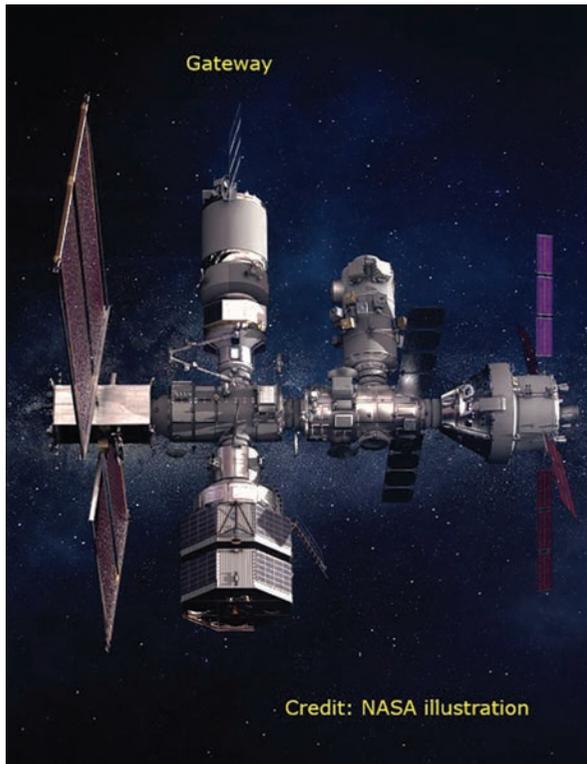
The NASA website states: “The Artemis program will lead humanity forward to the Moon and prepare us for the next giant leap, the exploration of Mars. We will collaborate with our commercial and international partners to establish the first long-term human and robotic presence on and around the Moon.” The statement continues: “NASA’s powerful new rocket, the Space Launch System (SLS), set to blast off from Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral will send astronauts



aboard the Orion spacecraft nearly a quarter-million miles from Earth into lunar orbit. Astronauts will dock their spacecraft Orion at the Gateway and transfer to a human landing system for expeditions to the surface of the Moon. They will return to the orbital outpost to board Orion again before returning safely to Earth.”

The Artemis program is comprised of the Space Launch System (SLS), the Orion spacecraft, and the Gateway. The SLS is the most powerful rocket in the world which will launch the Orion spacecraft on its journey from Earth to the Moon. It’s a vehicle capable of carrying 57,000 pounds as it lifts off and escapes Earth’s gravity.

Orion is the spacecraft which will eventually carry the astronauts to the Moon and return them to Earth with a splashdown landing in the Pacific Ocean.



The journey to the Moon will take several days. When it arrives, Orion will fly about 62 miles above the surface and then use the Moon's gravity to propel the spacecraft into a new retrograde orbit 40,000 miles from the Moon in the opposite direction the Moon orbits the Earth. It will stay in this orbit for approximately six days allowing mission controllers to collect data and evaluate Orion's performance.

Eventually a human crew will fly the Orion spacecraft around the Moon during the more advanced phase of the mission, Artemis II. The awe-inspiring culmination will be Artemis III when the first woman and next man will land and walk on the surface of the Moon. Humans haven't returned to the Moon since Apollo 17 when astronauts Eugene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt blasted off from the lunar surface on December 14, 1972, to return to Earth.

We will send human and robotic explorers to the Moon starting at the lunar south pole. Hints of water were detected there by previous lunar missions, but recent data from the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter has found specific areas where water is likely to exist in large permanently shadowed craters. Finding and using water and other resources on the Moon's surface will be crucial to learning how to survive and work on another celestial body in our solar system other than Earth.

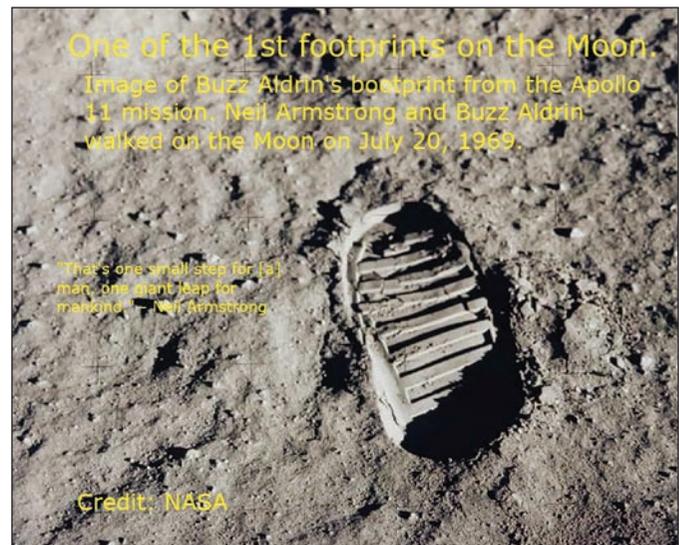
The plan is to build Gateway in orbit around the Moon and an Artemis Base Camp on the lunar surface. This will allow robots and astronauts to function in a higher capacity than ever before. The Orion spacecraft would dock at

NASA is working with commercial and international partners to establish the Gateway. This will be a multi-purpose orbiting outpost, similar but much smaller than the International Space Station, which will orbit around the Moon and serve as a base for a landing system to carry humans to the lunar surface for exploration.

The first part of the mission scheduled for late this summer is Artemis 1, an uncrewed lunar orbital test flight. The spacecraft will fly 280,000 miles from Earth, thousands of miles further than the Moon is from us (225,623 miles at its closest approach and 252,088 miles at its farthest) over a four-to-six-week mission traveling 1.4 million miles round-trip before returning to Earth. Entering the atmosphere at 24,500 miles per hour, it will test the heat shield which will reach temperatures of close to 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

In collaboration with NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), and private contractors, the goal of this test flight is to assure a safe launch, crew module reentry into Earth's atmosphere, splashdown, and recovery of the spacecraft.

The mission will also carry 13 CubeSats and deploy them to conduct science and technological research. Each CubeSat is a small satellite only four inches long weighing about three pounds with an individualized mini-mission to be developed by NASA, private companies, academic institutions, and international partners.



the Gateway and use a human landing craft to travel to the surface, then return to Gateway where the Orion spacecraft will bring the astronauts back to Earth.

When on a mission to the Moon, astronauts are only three days from the safety of Earth. It will be a completely different scenario when sending astronauts to Mars which can take up to three years to make the entire roundtrip journey.

The immediate future of space exploration will include the Artemis mission as it gathers a wealth of knowledge and experience. It will be an exciting time for humanity as it witnesses another "giant leap for mankind". 🦉

# WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE NIGHT SKY

**July 15:** A conjunction of the planet Saturn and the Moon will occur around 3:00 AM about 30 degrees up from the southern horizon. The Moon will be just below bright Saturn shining at Magnitude -0.4. A conjunction is an apparent close approach as seen from Earth.

**July 18:** A conjunction of the planet Jupiter and the Moon can be seen around 4:00 AM about 45 degrees above the south-southeastern horizon. The Moon will be below Jupiter which will shine brilliantly at magnitude -2.6.

**July 30:** The Southern Aquariid meteor shower will peak in the early morning hours between 3:00 and 5:00 AM. The radiant, or area of the sky from which the meteors will appear to originate, will be about 30 degrees above the horizon in the southeast in the constellation Aquarius. You may be able to see up to 12 meteors per hour at the shower's peak. As the Earth plows through the debris left behind by Comet P/2008 Y12 (SOHO) when it visited our solar system, the fragments burn up in our atmosphere creating a bright flash which people often call a 'shooting star'.

**August 11:** Another conjunction of Saturn and the Moon can be seen when they reach their highest point in the south

about 30 degrees above the horizon at 1:30 AM. Saturn will be 4 degrees above the almost full Moon.

**August 13:** The Perseid meteor shower, one of the best of the year, peaks on August 13 before dawn brightens the sky. Although it will be active from July 17 – August 24, in some years it's possible to see up to 140 meteors per hour at the peak. However, the Moon will brighten the sky that morning and prevent the fainter meteors from being spotted.

**September 22:** The Autumnal equinox occurs at 9:03 PM in our area and announces the first official day of fall in the Northern Hemisphere. There will be almost exactly 12 hours of both daylight and darkness.

**September 26:** The planet Jupiter reaches opposition today which means it lies directly opposite the Sun from our vantage point here on Earth. It will rise in the east around 8:00 PM and reach its highest point in the southern sky, 46 degrees above the horizon, at 1:00 AM. Around the same date, Jupiter will also be closest to Earth, appearing larger through a telescope and shining at a brilliant magnitude -2.9 as seen with the naked eye.

**See Strassenburgh Planetarium updates page right.**

## 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.

NOTE: A planet will look like a star in the sky.

**Sun:** -26.7

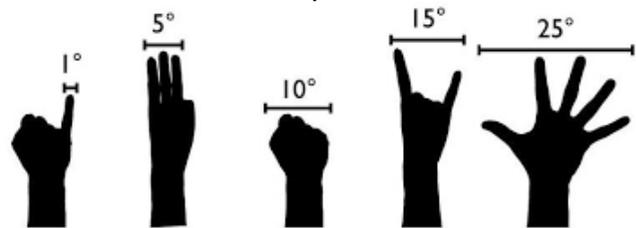
**Full Moon:** -12.6

**Dimmest star visible with the unaided eye:** 6.0 to 6.5

PLANETS	JULY 2022	AUG 2022	SEPT 2022
Jupiter	-2.06	-2.8	-2.9
Mars	0.29	0.0	-0.4
Venus	-4.39	-4.12	-3.94

## How to measure degrees in the sky

A simple "ruler" is to hold your arm straight out, close one eye, 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. Hold three fingers up to the sky – the width of your three fingers measures 5°. The width of your little finger held at arm's length will measure 1°. You can also use this method to measure how far apart two objects are from each other in the sky.



• Listen to learn more: "Dee's Sky This Month" — describing what can be seen in the sky— on the ASRAS website, [rochesterastronomy.org](http://rochesterastronomy.org)

## At the Races from p.7

Once they were past the crowd, Ralph started moving Bamboo Curtain up in position. No one expected any challenge from Bamboo Curtain, so it was with surprise that the other jockeys noticed Bamboo Curtain passing them.

Three-quarters of the way through the race, Bamboo Curtain was right on Charger's heels. His jockey peeked under his arm and was shocked to see that the horse gaining on him was the mare who wasn't supposed to be there.

Charger's rider went for the whip, but it was too late. Bamboo Curtain was finally free to run to her heart's content and she wasn't going to be stopped.

Bamboo Curtain dug in hard and 100 feet before the finish line she pulled ahead of Charger. She held the lead and won the race, to the roar of the crowd.

Jimmy John was jumping up and down when Ralph finally got Bamboo Curtain slowed down enough to turn around and head back to the center of the paddock for the award ceremony.

Once Bamboo Curtain was in the paddock, Mr. Parker could barely contain himself and kept slapping Ralph on the leg and saying, "Good job, good job."

The crowd pressed closer to congratulate Mr. Parker.

Mr. Parker sent Jimmy John to collect his winnings.

As Jimmy John returned with the money and gave it to Mr. Parker, they were approached by Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie, all smiles and proud.

"That's our girl," said Mr. Ronnie, trying to get near the excited and sweaty horse to pat her neck.

"No. Actually, she isn't," said Mr. Parker. "Remember when you insisted I get rid of her? She was a bad horse. I did a bad job picking her out. I gave you a deposit on her then, and here is the rest of the money."

Mr. Parker pushed a wad of bills into Mr. Ronnie's hand and turned to walk away.

"Wait," said Mr. Ronnie, "We don't want to sell her after all."

"Too late," Mr. Parker said over his shoulder.

"Wait," said Mr. Ronnie. "Can we buy her back? At a higher price, of course, and she stays in your barn?"

"She's not for sale," Mr. Parker said.

"Wait. We made a mistake," Mr. Ronnie said.

"You were right. She is a good horse."

Mrs. Ronnie stood behind her husband nodding, flowers bobbing.

Mr. Parker hesitated. Mr. Ronnie finally convinced Mr. Parker to have a drink and discuss the possibility of selling the mare back to Mr. Ronnie.

Jimmy John led Bamby back to the barn, bathed and bandaged her, and put her in her stall. He stood at the stall door and fed her carrots, telling her what a good girl she was, and accepting congratulations from the racegoers walking by. There was no question that Bamboo Curtain was a star, and now everyone knew it.

Charger's trainer and groom were strangely absent from the next couple of race meets, recovering from an accidental fall from a hay mow and being kicked by a horse . . . or so they said. 🐾

Jackie Paterson is a life long horsewoman and certified riding instructor who spent 20 years running a large hunter show stable with her husband. Jackie also spent 28 years as a corporate technical writer and webmaster. She still owns two lovely mares and travels between Canadice, New York and Bradenton, Florida with her dog Taffy.

### Strasenburgh Planetarium

Strasenburgh Planetarium offers the public an opportunity to observe the night sky through two large telescopes on most Saturday nights when the skies are clear. Volunteers from the Astronomy Section of the Rochester Academy of Science will operate the telescopes from dark to 10PM. You will need to climb 60 steps to the telescope observation deck at the back of the planetarium. Call the planetarium on Saturday after 6:00 PM at 585-697-1945 to confirm this event will take place. If it's cloudy, it will be canceled. Observing and parking are free.

# DRAGONFLY TALES

STEVE MELCHER



## Ornithery and Mindfulness

• Learn More: fb @ Odonata Sanctuary

### Pay Attention!

“The simple act of paying attention can take you a long way.” – Keanu Reeves

“With my new habit of carrying binoculars everywhere, I feel imbued with a readiness to see, an attitude that my life itself is a kind of field trip. The urban naturalist has the terrific luxury of stepping out her door and into “the field,” without long rides or carpools, or putting money in for gas and Dairy Queen. When does the field trip begin? Whenever we start paying attention.” – Lyanda Lynn Haupt, *Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness*

Holly Merker is a cancer survivor. She’s convinced that her hobby helped her beat the disease. What’s Holly’s hobby? Birdwatching. Holly has been fascinated by birds since early childhood and believes mindful birdwatching helped her through traumatic chemotherapy and basically saved her life. What is “mindful birdwatching”? Anytime you’re concentrating on something and everything else in the world disappears is “Mindful” time. Your mind is full and focused on the moment. We’ve all experienced watching something fascinating like a bee visiting a flower or an ant carrying something twice its size across the sidewalk. In that moment, everything else disappears and your mind is full with the vision of bee or ant. Holly decided to continue her life as normal as possible while undergoing treatment. Part of her normal routine included going out in nature, alone, to look for birds. She found that in those moments of concentration while trying to catch a glimpse of a warbler or identify a bird song, she was so focused on the moment that the pain and depression of therapy was somehow softened and

even shunted into the background. For those moments she was choosing to fill her mind, to be “mindful” with the beauty of song of a Cerulean Warbler leaving no room for negative thoughts of her condition.

Twenty years later, Holly decided to share her discoveries in a book titled, *Ornithery* (Orni from the Greek *órnīs* meaning bird and therapy). The complete title is *Ornithery: For Your Body, Mind and Soul*. Published in 2021, the book has photos from well known bird photographer, Richard Crossley, and his daughter, Sophie Crossley, who is now a free dive instructor in Nicaragua. Ornithery is not a new concept by any means. Docs in the UK have been prescribing birdwatching as a treatment for anxiety and suggest that it is far more effective than any tranquilizer—and cheaper, safer and without negative side effects. Merker defines Ornithery as a “practice of mindful observation of birds which benefits our mind, body and spirit. Birds offer gateways into deeper experiences with nature. Ornithery amplifies the boosts of well-being that nature provides.”

“Nature itself is the best physician.” –Hippocrates

I’ve been a birdwatcher all my life and I never thought of the mindfulness component until I met Holly. I realized that I could describe more than a handful of birdwatching moments where time and the rest of the world disappeared. An example I used was my first sighting of a Resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) in the Monteverde Cloud Forest of Costa Rica. I had ‘stationed’ all four of my adolescent kiddos about 50 meters apart along a trail where a Quetzal had been seen earlier that week. I spread the kids apart primarily so I could have some quiet time and a chance to see the elusive bird. I finally had the last one, Sage, settled in line and headed to my spot further down the trail. The Rule (suggestion or guideline in this family of no rules) was not to move from your spot until Dad came back down the trail to collect you. I got to my spot and as my mind wondered (worried about possibility of jaguars, snakes, scorpions, peccaries and aggressive monkeys) in the corner of my

eye, that peripheral boundary of twilight zone, I was visited by the angel Gabriel aka the Resplendent Quetzal. In that moment time disappeared as did the rest of the world. I was afraid to move, even turning my head might melt the mirage. His tail dangled a good meter below the branch on which he perched. There was a golden glow all around him, possibly from the limitations of my peripheral vision, or perhaps from the bird himself. After all, the Aztec and Mayan cultures considered Quetzal tail feathers as symbols of wealth and even used them as currency. I don't know how long his visit lasted. I didn't see him fly to the branch or away from it. I did manage to take a few shaky photos before I heard Forest whisper behind me, "Cool". The band of munchkins had managed to walk up and line up behind me in all my stupor without me noticing. They all had a chance to witness the Quetzal and I had a memorable experience of mindfulness.

This is an example of birding having one of the tenets of mindfulness: Awareness. How many of us leave the house in morning for work and are unaware of what kind of tree is growing or what bird is singing in that tree? The first tenet of mindfulness is to be aware of your world. I used to say to my middle school science students, "Most of you were born on this planet and many of you will die on the same planet, so why not get to know some of the other travelers on this spaceship we call Earth". That would get them thinking a bit and we would have a discussion about Eddy and if he was really from Mars. Most also agreed that some of them might actually die on another planet if they were to be part of a pioneering space expedition. We would all come back to the trees, and plants, and garbage that we passed everyday but never noticed. An example of selective

vision was discovered when we had a trash survey. Many of the students were upset by the amount of trash on the footpath on the way to the school. First order was to find out what the trash was and its source. So we did a trash survey which was a simple walk along the path on the way to school in the morning to list what they saw as trash. To my surprise many of the students returned with almost blank sheets of paper with very few items on their list. I walked with them that afternoon after school. We walked right by what I considered trash or at least litter. I had to point out that those orange and yellow styrofoam cups, paper wrappers and containers with the big M on them didn't grow here naturally. These kids were not aware that this was trash. Once I pointed it out, they saw it everywhere, a wonderful example of the Baader-Meinhof Phenomenon!

The Baader-Meinhof Phenomenon, otherwise known as the frequency illusion or recency bias, is a situation where something you recently learned about suddenly seems to appear everywhere. They became aware of the trash and then suddenly it was everywhere! I was able to nudge this concept from trash to bird song. When I pointed out the Wood Thrush and the Towhee, suddenly it was everywhere! Everywhere awareness. Needless to say the trash on paths along the St. Jones River became a rarer and rarer sight but the sightings of Blue Herons and Osprey flourished. And yes, it was those sloppy upper school kids who were skipping school and visiting the local fast food joints that were the culprits of the lunchtime litter.

Another tenet of mindfulness is to slow down and be intentional in your thinking. Without judgement or glancing at your watch, you just let the experience be what it will be without worrying about time or a schedule.

You're there in the moment, mindful and completely mesmerized or at least somewhat satisfied with the time being spent in that moment. I was getting dressed this morning, late for an appointment, when I heard that familiar cackle and scolding of crows on the mob. I found myself frozen, mid-button, looking out over the pond trying to find the object of the crow's discern. Several minutes must have gone by and my, 'you better get moving' alarm went off somewhere in my subconscious and I realized most people don't have to time to stop and watch crows let alone smell the roses. But we all do have time, only a small amount, and it's ours to spend as we wish. Like any resource or gift it's how it's valued that matters. Intention is a big part of deciding how you spend your time. Some of us have the luxury of pursuing our passion and experience mindfulness in birdwatching or painting or meditation. If we don't think we have that luxury, perhaps we should gift time to ourselves; the benefits far out way the sacrifices. More studies are showing the benefits, both physical and mental, of spending time in nature. Birding is a special noninvasive gateway as opposed to hunting or fishing. Most of my vegan friends were once hunters but decided to become gatherers still wanting to spend time in nature but choosing not to do harm to fellow passengers. As soon as you enter nature you move to nature's pace: you slow down. Your senses become attune to that slower pace. When you slow down you hear things you didn't hear before, see things previously unseen and ....what's that smell?

**"Adopt a pace of nature: her secret is patience."  
—Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Continued on page 23

# Sunwise

KAY KING

Connor Galain had never been overly fond of horses. They were far too large for him to be quite comfortable standing next to one, especially with his rather miniscule stature.

There was an unpleasant intelligence in their eyes as well. It was as if they understood the position they were in as servants and pets to another caste of beings. The only thing holding them back from revolution: the lack of thumbs. If that revolution ever came, mankind would deserve it, if the treatment of the animals by many of the nobles Connor had seen was representative of the rest of the world.

The chestnut beast before him raised its head and snorted, a nearly plum-sized eye locking with the narrow, amber ones of the young man, reminding him of the day all those years ago when a similar gaze had stopped him in his tracks. It had been in the middle of the street in Waterpoint, his older sister barely yanking him from the path in time, preventing his embarrassing demise by horse-drawn cart.

Yes, Connor had never been fond of horses.

“A truly magnificent animal,” he calmly told the young woman who affectionately patted the creature’s long snout.

“I’m glad you think so. He’s sure to win the race today. My father has made his fortune raising horses, you know. No other lord or lady of Waterpoint knows the creatures better.”

“Oh, I should think not, Lady Valbrooke,” he responded. This woman had, apparently, decided that she was adopting him for the duration of the Sunwise Festival. He played along and didn’t argue. It suited his purposes just fine. “Of course a man such as he, with enough wealth to host a summer cele-

bration such as this, would be the master of his trade.” He ran a hand through the thick, auburn hair which curtained his diamond-shaped face, distracting himself from the equine-related nerves he could not afford to show her.

“Well said, Connor. Tell me, are you a rider of any sort? I’ve heard that the elves of the wood ride much stranger beasts—beasts that can climb the trunks of trees and leap from branch to branch. Is such a claim true?” The lady brushed off the front of her outfit: a blue, green, and white dress made from so many different materials and clashing patterns that the man was sure it was made more with the intent of displaying wealth than actually looking good. The skirt of the garment also splayed so far out that he wondered what contraption might be holding the confounded dome up. He, of course, kept this to himself.

“I wouldn’t know, m’lady,” he told her, twisting his full lips from their usual resting scowl into the most genuine smile he could muster. “I grew up no further from Lake Nila than you. I am only half Alfar, as you might recall.” He tapped one of his pointed ears which were connected across the face by a light dusting of freckles.

“Of course, of course, my mistake,” admitted the woman as she adjusted her hair. The black ringlets were only half-visible through the thin, silk veil which fell around her head from the blue and silver headband she displayed proudly.

“Now,” Connor began, holding out an arm for the lady as he adjusted the

collar of his stuffy, yellow vest. “Shall we be going? Wouldn’t want to miss any of the festivities, would we?”

“Right you are, ser.” She took to his request without hesitation, and to Connor’s relief, the pair made their exit from the building arm in arm.

As the stable grew further behind them, so too did the elaborate manor which cloaked it in shadow, shielding it from the bright sun of the summer month of Vola. Instead of the massive house in which the Vallbrookes resided, they were bound for the acres of land surrounding it. Much of the estate had been converted into a fairground for the festivities, that much was clear after walking no more than a few steps beyond the stable.

A cool, lakeside breeze tousled Connor’s hair and caused the back of his worn, gray overcoat to flap loosely behind him as his companion led him through the gardens and into the fair. Lovely flora surrounded them on all sides, blue and purple flowers of varying shades lined the white bricked pathway as they sauntered along. As they stepped through a white archway up which vines and ivy crawled as if up the trunk of a tree, the wider land belonging to this young woman’s father was opened to Connor’s sight. The same wind which swept against him rustled the oaks dotting the landscape. The leaves of these trees cast a verdant green upon the landscape which, when combined with the stretching field of neatly tended grass, clashed against the deep azure of the great Lake Nila a fair distance off to the pair’s left.

Continued on page 33

## Side Street from p.15

three songs. It was horrible. Then the singer walked over to the side of the stage while the guitar player made feedback against his tiny practice amp. The singer grabbed a bucket, walked back to center stage, made himself puke into it, and then he dumped the bucket over his head while the guitar player started to try to smash his guitar. Security grabbed them both off the stage, dragged them back through the venue, and threw them out the front door.”

**B**obby Nesbitt, originally from Livonia, NY and currently living in Key West, FL has toured the world as a piano player and cabaret singer.

“One of the best (yet bizarre) was the time I was hired by a very rich couple to entertain them in their villa in the South of France for the month of August. They never showed up! It was just me and their kids. All gigs should be this good.”

My weirdest gig was a last minute booking filling in for another musician who had to cancel a show at a bar near the Rochester Institute of Technology. I didn't have time to publicize the gig, so I was at the mercy of whomever happened to show up. I was pleasantly surprised to find a relatively full house when I arrived. Something seemed a little off, however. It was too quiet for the number of people in the room. Then the bartender told me that they were hosting a class reunion for a group from the National Technical Institute for the Deaf. As it turned out, the sound man, the bartender, and I were the only three hearing people in the room most of the night.

If you're on the music scene long enough, you're bound to have some stories to tell. Some make it into songs. Others are reserved for after hours. If you're lucky enough to be around when the tall tales start getting told, you're in for a night almost as entertaining as the music. ✂

## Dragonfly from p.21

Many of us choose not to intentionally take time to focus because we think it's time wasted. Mindfulness is not sitting in a lotus position with a string up your nose and out your anus and it's certainly not killing time. Time spent in a mindful state can be as therapeutic as time spent with a doctor or therapist. Maybe you're worried about missing out on something more important (FOMO - really! Fear Of Missing Out, it's a thing!) What is more important than the well being of your body, mind and spirit? Take time for yourself, you deserve it. We all deserve it. If you're reading this you have time to be mindful for a few minutes. Now get up and spend some time in nature. ✂

### Benefits of Mindfulness: The Magnificent 7

- Decreased Depression
- Increased Emotional Regulation
- Reduced Anxiety and Stress
- Better Memory
- Cognitive Improvements
- Stronger Relationships
- Better Physical Health

### From *Ornithery: For Your Mind Body Spirit* by Holly Merker et. al.

It was the height of spring migration, and birdsong was abundant. I picked out the song of a cerulean warbler, which is rare in our area, and found him perched atop a tulip tree, singing. He was standing in front of a nest that held his mate. I began to practice mindful birding, watching the birds and forgetting about what was going on in my life. I recognized that this bird, too, faces challenges of survival. It had just winged its way from wintering grounds in South America, thousands of miles. And this bird family, too, was attempting to raise their young.

I realized I was not different from the warbler. Just another being trying to survive and raise my young.

At the time, I didn't realize I was practicing ornithery. I had not read anything about it. This isn't something doctors at the cancer center talked about. It just naturally happened for me. And now I know why.

“When we pay attention to nature's music, we find that everything on the Earth contributes to its harmony.” –

Hazrat Inayat Khan

Another reason to to pay attention...

“When your views on the world and your intellect are being challenged and you begin to feel uncomfortable because of a contradiction you've detected that is threatening your current model of the world...pay attention. You are about to learn something.” –William H. Drury, Jr. Professor

# HEARTWOOD T.TOURIS



## Greenwood — Three Days in Pittsboro, North Carolina



A fresh green pine log ready for hewing.

being taught by none other than Roy Underhill. Known to many woodworkers as “Saint Roy”, Underhill has spent the past 43 years preserving the craft of traditional woodworking through his PBS show the *Woodwright's Shop*.

In late April I had the pleasure of attending the Greenwood Wright's Fest in Pittsboro, North Carolina. The event was three days of workshops and demonstrations in working freshly cut wood (green wood) into useful and beautiful objects.

Among the many activities, teachers and presenters showed how to carve wooden spoons, strip bark from hickory logs to make woven chair seats and baskets, turn wooden bowls on a foot-powered spring pole lathe, and how to convert fresh pine logs into beams and cut timber frame joints.

This last activity is what piqued my interest in the festival, because one of the (too) many plans for our homestead is to build a timber frame greenhouse. Also, the workshop was



Top Right: A notched log being hewed.

Bottom Right: A freshly hewn face.

Above: Sawing a tenon into a beam.



For 37 seasons, Roy and his guests have demonstrated how to make everything from a log cabin to a Shaker table using only traditional hand tools. He's inspired countless viewers to pick up a hand plane and make shavings. His show was required viewing during my early years of learning woodworking.

As a teenager and college student I couldn't afford a Norm Abram (host of the PBS show *The New Yankee Workshop*) shop full of power tools. Instead, I learned that it was possible to make some pretty nice things with hand saws, planes and chisels.

The day-long workshop began with the drop off of several pine logs. We then proceeded to mark the logs and with axes hewed them into straight, rectangular beams. As the air filled with the scent of fresh pine and the sound of thumping axes, Roy instructed us on the various techniques for ax work, throwing in occasional quotes from Thoreau and Monty Python.

After breaking for lunch, we returned to cut mortise and tenon joints using saws and chisels. The beams were then joined into a "bent", which is a single section of a timber frame structure. Several bents can be joined together by additional beams to create a sturdy shed or perhaps a small greenhouse. The day too quickly ended with the raising of the single bent for the tired crew to admire.



The following morning, I had the pleasure of watching Oliver Pratt demonstrate how to turn a bowl on a spring pole lathe. This ancient type of foot-driven lathe uses a reciprocating motion to turn a piece of wood back and forth. Wood is cut away on the downward stroke using special hooked cutters. It was fascinating to watch Mr. Pratt form a bowl from a roughly hewn piece of green soft cherry wood. His legs, arms, hands, and eyes all operating together in a steady rhythmic motion. Pratt then allowed us to try our own hands (and legs) at the activity. After a bit of initial fumbling, I managed to create a few nice shavings, giving me enough of a taste to put a pole lathe on my to-build list.

After the festival, I headed out to see my kids and celebrate my daughter's birthday. Her gifts were a beautifully made bowl and a spoon with a handle carved like a butterfly wing. The festival and the great people that were part of it, have inspired me to continue to reveal and share the beauty that can be found in wood. 🦉

**Top Right:** Raising the bent.  
**Left:** Roy Underhill tries his hand at bowl turning on a spring pole lathe

# FANTASTIC FLORA

• [sallyl.white11@gmail.com](mailto:sallyl.white11@gmail.com)

SALLY L. WHITE



## A Balm for the Bees (and Butterflies)

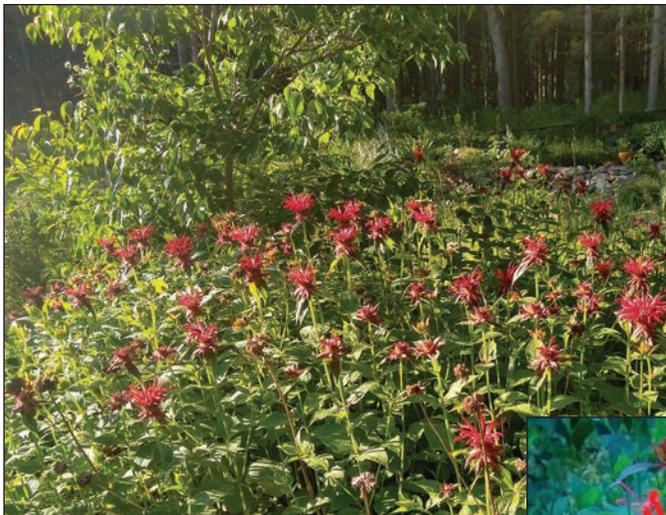
**Scarlet Beebalm (*Monarda didyma*), and Wild Bergamot, (*Monarda fistulosa*) — the Mint Family (Lamiaceae)**

What does the word “balm” mean to you? Do you think first of the biblical Balm of Gilead (a term applied to several different tropical trees), or a soothing ointment for lips? Botanically, “balm” is often used for plants in the mint family, especially those that are aromatic.

Of the 76 mint family members we’re likely to encounter in the Finger Lakes region, fewer than half are native and only a handful are truly “minty.” We spot them by common traits they often (but not always) show, especially their opposite leaves (two per node) and square stems. Our herb gardens are full of mints, and we’re likely to see bees and other insects enjoying their flowers, from peppermint and spearmint to familiar herbs like lavender, rosemary, basil, thyme, savory, and oregano. They are all in this useful family. Other introduced mints include the dead nettles used as ornamental ground covers.



Cultivated varieties of dead nettle (*Lamium*) spread well and make effective ground covers. They are similar to weedy mints, but their larger flowers and often variegated foliage provide attractive color all season.



Scarlet beebalm makes an impressive display when several plants are used together in a sunny site and given room to spread. Massed beds like this will attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and hawkmoths. Beebalm’s tubular flowers are clustered at the tips of the plant, accessible to hummingbirds and other pollinators. The pollen-laden anthers are positioned high to deposit pollen on a hummingbird’s head, but may miss smaller visitors like hawkmoths and butterflies.



### Stars of Summer: The Beebalm

At the height of summer, two spectacular native mints take the stage: Oswego tea, aka Scarlet Beebalm, and its cousin Wild Bergamot, also known as Lavender Beebalm. Together they rank #3 on the Xerces Society\* list of 100 best plants for pollinators and are somewhat better behaved in our yards and flower beds than other mints. They are also larger, reaching heights of four feet, with showy flowers that attract several kinds of bees, butterflies, and even hummingbirds.

The name “beebalm” suggests its use to relieve stings, a good field remedy for us rather than a treat for the bees themselves. Flowers of scarlet beebalm are adapted by evolution to be pollinated mainly by hummingbirds; the red color draws them but bees can’t distinguish it. Only the long tongue of a hummer or a butterfly proboscis can reach the sugar-rich nectar at the base of the long flower tube.

“So what made you first interested in plants?”

I now realise the problem lies [in] the question, which assumes plants are not totally and utterly fascinating. I am so obsessed with the botanical world, and have been for as long as I can remember, that I think it’s weird that people \*aren’t\* interested in plants. What on earth happened to them in their lives to make them indifferent to the magic of the natural wonder that surrounds us all?

—James Wong, @botanygeek



**Above:** Wild bergamot is found along roadsides and edges of woods on somewhat dry sites compared to other mints.

**Left:** Nectar thieves: The rich nectar of beebalms is so tempting that the bees may even cheat. Bumblebees and carpenter bees power their way in, bypassing the pollen delivery system and cutting a window directly to the nectar at the base of the flower, as this bee is doing. Look closely to spot this behavior in your garden.

Fortunately our role in this process is clear: we can best support populations of so-called “pollinators” by ensuring our gardens offer a variety of native plants that produce both nectar and pollen for bees, moths, butterflies, and hummingbirds. In a garden setting, successful pollination (and thus seed set) is not always the primary goal. We are just as interested, often more so, in the enjoyment and conservation of the flowers themselves and their visitors, whether the guests are helpful or merely there to steal nectar.

Continued on page 44

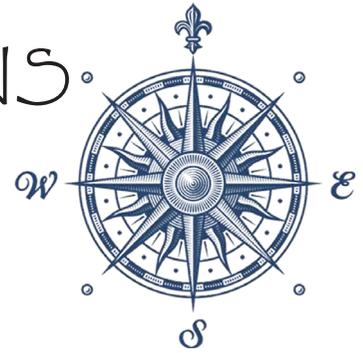
Why “Oswego tea”? In fact, both beebalms have wonderful, scented foliage that is loaded with thymol, known to be an effective anti-inflammatory and antiseptic agent with a long history of wide medicinal use by Native Americans for a host of ailments from headaches to parasitic infections. Like most members of the mint family, beebalm is edible as well as therapeutic, but its qualities may be best delivered in teas, where the leaves yield an excellent soothing brew for sore throats and colds.

Although it’s native, scarlet beebalm is considered vulnerable to over-collecting here in New York; the lavender species may be more abundant in the wild. The best way to acquire some is to find a friend whose clumps need thinning. And they will need thinning—dividing patches every few years will keep them healthy and spread the benefits. Grow them in full sun in rich moist soil for best results; they will also tolerate partial shade. If you must get these or other pollinator plants from a nursery, make sure they haven’t been grown using insecticides, including neonicotinoids, which are lethal to bees and can be present in pollen and nectar.

The world of plants and their pollinators is complex, with many parties in a race to ensure their survival and successful reproduction. Although the aromatics in mints deter browsing by insects and other animals, the plants need the “services” pollinators provide. Providing nectar as a tempting reward helps ensure pollination, though the process is costly, and the results may be unpredictable.

# INSPIRING EXCURSIONS

BILL WATERHOUSE

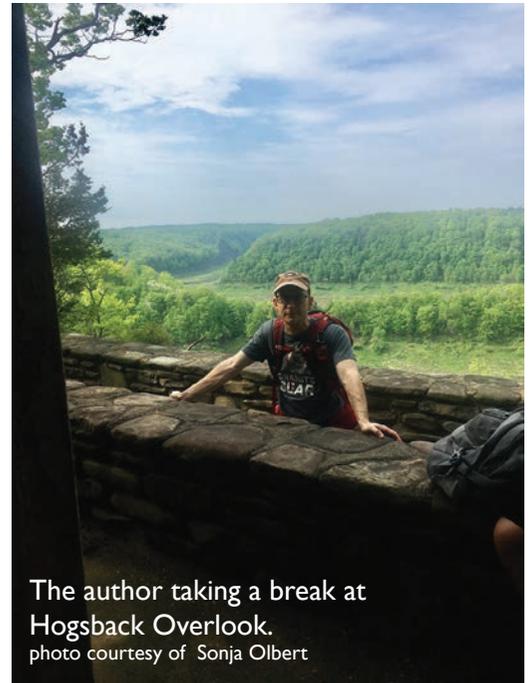


## Letchworth's West vs. East Siders— *The Two Sides Could Not Be More Different*

In 1990, while still free of most adult responsibilities, I joined two friends to celebrate Mardi Gras in New Orleans. We decided that riding Amtrak from Rochester to Chicago, then to New Orleans, was the best way to save money for more important things like Pat O'Brien hurricanes and steaming trays of crawdads. The train provided both pleasure and pain, as we met so many interesting people but suffered uncomfortable nights trying to sleep in jam-packed passenger cars.

One evening while sitting in the dining car that provided a comfortable seat, guitar players, cute girls and adult beverages, we struck up a conversation with a guy from Chicago. One of my companions asked where he lived in the Windy City. He replied "The South Side," to which my friend said "You gotta live on the East Side." The man replied "East Side of what?!" My friend replied "East Side of Anything!"

That statement has stayed with me for decades. I've often pondered the environmental advantages and disadvantages of where you live in urban environments. Historically, if you lived on the east side and commuted to your job downtown, the sun was behind you when you left for work in the city center and at your back when you returned home. West siders would have had the sun in their face for both inbound and outbound travel. Did Rochester's George Eastman and other well-to-doers decide to build their homes on East Avenue for this very reason?



The author taking a break at Hogsback Overlook.  
photo courtesy of Sonja Olbert



People at lookout on Trail 20 at Hogsback.  
Photo courtesy of Bill Waterhouse

When applying this thought to Letchworth State Park's east and west sides, this idea is flipped on its head. The two sides could not be more different, and the types of people who visit each side are equally different. The west side is where visitors go to "be and be seen." The west side connects you to Letchworth's awe and wonder through man-made roads, stone walls and amenities. The much quieter east side is for explorers, including hikers, backpackers and mountain bikers. It connects you to Letchworth's awe and wonder through nature and mostly dirt trails and roads.

Many of Letchworth State Park's geologic characteristics bring significant advantage to the west side. After participating in the park's First Day Hikes with renowned naturalist Doug Bassett, I learned the west side's flat plain areas were actually where the river flowed before the waterfalls further carved the gorge.

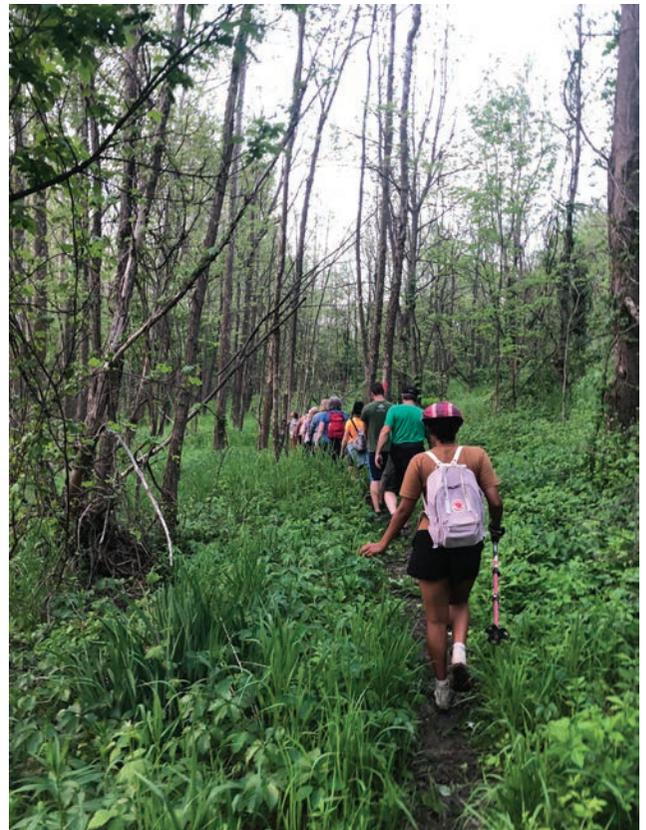
For example, if you're parking between the Upper & Middle Falls, you're actually parking on the old river bed. Same goes for the Glen Iris Inn and the many flat areas that extend toward the Mt. Morris end of the park. Once it clicks in your mind, old river bed characteristics are easy to discern. These "shelves" are almost exclusive to the park's west side. In fact the only east side shelf I've observed is at the very north end of the park, around Mt. Morris Dam & Recreation Area and Hogsback. These east side shelves mirror their west side companions, the Highbanks Recreation Area and Mt. Morris Dam Overlook Area.

West side hiking trails follow the geological features of each area, with each mostly flat or gently sloping towards the gorge. With only a few exceptions, most are easy to complete. The west side shelves allow photographers, videographers and the public access to absolutely beautiful sunrises, awe-inspiring Milky Way shots above the equally awe-inspiring train trestle, and of course the waterfalls in any season. The most spectacular entrance is at Castile, where upon arrival you are greeted by Big Bend, soaring birds and another shelf at Archery Field. Park Road extends the entire length of the west side, taking visitors from one overlook to another. Museums, restaurants, a visitor's and nature center, and an Olympic-sized pool await you on the west side. With so much to offer, why would you ever visit the undeveloped east side?

The "rustic east side" as park employee's refer to it is as undeveloped as the west side is developed. And as a hiker and backpacker, this is the side for me. The east side contains only



Hogsback from Trail 20: The trail is close to Park Road with great views but lots of traffic. Photo courtesy of Bill Waterhouse



a few areas one would call civilized, including the Parade Grounds, the smaller D & E Cabin Areas, and the aforementioned Mt. Morris Dam & Recreation Area. Few cars or motorcycles break nature's sounds. Animals are more prevalent, people few and far between, and the western winds almost always present.

Continued on page 30



**Above:** Hiking Trail 8 at sunset. One of the few road-walking trails on seasonal roadways. Photo courtesy of Theresa Hoang

**Right:** The east side abounds with trails that lead to the gorge's bottom. Each season provides different experiences. Photo courtesy of Bill Waterhouse

## Trails from p.29

Geologically the seventeen mile long east side is very similar between Mt. Morris and Portageville. Known for its farmland, the east side's trail entrances are on flat, gently sloping acquired farmland that can be quite the mess during spring's mud season. But one quickly finds that once you traverse past the old farm boundaries, the land either quickly falls off into feeder streams and gullies or ends abruptly at the gorge's rim. These gullies make for beautiful cascades, especially one of our favorites called Bear Hollow. The gully hikes can present a challenge to those unaccustomed to elevation, as they can be very steep as they quickly descend to the gorge's bottom.

In late winter and early spring, an east side hiker can more easily experience "Lake Genesee," the temporary lake formed by meltwater accumulating behind the Mt. Morris Dam. All mid-park east side trails end where the flood plain begins. The twenty-four mile long Finger Lakes Trail traverses the entire east side of Letchworth, and provides two shelters for overnight accommodations. This is the park's longest trail and is maintained by the Finger Lakes Trail Conference. Overnight camping and shelter reservations are allowed on the rustic side with park notification ten days in advance.

So if anyone asks me what's my favorite side of Letchworth, I'll always answer "the east side!" Looks like after all these years I'm still an "east side" kind of guy. I invite you to explore all the trails in Letchworth, as each has something unique to offer. 🌿



Bill Waterhouse

Mayapples abound in Letchworth State Park. Edible by humans, if you can snatch them after they turn yellow but before the animals!

### Interesting Letchworth Hiking Facts:

#### Want to Explore the Flood Plain?

##### Take the following trails down to or very near the river:

- Trails 12 (Seneca) or 16 (Bear Hollow) on the east side
- Trails 10A (Trillium), 13 (St. Helena - road walk), 15 (Smokey Hollow) or 17 (Big Flats) on the west side

#### Don't want to hike down? View the Flood Plain from these areas:

- West side: Hogsback Overlook, Trail 18 (Kisil Point)
- East side: Hike the Finger Lakes Trail between Mt. Morris Dam & Recreation Area parking lot and Hogsback Overlook parking lot (1.8 mile hike on flat trail)

#### Challenge:

If you're looking for the ultimate Letchworth challenge this summer and fall, take a look at Trail Otter's Hike Letchworth: Hiked 'Em All Challenge. Hike all 29 trails in Letchworth and receive a snazzy patch and have the satisfaction of knowing you've explored the entire park. Sign up at [trailotter.com/challenges](http://trailotter.com/challenges)

If there is a topic of interest that you would like to see covered. let us know? Email [info@trailotter.com](mailto:info@trailotter.com) or call us at (585) 382-5055

Better yet, stop in to see us and share your favorite outdoor adventure story (maybe it will make it into the *Owl Light*) or talk with us about your next adventure. We'd love to help!

# An Ordinary Drey

KAY THOMAS

“You’ve been staring in that direction out the window for weeks now. What’s intriguing you?” My husband startled me when he came up from behind me. I was at a loss for an answer. “Whatever that is up in the tree.” I pointed out in the distance, into the treetops.

Let’s say that was the moment when I either stopped making a point of standing at the bathroom window frittering away the clock peering out into the woods behind our house or doing a bit of investigation and coming to the bottom of the problem. Curiosity got the better of me. Speculation is never satisfying under any circumstances.

Truthfully, as a visual artist, my husband is observant and notices patterns and details much better than me. Then too, he is a country boy at heart whereas I fell into my surroundings by accident of marriage. What knowledge I have learned comes from our conversations and his careful explanations of nature’s ways. Still, in this instance, he knew not much more than I did about the compact nest thirty feet from the ground near the top of a bare hardwood tree which I had been watching during the annual display of fall foliage coloring the sky, and now here it is the dead of winter. “Probably for the squirrels,” he conjectured. “Have you counted how many others there are on our property?” (Later, I did, and there were four other clumps making for a rural neighborhood of squirrels).

It was necessary to do a bit of research and, thanks to *Google*, I read about a drey: the nest of a tree squirrel and their young. Leaf nests are constructed from various twigs, leaves, moss and other material. The twigs are loosely woven together to make up the floor of the nest before creating more stability by packing damp leaves and moss on top of the twig platform to reinforce the structure.

On and off I would check the drey. I can’t say that watching ever became an obsession, and mostly, an off-handed look out the rectangular window when I was drying myself off after a shower, reassured me that all was well. In order to get a view of the drey, though, I had to bend down just a bit to glimpse. Otherwise, the woods were all I saw down the hill. The drey stands out in stark contrast to the bright winter sky above and snow draping the lower hill overlook-



D.E. Bentley

ing the creek running through our property. Certain breezy mornings the drey sways back and forth almost effortlessly. Tree squirrels are most active during daylight hours. During the winter, however, all squirrels tend to become idle and typically stay in their nests. That is no doubt the reason that I have never seen a single squirrel scurrying up the tree.

I watched the drey over Labor Day weekend when the annual New York State Festival of Balloons delivered a sky of colorful balloons over our property skirting the woods for suitable clearings.

I watched the drey on Halloween Eve with its full moon shining over the earth and casting its spell on the lighted pumpkins on the porch.

I watched the drey over Thanksgiving week while we carved a turkey in gratitude for all our blessings and threw out the carcass for the animals’ evening feast.

I watched the drey on my birthday, a week before Christmas, while chatting on the phone with a friend.

I watched the drey over Christmas Day during a period of milder weather and unpredictable winds melting snow clinging to the bark.

I watched the drey on New Year’s Day and stated aloud to anyone within earshot how glad I was of a new chance to get this pandemic under control.

Continued on page 32

## Drey from p.31

I watched before I left for Mexico in February and, when I returned a week later, the drey was there as a beacon guiding me home.

I watched the drey and wept tears when a close friend passed from COVID.

I watched the drey from up close under it when I wove my snowshoes under and about the trees to get a firsthand look.

I watched on ordinary days when isolation boredom almost got the best of me.

I watched in the mornings before my bathroom ritual while the sky came up over the east.

I watched in the evenings when the days were coming to a closure and the orange sky was out in full force.

I watched during a blizzard when I could hardly see the trees through the whirls of whiteness, and returned later to see if the drey was still there.

I watched this morning after a squall and dipping temperatures and saw a tuft of white on top of the drey like icing on a cupcake.

I will admit that I don't recall the first time that I saw this particular drey, and if in fact, it has been there for more than the year. "Oh, no. That drey has been here for years. For as long as I can remember." My husband is positive. That's just an example of how I fail to notice what's around me unless I find a need.

The drey stood firm when my husband and I retired from our teaching jobs in the summer of 2000.

The drey stood firm when my mother passed and we scattered her ashes under the red maple by the road.

The drey stood firm after the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York City.

The drey stood firm when the United States Capitol was assaulted on January 6, 2021.

The drey stood firm during President Biden's Inauguration Ceremony and Amanda Gorman's reading of her soulful poem.

The drey stood firm when billionaire Richard Branson went into space on the Virgin Galactic flight for the first time in July, 2021.

The drey weathered lightning strikes.

The drey weathered slight earthquakes being geographically within a couple hundred miles of the Appalachian Faultline.

The drey weathered tornado alerts.

The drey weathered temperatures from -8 degrees to 87.7 degrees F. (records from home our weather station)

The drey withstood a wind gust of 53.4 mph November 26, 2020 (our weather station)

The drey remained after 52.90 inches of rain.

I discovered that squirrels are creatures of habit and do not believe in abandoning an already well-constructed nest. They have no problems returning to previous locations and reusing their nests. If their nest is safe and intact, you will find that a mother squirrel may continuously reuse the nest year after year.

One morning while I was brushing my teeth aimlessly, and losing all sense of time, I wondered what the occupants of the drey see from their perch.

Black bear mothers and cubs roaming a fifty-mile radius.

Deer in pairs and threes searching for apples from the tree at the corner of our property.

Other squirrels dashing here and there.

Bald eagles heading back to their roost at the nearby lake.

A turkey flock moving along in unison our stream.

Fox kits leaving the den in the spring and summer exploring the territory.

One of our cats walking the land he claims as his own.

The drey inhabitants hear woodpeckers tapping away and the mating calls of bluebirds.

The drey hears the chainsaw when are woods are being logged professionally.

The drey hears the occasional ambulance and police car ascending the hill.

The drey hears the fire trucks turning at our corner when a house down the road is up in flames.

The drey hears the neighbor kids giggling down in the stream searching for fossils.

The drey inhabitants smell the burning of dead leaves in the fall and the drying of muggy dampness in the spring.

The heat of the summer and the frigid temperatures of the winter are to be endured as part of the earth's cycle.

I want to believe that the drey acknowledges our efforts for harmony with nature. Long after my husband and I downsize and move away, the drey will remain intact on the property. There is a comfort in that we will leave a life well-lived on this land, respecting nature's community. 🌿

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Kay Thomas is a freelance writer who lives in the rolling hills outside Wayland, NY. When she is not writing on a whim, dancing randomly or contemplating cloud formations, she is off traveling the world. Find Thomas at [kathomaswriter.com](http://kathomaswriter.com) and on social media.

## Sunwise from p.22

Upon this impressive pasture a great many people gathered, a crowd spread across the field all in various states of celebration. Nobles in high, formal dress danced around performers as lutes, flutes, and drums were strummed, played, and beaten merrily. Some stood in small groups chatting and gossiping, blowing puffs of smoke from pipes, downing pints of ale, munching on breads and cheeses at various small tables. So this is how the elite celebrate... Connor thought to himself.

He was pulled from those thoughts quite literally when Lady Valbrooke began leading him with more enthusiasm, much like a dog on a leash. He wondered which of them was the dog. "So, Ser Connor, your heritage aside, I wish to learn more of your immediate family," she told him as the pair walked past a small crowd admiring the dexterity of a man juggling knives. The giggles of children and the oohs and aahs of the wealthy crowd were only white noise, cut through by the rhythmic sharpness of the highborn woman's voice. "What, if I may ask, is their business? Are any of them here today? It would be a shame if you had come alone."

"Our business is a humble one, but quite stable as well. My mother is a minor noble across the lake. She owns a ferry which transports goods and people around Nila. My elder sister and I assist her," he lied.

"Oh, wonderful!" the lady exclaimed. "A small family business! I'm so glad that this celebration has given me the opportunity to mingle with some of the less fortunate!"

Connor blinked several times, each time his eyes opened he was greeted by the most genuine smile. Is she serious..? His cover had been purpose built to mark him as a humble noble that could blend in easily. Just how out

of touch was this woman?

"Yes of course..." he began to trail off. "To answer your other question, my mother was not able to make it, but my dear sis-

"Hey, Conny! Already making friends?" Both of them turned around to a voice which was instantly familiar to Connor. The woman that stood behind them was quite similar to him in many ways, particularly in the shaggy auburn hair, the small, piercing eyes, the light freckles, pointed ears, and raised nose. They were the striking image of siblings, their fraternal resemblance too great to deny. There were differences, however. The most obvious was height. Where Connor, though toned and far from weak, was small in stature, this was a beanpole of a woman: equally athletic, but far taller. The more subtle difference was her mouth, which was plastered in a thin smirk rather than the unenthused scowl one would find adorning the brother's face. She wore a suit similar to her brother in style and coloration, though it sported a lengthened tailcoat and the shoes were noticeably more scuffed.

Connor examined the well dressed noble ladies attached to his sister's arms at either side. "You seem to be doing quite the same." He turned to his partner. "Speak of a devil and she shall appear. This is my dear sister, Reagan. Reagan, this is Lady Valbrooke. That, Lady Valbrooke."

"Oh, lovely to meet you! Connor had only just mentioned you, so I'm afraid I don't know all that much about you. What is it you do for your mother's business, Reagan?"

The taller woman eyed the shorter with an interested gaze, as if amused by Connor's choice of company. Connor was already aware of why, but he remained silent and allowed her to speak, "Truth be told, I'm more a... skilled laborer than anything else, m'lady. My brother dearest is the real

brains of the operation. The mastermind, as it were."

"Is that so?" Valbrooke smiled and gave the man a knowing look.

"More or less," he confirmed, "I tend to plan the majority of our undertakings. I do rely on Reagan's skills quite a lot to make sure said plans are executed properly, however. My work would be rather difficult without her."

"So very humble, Ser Connor," the lady swooned.

He noticed the corner of Reagan's smug grin twitch: something he was sure no one else noticed. Surely it meant nothing to anyone else but him. "Well, brother," his sister said. "These two were eager to show me one of the performers, and it seems like your afternoon is going every bit as well as we'd hoped, so I think I'll leave you to it. Lady Valbrooke, I trust you'll look after this one." She gave a wink to her brother and a nod to the lady, stepping away as the lady curtsied back.

"She seems lovely!" the noblewoman told him enthusiastically.

"Mmm. Yes, she does seem to be on her best behavior today, doesn't she?" He pondered. Valbrooke laughed. Connor was serious. "In any case, shall we find your father? The horse race will be starting in a few minutes and I've no doubt he'll want you beside him."

She pouted, looking around at all the revelry which surrounded the pair. "Very well, but do take me to him slowly. I wish to enjoy the merriment."

"Of course, m'lady."

The merriment she did enjoy. Valbrooke gawked and marveled at every sight the festival offered her as the pair made their way through it. Connor, ever the gentleman, did not dare complain. The young lady's face lit up as she watched a juggler in bright scarlet and yellow toss a set of fine glassware into the air, attracting a decent crowd as he made each dish fly.

Continued on page 34

## Sunwise from p.33

Further ahead of them, several of the noble guests took turns drawing back a bowstring to see who had the best aim. Much to the surprise of these men, one of their daughters—surely no older than thirteen—outdid the lot of them. She brushed her dark hair aside and took up a bow which seemed as tall as she. Her arrow flew free, impaling the straw target just a hair away from the red painted bullseye. The men all gasped and sputtered, unable to process what they'd seen; that is, aside from the one who appeared to be her father. His large mustache was pushed upward by an ecstatic, proud smile. Lady Valbrooke clapped for her as the father hugged the girl tightly.

Connor led his companion past the archery field and through a larger crowd of people who were gathering around several casks. As a besuited and behatted man slammed an ale-filled mug into that of his neat-bearded friend, the half-elf yanked Valbrooke back to avoid a splash of the golden liquid and saved her ever so expensive dress from a sticky and possibly staining situation.

A pair of children ran past them, giggling, one of them carrying something that looked awfully similar to a mug in his hands. Clearly some mischief was taking place.

Finally they exited from the other end of the crowd, and the lady pointed forward. "My father," she said. The man to which she motioned had his back to them as he leaned over a fence, watching as a jockey saddled a dark haired mare. That quickly changed however, when his daughter ran to him—as gracefully as she could in that dress—and began to call for him, "Father! Dear father, there's someone you must meet!"

The lord turned around as his lovely daughter approached, dragging a dis-

oriented Connor along with her. This new angle revealed a stern face coveting small, icy blue eyes, shadowed by dark hair slowly graying at the roots. He was well dressed, far more so than Connor, and his palette of color was white, green, and blue such that he matched his daughter. The patterns were more modest, though the quality of fabric was anything but. The crown jewel of his outfit was a long ascot of emerald silk, tucked deep into a vest only buttoned near the bottom. The long coat he wore also looked to be worth more than anything Connor owned.

"Ah, Lizzy," he said in a voice deep and warm, smoldering, not a fraction as snively as many of the nobles the young auburn-haired man had met or seen before. "Who is this you've brought me?"

"Connor of Soford," the younger man gave his half-truthful introduction himself, noticeably perking up. He felt eager to speak to this man, forgetting himself for less than a second. If anyone had what Connor was looking for, it would be the head of the house. He took a moment to maintain his composure, and in that moment his companion stepped in.

"Ser Connor has been so kind as to accompany me through the festival today. I just showed him the stables a few minutes ago." The half-elf was relieved when the lord did not raise an eyebrow at her use of 'ser.' Connor was not a knight, nor was he of any status that could afford him such a prefix. He had gone along with her assumption for extra cover, but her using the honorific in front of her father made him nervous.

"Lord George Valbrooke, Head of my House and this estate," the man's voice quaked. "Thank you for keeping my daughter amused, young ser. She tends to grow bored when left to her own devices."

"It's been my pleasure, m'lord."

A smirk crawled up the man's face. "Good answer, lad." He patted the fence he was leaning against. "Come, watch with me."

The two moved to stand at the edge of the fence next to the older man, his daughter in the middle. "What are we watching, m'lord? The race isn't starting quite yet, is it?"

"No, lad," he confirmed. "But you can learn a lot about a man from how he cares for an animal." He waved a hand toward the rider ahead of them, patting his beast on its long nose, having just pulled the straps of the saddle taught. "In this case, I am only trying to learn who might win the race, based on their connection to their mount." He nodded as if he were a second person acknowledging solid advice. "What about you, boy? Have you any horses at your estate in Soford?"

Connor's eyes widened for a third of a second as the lord turned to him. The hand that had been creeping around Lady Valbrooke and toward George's coat pocket snaked back to his side. In a perfectly calm voice and a posture free of suspicion, he replied, "None that I've ridden often, I'm afraid. Never been good with animals, m'lord. Truth be told, I'm behind a desk more often than not." One of Connor's first truths of the day.

"Ah. A shame," the lord turned his gaze back to the track, giving the younger man another opportunity. "You're rather small framed. You could do quite well for yourself in the races."

"Is that so, m'lord?" came the response from a Connor only half listening. He needed to keep the man talking and focused on the track long enough... His arm snuck behind the woman's back, as if to comfort or embrace her. She only moved closer to him. This was helpful for his cover, as uncomfortable as it made him.

"Very much so," the lord confirmed, his vision now fixed on an-

other horseman across the track. "My son is quite skilled at caring for the animals, but he's much too bulky to gain the speed for success in our sport. I've been trying to convince Elizabeth to take up the reins for years, but she's never had the interest."

Connor's hand moved to the entrance of the coat pocket, looking for an opportunity to slip inside unnoticed.

"I'm light, but I haven't the athleticism, father!" the lady told him, seemingly for the hundredth time. "Not like cousin Elaine. She is a talented rider for one so young."

The older man chuckled heavily, "Yes, quite promising, that one. I do wish she had chosen to ride today..."

As George shifted dominant legs, causing his coat to move, Connor took his chance. His fingers were in and out of the man's pocket in but a moment, carrying with them the item he coveted and passing it quickly to his own. It was very lucky indeed that he had selected the right pocket on the first try. He could have succeeded regardless, of course, but it made things considerably simpler.

"Let the poor girl be a child for a little longer, father," Lady Valbrooke requested. "She would have had to spend most of the day preparing had she decided to race. You know how much the festival means to her."

The older man sighed, "You're right, of course..."

Not wanting to appear suspicious, Connor rejoined the conversation as if he had been paying diligent attention for its entire length. "As wonderful as it would have been to see this young lady race, I think you did right to leave it to her decision, m'lord. There's always next year."

"Right you are, Connor. Right you are," the lord accepted. He scratched his chin and eyed the racetrack. Many of the jockeys seemed to be all but ready for the event. "I suppose we

should find our place in the stands. I would be happy for you to join us, lad." The daughter beamed at this invitation.

Now was the time that the young man had to slip away. He just so happened to have already planned his excuse. "If it please you, m'lord. Though, I should say I'll meet you there in a few minutes. I must collect my sister, you see," as he explained, he leaned in conspiratorially, lowering his voice to a whisper. "Between the three of us, I'm worried she might be getting to know some of the good ladies here today a little too well, if you catch my meaning."

The lord snickered, but the lady gave a full belly-laugh. "I knew she was the flirtatious type. How droll!" She inched away from Connor and towards her father, which brought the half-elf a small relief. "Do fetch your sister. We will save a space for the both of you... And a companion, should she choose to bring one." With a wink, she took her father's arm and the group split, the young thief now on his own.

The celebration he turned to re-enter was less lively than before, as much of it had already begun migrating toward the stands surrounding the horse track. He found himself moving against the crowd much like a salmon swimming upstream as he traveled the path to his sister. That part had not been a lie; this had always been the plan. What was a lie was the idea that he must look for her. In fact, he knew exactly where he was going.

The crowd continued to thin as he found himself closer and closer to the stable from which he'd come with Lady Valbrooke less than an hour previously. Passing the structure and certainly leaving the eyesight of any festival-goers around, he slipped behind the stable to lay his eyes on a small warehouse some distance behind the manor.

It wasn't an ornate building but it was tidy and stable, clearly a structure given just enough thought to look re-

spectable and decent, but no more. Solid wooden boards made up the walls and roof alike. It was evident that aesthetics were second to practicality in its construction, likely a decision made easy due to its position behind the main house blocking it from polluting the front silhouette of the estate. A pair of towering, barnlike, wooden doors secured the entrance with a blocky, iron lock.

Inside this lock was a pair of steel files being used as lockpicks, led by a pair of clumsy hands attached to a cloaked figure. Connor could see that figure from his hiding spot around the stable's corner, and excitement shot through him in a shiver as he knew the main stage of his plan was beginning. He watched as this person played gracelessly with the lock, knowing the door would not open. It was his sister beneath that cowl, as he knew, and she was not truly trying.

"Oi! You there!" a stern voice came a short way off from the shed. "What the 'ells do you think you're doing?"

The cloaked figure looked up just as the guard marched into view. Clad in a breastplate, a sword sheathed at his side, the man's eyes locked onto Reagan. His head didn't swivel nearly enough for him to catch Connor out of the corner of his eye, even as the half-elf peeked around the corner of the stable.

Reagan winged both lockpicks at the man, which pinged annoyingly off his skull as she took off running.

"Ow!" the guard yipped, startled. "Get back here!" The vandal and her pursuer dashed into the treeline, and for a moment Connor felt he was watching some slapstick comedy on stage with how this man chased after his sister.

The young thief only emerged from his hiding place once the pair had disappeared from sight. He glanced around and noticed no other guards,

Continued on page 38

# THE DISCERNING READER

MARY DRAKE



## **The Book of Strange, New Things**

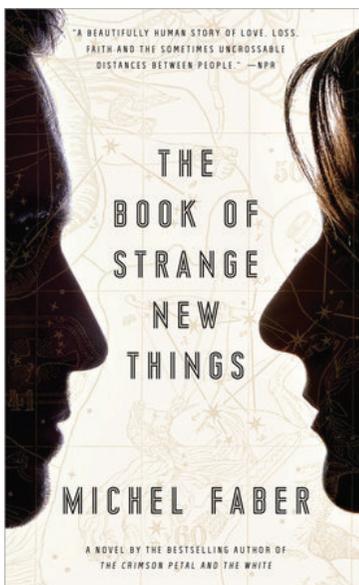
*The Book of Strange, New Things*  
by Michel Faber  
SCIENCE FICTION 528 pages  
Hogarth (2015)

A book title, as we know, can be a strong hook to draw you in, and the title of Michel Faber's most recent novel, *The Book of Strange, New Things*, may immediately arouse your curiosity. What book is he referring to? And what is so strange and new about it? Ironically, the title refers to one of the oldest and most familiar of books—the Bible. But while it may be familiar to us, it is full of wonders to the native inhabitants of a far off planet.

Why are aliens reading the Bible? Because in this science fiction book that claims to be nothing like a typical science fiction, a missionary named Peter goes to another planet to tend the souls of the native inhabitants.

Right from the start there are elements of mystery. Why was Peter chosen to make this million-dollar journey to the faraway planet of Oasis when there were undoubtedly more qualified applicants? Why is Beatrice, his wife, not allowed to accompany him, since the couple usually works as a team? What are the motives of the multi-national corporation, enigmatically named USIC, who hired him? But most immediately, what are the other-worldly creatures like that Peter will be ministering to?

After surviving with difficulty the 30-day trip to planet Oasis, Peter is perplexed by the settlement—there are no locks on any doors—and by the other earthlings already there who seem resigned and indifferent. Then he becomes even more concerned when he learns that two of those who preceded him in working with the natives are missing: Marty Kurtzberg, a Baptist minister, and Frank Tartaglione, a linguist who who tried to understand and learn the Oasan language. Alarming, no one even bothers searching for them, they merely joke that they were eaten by the natives.



So curiosity may keep you reading through this fairly long book which often contains a bewildering, occasionally tedious, amount of detail about the planet, the original inhabitants, and the USIC compound. Details are necessary, of course, to provide an adequate backdrop for the action, but do we really need to know that car engines on the planet must be protected from extreme humidity by coating them in “a greasy gunk that stank like old cat food”? And although the thermodynamic engineering needed to create the new Centrifuge &

Power facility on Oasis is impressive, the description of it makes the book seem more like the science fiction it claims not to be.

However, a main feature of the novel is the relationship between Peter and Bea, shown from both points of view through the many emails they exchange while separated, so many letters that the novel is considered part epistolary. Examples of epistolary novels written in the form of letters go as far back as the epistles of St. Paul, *epistle* being the Greek word for *letter*. More recently, such popular books as *Dracula*, *The Color Purple*, and *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* have been written using the epistolary format.

And certainly the characters' names are significant: “Peter” being chosen for St. Peter, the rock upon which the Christian church was built. This Peter has pulled himself up from the depths of alcoholism, drug use, and thievery to become a minister; now he comes to build a church for the natives on planet Oasis. Historically, Beatrice is the name of the poet Dante's eternal love and spirit guide through the nine celestial spheres of the *Paradiso*. This Bea is an overworked nurse who tended Peter when he was in the hospital and introduced him to Christ. Peter changed his

ways, and now they co-minister their small church. He says that she makes him a better person: “She was the one who stopped him coming out with claptrap, curbed his tendency to construct grand theories that encompassed everything. She brought him down to earth.”

But now he is far away from Earth. A jaded co-worker on Oasis gives him a left-handed compliment by saying, “Well, its plain to see you’re not an uneducated holy roller from Hicksville.” Indeed, he is an unusual mixture of sordid experience and sincere idealism. Rather than coming to convert anyone, he readily admits he’s just “someone who loves people and wants to help them, whatever shape they’re in.”

But it is not people he’s come to love. It is alien beings with a cleft down the middle of their head, a single mushroom-like structure that he thinks is an eye, and a voice “like a foot pulled out of sucking mud.” Eventually, Peter goes to live among them. He witnesses birth and death, and what they do afterwards with a dead body is both holistic and also gruesome. Peter even begins to translate some Bible stories into language the Oasans will find easier to understand and pronounce. While he increasingly wonders about USIC’s purpose on the planet, he becomes ever more concerned about Bea’s situation at home. Her emails which start out chatty and hopeful grow increasingly frantic and discouraged as she relates news of tidal waves, high-profile murders, riots, floods, cyclones. Her own life begins to fall apart as food becomes scarce, working conditions go downhill, and their beloved pet is cruelly killed. Through it all, people keep asking her, “Where is God in all this?” Until she no longer has the answer.

Peter’s success comes at the cost of everything he holds dear on Earth. How he finally resolves this conflict, and how Faber ends the book, may or may not surprise you, but it is heartening.

The character of Peter is loosely based on that of the author. Although Michel Faber is not the pastor of a church, he was every bit as devoted a husband as Peter. Before his wife Eva’s death in 2014, he cared for her through her devastating illness of bone cancer. From that experience came *Undying: A Love Story*, his book of poems about their grueling ordeal. And just as Bea made Peter better in his ministry, so Eva made Michel a better writer. Asking her thoughts and advice was “so much a part of who I’ve been for the past 26 years,” Faber told an interviewer from *The Guardian*; she “helped to shape the mood and plot of all his books. ‘I would have been a different writer without her,’ he says.”

Faber has also written a collection of short stories, *Some Rain Must Fall*, and the novels *The Crimson Petal and the White* and *D: (A Tale of Two Worlds)*.

## Once Upon a River

*Once Upon a River*  
by Diane Setterfield  
MAGICAL REALISM 432 pages  
Simon & Schuster, Inc. (2018)

If Michel Faber’s science fiction book goes forward in time, Diane Setterfield’s *Once Upon a River*, a novel best described as magical realism, goes backwards in time, to nineteenth-century England.

You might notice the reference in the title to folklore—Once upon a time, Once upon a river. Yes, this book feels like a story being told by the fireside on a long winter’s night. And like most folklore, it’s full of wonders and coincidences.

The story starts out dramatically when one night an injured, half-drowned man bursts into a cozy riverside pub called the Swan. He’s carrying a lifeless figure that’s first mistaken for a doll but later revealed to be a child. Is she dead? Or alive? Or a little of both? And who is she?

After such an astonishing beginning, the novel, like the river which is a recurring metaphor, “winds its way in time-wasting loops and diversions.” In other words, the drinkers head home from the inn and begin repeating the story of the girl who was both dead and alive and for a time readers might wonder where the story is going.

Not to worry, there is a plot, but *Once Upon a River* is as much about storytelling as it is about the story itself. Right at the beginning we’re told that some inns specialize in gambling, some brawling, others fiddling and singing, but the Swan, “a very ancient inn, perhaps the most ancient of them all” specializes in storytelling, perhaps because stories were how human beings first entertained themselves. When storytelling began, stories were meant to be told and retold. Once written down, however, stories stopped evolving and were frozen in time. But as long as they were oral, passed down through memory, they could change and grow with each storyteller.

So the story of the girl trickles out of the Swan and eventually begins to flow in three distinct channels. A prosperous bi-racial farmer named Robert Armstrong thinks the mystery girl is his lost granddaughter. The Vaughans, a wealthy couple distraught over the loss of their kidnapped child, think she is their young daughter who has miraculously returned. And a half-simple housekeeper improbably named Lily White imagines the little girl is her younger

Continued on page 38

## Sunwise from p.35

clearly most of them were at the race-track. He couldn't help but smirk. All was going according to plan.

He reached into his pocket to find the item he had stolen from the lord of the estate. The iron key felt cold in his hand. He twirled it around his finger as he paced briskly over to the warehouse. The key turned in the lock with a satisfying click vibrating into his hand. He pulled the handle on one of the large doors, allowing it to swing open with a loud, lazy creak.

Connor's prize finally stood before him, unguarded and ripe for the taking, like a juicy fruit hanging low to the ground for him to pluck as he passed. A beast of burden gave a curious whinny as an extra ray of light poured into its current home, but otherwise didn't react. It made sense that they would have used the most well-tempered horse for a task that would bring it near so many

people. After all, its cargo was specially gathered for the festival. Connor Galain had never been fond of horses, but what this horse pulled behind it was worth the discomfort of big, creepy eyes and the frustrated stomping of hooves.

He pulled the sheet up to look inside at the cargo held by the large cart. It was everything he expected, and it was all there. He resecured the cover and made sure the horse was properly fastened. When all was right with the cart, he pushed open the second door and clambered up onto the front of the wagon. The leather reins were firm in his hands, and before he cracked them to move forward, he heard a signal horn blown from brass upon the wind, followed by the thunder of dozens of hooves hammering the dirt below them. Perfect timing, he thought. The steps of his own animal joined the precision, only audible as one of many.



It was hours later when he had re-entered Waterpoint. He had passed off the duty of driving as quickly as possible: a task his sister now performed. Instead, he had spent much of the trip taking inventory on the cargo. It would be easier to divide the spoils of victory with a clear idea of what they had.

Starrick—one of the two others the siblings had recruited for the job—leaned back from his seat next to Reagan to face Connor. “The guards didn't even think twice about letting us in. Moving the cargo to another cart and ditching the other one along the road was the right call, boss.”

“If they can't identify the vehicle or the horse, they've no hope of catching us. I'm impressed, Starrick. You and Eirin finished that in record time. I'm glad we let you in on this, mate. Things went smoothly.”

Continued on page 40

## Reader from p.37

sister returned from the dead

And just as folklore is populated by those who are larger than life, so too is the novel. The characters have outsized emotions that distinguish and set them apart. Robert Armstrong, as his name implies, is tall and brawny, but he is exceptionally kind, especially to children and animals. Even after two years and three months, the loss of his favorite pig can still bring tears to his eyes. Helena Vaughan grieves so deeply for her lost child that she spends all day in a canoe out on the river staring up into the sky. Her faith that the rescued child is her daughter is unshakable, even though her husband does not recognize the girl. And the housekeeper Lily feels so unworthy of any happiness in life that she denies herself even the

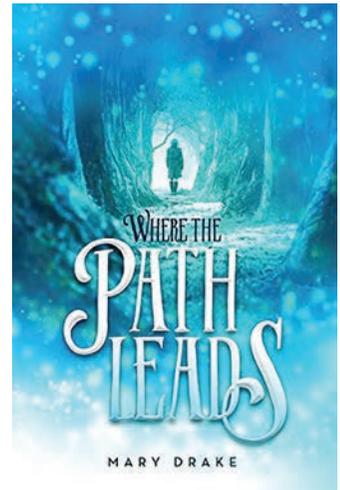
basics, like a pair of gloves on a cold day. And the child who came out of the river and started it all, she remains a mystery, always mute, although she has the magical effect of making all who comes in contact with her want to love and keep her for their own.

Even though most folklore is fictional, it often begins with a kernel of truth. So, too, this novel has just enough fact to complement the fantastical. The basis for the story is the River Thames which is real enough and has figured prominently in British literature for centuries. The character of Henry Daunt, the photographer who rescued the child and brought her to the Swan, is based on a real-life photographer, Henry Taunt (1842 - 1922), who took pictures of and mapped the Thames for his series of local guide books. He also entertained children

with his “magic lantern” show, an early type of projector that used paintings or photographs on glass plates. An episode of the magic lantern show figures into the novel although rather than being used for entertainment, it's being employed to draw out those who kidnapped the Vaughans' daughter. And since the nineteenth century was a period of avid interest in the occult, the novel contains a psychic whom Anthony Vaughan goes to see when he desperately wants to know what to do about his lost child.

As evidenced by this book as well as her first novel, *The Thirteenth Tale*, Diane Setterfield has a special liking for the Victorian period, perhaps because it's the last time in which science and magic existed alongside one another, before the latter became just fantasy. 🦉

*Where the Path Leads* is a YA novel of medieval time travel in which 13-year-old Emily enters a labyrinth at a Renaissance Faire and is magically transported to a place that resembles the Middle Ages. Trouble ensues, and Emily is forced on a quest for a magical object that may save her friend and mentor, Sophia.



### Where we are in the story:

**I**n Chapter 27, Being very near the goal of her quest, Emily is warned that she will have to confront a dragon and she is advised to turn around. Her rational self scoffs at the thought of a mythical creature, but when she finally arrives, what she finds is beyond her wildest imaginings.

The story continues online with new chapters each month.

#### Chapter 28—What She Feared Most

After facing down her own fears in the form of the shadow wights, Emily finally reaches the magical cypress tree which clings dangerously close to the edge of an abyss. As she tries to retrieve the cypress branch which she has come all this way to get, she is confronted with the creature that lives at the bottom of the abyss, the thing she fears the most.

#### Chapter 29—The Great Burning

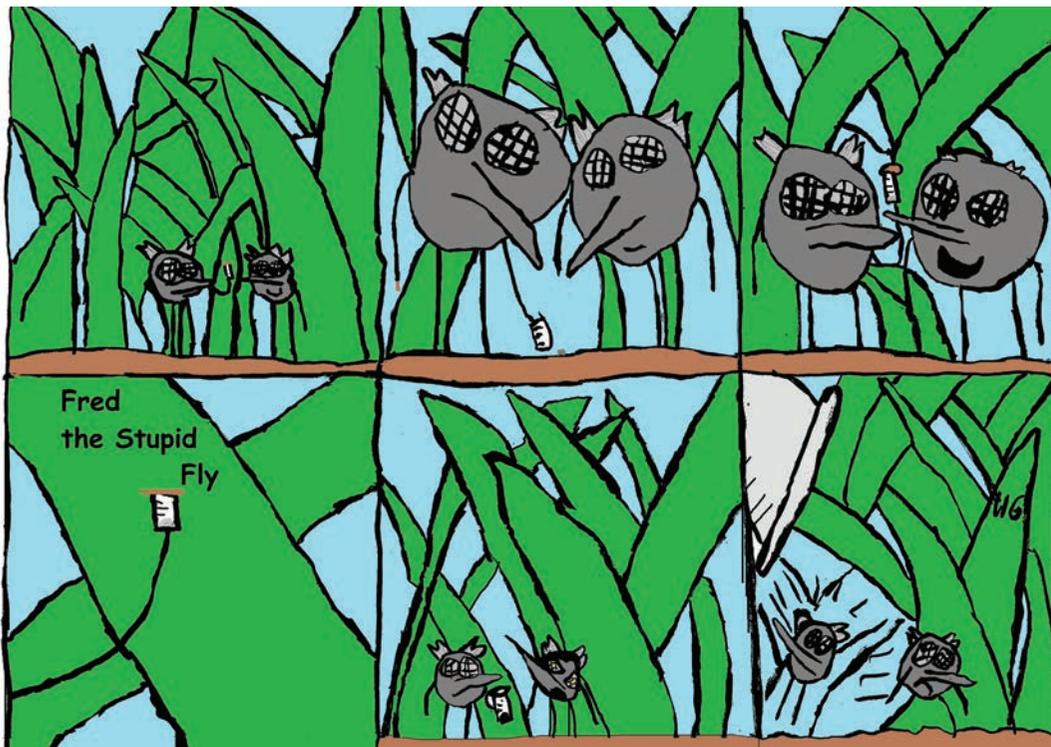
Emily, Arthur and Annamund all confront the angry dragon which guards the cypress tree, and barely escape with their lives. But their battle unleashes something deep within the earth, triggering a volcano, and molten lava sets Blackwood Forest ablaze.

#### Chapter 30—Forgotten About

While Emily and Arthur take refuge in an underground cave to escape the worst of the fire, they soon realize they are not alone. An even worse discovery follows when Emily finds out what has happened to Sophia during her absence.

#### Monthly installments online.

If you are just joining us, you can begin your journey at: [owllightnews.com/where-the-path-leads-chapter-1](http://owllightnews.com/where-the-path-leads-chapter-1)



**William Gentry** is a 10-year-old kid who doodles. A LOT. He likes playing games, reading, and of course, drawing. He mostly likes drawing because he also likes viewing it. He loves reading comic strips and graphic novels. And, trust me, he has a 17th favorite comic strip (no joke!) He lives with his mother and father (of course), and is really happy to be submitting a comic strip to this newspaper.

## Sunwise from p. 38

His sister grinned over her shoulder. “Think we’ll have a chase or a fight on our hands if they see what we’ve got in the back? That guy back at the festival was too easy to shake.”

Connor chuckled, “Not unless the guards are clairvoyant. I reckon we had a ten minute head start before anyone realized the cart was missing. Much longer before they figured out what direction we left for, if they’ve even managed that. To anyone here we look like any other trade wagon. Forget knowing what to look for, no one here even knows they’re looking for anything yet. By the time they do, all the evidence will be in a hundred different locations.”

The three other thieves made small talk for the rest of the short journey to the slum they called the Drowned Quarter. Eirin leaned up from her spot in the cart with Connor to chat with the others. He, however, stared out at the city they swept through. Solid structures and houses built from firm timber and clay upon stilts gave way to shacks half-sinking into mud and water, buildings made from the same materials yet plagued with crumbling walls and foundations slowly swallowed by the lake. As the young man saw himself returning home, he also

heard it in the stamping of hooves through puddles. He felt it in the bumpy, rolling vibration of the wagon’s wheels braving cracked and uneven cobblestone.

The organizer of the heist took a deep, serene breath as his sister pulled the reins and brought the horse to a stop. He was the first to drop from the back, one foot splashing into a puddle he hadn’t seen. He was used to that.

“Alright. Eirin, Starrick, start gathering folks over here. So everyone knows, I’ll read off the inventory I wrote. We have: four casks of ale, three barrels of smoked fish, six large baskets of bread and meat pies, another three of fresh produce, six pots of boiled vegetables, and six pots of some kind of stew.”

His sister remained atop the cart as the other two leapt down. “I’ll get one of these barrels open!” she exclaimed.

A few minutes passed as the other pair gathered people, and the siblings prepared the cart for a large crowd. Connor was distracted, however, by a small figure lurking around an alleyway. It darted away as he focused on it at first, but he was able to coax it from the shadows eventually, with enough friendly smiles—an expression he rarely wore- and reassuring gestures.

The child—a young boy in a torn tunic—cautiously approached the cart, staring up at the half-elf. “Can I...

Can I...” the boy stuttered, staring at the massive gathering of food.

The man didn’t need the kid to finish the sentence. He tore off a piece of bread from one of the baskets and handed it to the child, who looked between him and the bread in awe.

“I...” the boy looked down at his feet, unable to match Connor’s gaze. “My mother,” he said weakly. “She’s too sickly to walk here. Can I...”

“You have containers at home, kid?” The child nodded and the thief continued, “Why don’t you eat that bread as a snack then run home and grab one? I’ll make sure to set some aside. Enough for you and her both.” Tears began to well up in the boy’s wide eyes. He hugged Connor’s legs. Surprised, the thief froze for a moment, but the awkward paralysis soon thawed and allowed him to pat the kid on the back. “Happy Sunwise, kid.”

Behind them, the other two thieves made their way down the street, followed by a crowd of hungry and poverty-stricken masses, many with bright eyes for the first time in a long time.

Reagan stood tall in the back of the festival cart, one scuffed boot on the side wall. Loud as ever, she called out into the growing crowd, voice booming through streets beginning to fill with laughter and merriment, “Happy Sunwise!” ☞

**Kay King** is infamous in several friend groups for writing instead of sleeping. An anthropology student at Gulf Coast State College, they have a passion not only for writing fiction about fantasy and magic, but also nonfiction about past civilizations. When they aren’t writing, Kay spends time reading classics in community parks and thinking about the many, many stories they’ve yet to tell. They can be found online at: [wattpad.com/user/KayShadedBlue](https://www.wattpad.com/user/KayShadedBlue) and [instagram.com/kay\\_shaded\\_blue/](https://www.instagram.com/kay_shaded_blue/)



# A Kingdom from a Queen

D.E. Bentley

Despite many years of experience as a beekeeper, Sam Hall approached each new beeyard change as an adventure, a scientific observation, and applied what he learned to future efforts. He taught me how to watch the bees more carefully, in order to better understand their motives. I lost several colonies over the winter and have applied this experimental thinking to my Spring 2022 apiary expansion. I came out of the winter with a strong survivor colony that had made it through two winters at our location (an important attribute; our apiary is in the shadow of hills and towering Norway spruce, which reduce foraging opportunities and shorten the season). Thus, my goal for the spring was to use this colony to expand the apiary.

Before I continue, it is important to note that the queen offers just a small part of the genetic material for future queens made from her eggs. Even well-developed and well cared for queens (fed adequate royal jelly by her respective nurse bees and kept well-nourished and content by attendees) must make multiple successful orientation and mating flights before she begins laying eggs. The emerging queen's promiscuity is key to the colony's success. She will mate mid-air with anywhere from a handful to as many as fifty drones. A diversity of sperm is desirable and is stored in a spermathecae for future use. An abundance of drone congregation areas is key. In short, not all queens make it and even fewer become dynamo egg layers.

A split is simply the movement of bees from one colony to another new colony. However, each colony (with some rare exceptions) has only one queen. Thus, each split must either be given a queen (or queen cell) or must be given larvae that is less than 24 hours old to make a queen from. It is May 27<sup>th</sup> as I write this and I currently have three splits in my beeyard, all of which came from a single colony. In all cases, I provided the bees with at least one frame of very young larvae and eggs, frames of nurse bees, and at least one frame of honey with field bees.



The mother of them all. I can often photograph queens on the face of frames, but this lovely queen was constantly on the go.



Catching wild swarms adds to apiary diversity. This trap, along a neighbor's hedgerow, may offer the perfect home for a swarm.



My first split of the season (S1 2022) was made on May 12. There are currently two sealed queen cells on the frame (image left), either of which could emerge any day (queens develop from egg to emergence in around 16 days). The queen that emerges first will likely kill the remaining one (unless I remove one and place it in a queenless split).

My second split (S2 2022), started on May 24, has a partially sealed single queen cell. It is possible that the workers will make additional cells as well.

My plan for the third split had been to use a method called grafting, whereby newly laid eggs are scooped up from the cells and transferred into plastic cups using a flexible spoon. I decided, instead, to use a method developed by Dr. C.C. Miller. The Miller method requires no grafting.

Continued on page 55

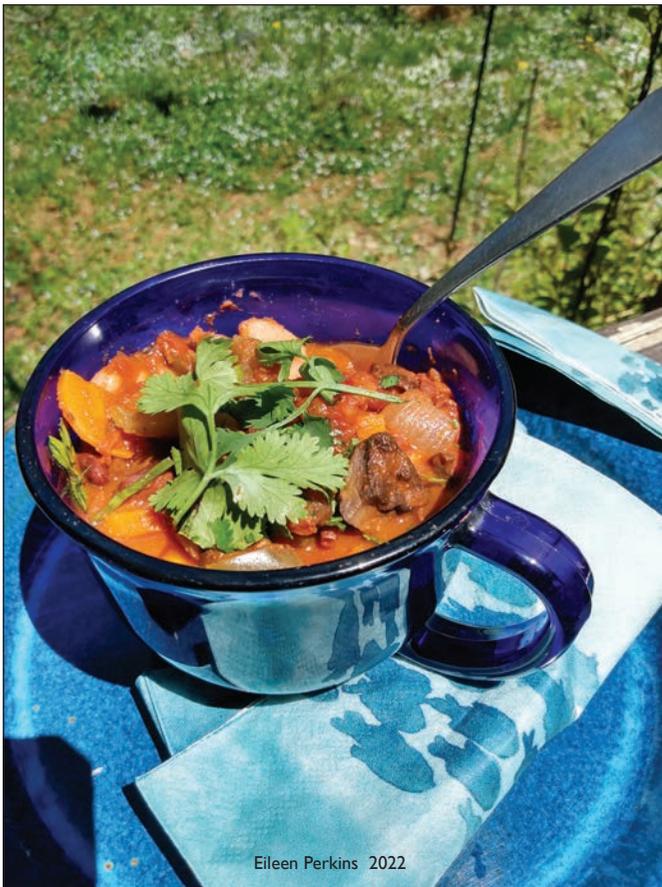
# CRAFTING YOUR OWN CUISINE

EILEEN PERKINS

## Chili For Everyone

(Makes about 20 cups total, 10-14 meal sized servings- freezes well)

Chili is a comfort food for many folks, and is sometimes thought of as a hearty meal to throw together on a cold winter's day. While there is nothing wrong with thinking this way, it does not take into account that many of the vegetable ingredients are actually harvested now, here in New York State. If you want to utilize locally grown seasonal produce, make some chili now and preserve it! Better yet, double or triple the batch size, if you have some big pots, and a good plan for storage. This chili is designed to provide both plant-based and animal-based options, which is helpful if you are feeding both vegan and meat eaters, or just crave more variety. If that flexibility is not desired, simply double the mushrooms or ground meat, and skip the step of dividing the mixture.



Eileen Perkins 2022

## INGREDIENTS

### PART 1

- 1 Tbsp. +2 tsp. fresh chopped garlic
- 3 cups diced onion
- 2 cups diced bell pepper, any color
- 1 ½ cups diced carrot
- 1 ½ cups diced celery
- 1 lb. white or cremini mushrooms, quartered
- 1 lb. ground beef (pork or chicken are good too, but taste and adjust seasonings if subbing)
- Oil to grease pans

### PART 2

- 7 cups (or two 28 oz. cans) peeled diced tomatoes with their juice
- 1 tsp. oil
- ¼ -1 tsp. hot pepper flakes
- 1-1 ½ Tbsp. chili powder (different blends contain different levels of spice)
- 2 Tbsp. ground cumin
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. whole fennel seed
- 2 tsp. ground coriander seed
- 1 tsp. oregano
- 1 Tbsp. salt
- 6 cups (3 cans) cooked, rinsed & drained beans of choice (combo black & red add visual interest)
- 3 cups water
- 2 tsp. (cider) vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. brown sugar
- Optional soy sauce for final taste correction

## PROCEDURE

Preheat oven @ 375°

Generously grease 9"x13" pan and add all vegetables, except the mushrooms, listed in Part 1 ingredients. Stir well. Cover. Cook for 30 minutes. Remove cover, stir and return to oven for 20 minutes. Set aside with any pan liquid.

Into one of two additional well-greased pans (10" cake pans work well), add the mushrooms, stirring to coat with fat. Into the remaining pan, break the meat into chunks.

Bake each pan for about 30 minutes, stirring half way through, making sure that any meat is cooked to a safe temp. Set each pan aside, with juices.

In a 4 qt. pot, over low heat, briefly warm the tsp. of oil, then quickly add the spices in the Part 2 ingredient list. Stir until spices begin to become fragrant, then add the water and the remaining ingredients in the list, as well as the vegetables from the 9"x13" pan. Cover, bring to a boil, then simmer, stirring frequently, until vegetables are tender, making sure to stir the bottom to prevent sticking. Divide the mixture into two pots, putting the cooked mushrooms in one and the cooked meat in the other. Bring each pot to a boil, lower heat to a simmer and cook for about 10 minutes. Correct flavors in each pot to your liking with salt, more hot pepper, vinegar, brown sugar or optional soy sauce. Good toppings are hot sauce, sour cream, chopped cilantro, chopped ripe black olives, chopped scallion, and shredded cheddar cheese. 🌱



As with most of the recipes in *Crafting Your Own Cuisine*, the variations offered and how the chili is assembled allow it to be easily adapted for diverse dietary needs, including for those with plant-based diets.

## COOKBOOK REVIEW

### *The Ultimate Dehydrator Cookbook*

*The Complete Guide to Drying Food, Plus 398 Recipes, Including Making Jerky, Fruit Leather and Just-Add-Water Meals*

by Tammy Gangloff, Steven Gangloff and September Ferguson

Reviewed by EILEEN PERKINS

Dried food sounds unappetizing, right? It might even reflexively conjure up an image of something the dog or a small human person hid behind the couch, in some minds. Yet if you think seriously about it, we happily consume dried foods when we turn to a handful of raisins, a piece of fruit leather or a hunk of savory meat jerky for a quick energy pick-me-up—and let's not forget familiar packaged mixes for French Onion Soup, grain pilafs, make-yourself salad dressings, and good ol' Mac and Cheese. Shelf stable ingredients like bouillon cubes, gravy mixes, herbs and spices are easy to take for granted—because they are dried, they can patiently await attention. Consider, too, that a ton of oth-

er “convenience” foods sold as canned and frozen meal solutions, likely contain some dried foods as part of their formulas too. They're just so handy!

So let's reframe this subject a bit and make it more respectful, because this is a book about dehydrating food, and after looking it over carefully, I am very convinced that this method of food preservation is worthy of respect...maybe even awe! The authors are family members—a mother, brother and sister. They've put together a very impressive website and YouTube channel called *Dehydrate2Store*. But I am imagining that this book, in itself, like the sub-title claims is a “complete guide to drying food...” so I am going to rely on it to get myself started with

this craft. Instructions are clearly written for dehydrating fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers, mushrooms, tofu and meats. Dehydrating eggs and dairy products is not recommended.

Issues pertaining to food safety are raised at the onset, and taken into consideration throughout the entire dehydration training part of the book. The authors state that a device specifically designed for food dehydration is essential, and do not recommend using a conventional oven or even a convection oven with a dehydrate feature built in. This was a surprise to me, but not a discouragement. Materials under the heading of “storage systems” are also going to be a bit of an investment, but I think it will be worth it.

Continued on page 44

## Balm from p.27

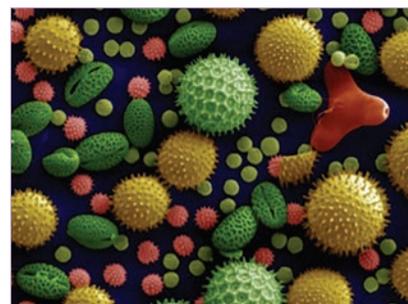
“Tea is balm for the soul, don’t you agree?” –author P.L. Travers

Metaphorically, a balm can be any soothing restorative agent. In literary use, friendship, love, and even sleep have been considered balm for our restless hearts or souls. If tea can be a balm, how much more so must a tea made from bergamot, beebalm, or other mints soothe us? Perhaps the sweet nectar and nutritious pollen these plants offer our flying friends throughout the season are balm to them as well. 🌿

*\*The Xerces Society is an organization dedicated to the conservation of insects. Visit [xerces.org](http://xerces.org) to learn more about how to protect native pollinators and provide healthy native plants to support them.*

## It’s not the goldenrod that gets you!

In general, the pollen that inspires our seasonal allergies comes from different plants than the pollen bees are collecting. Most allergies are caused by wind-carried pollen and spores—from trees like elm and cedar, birch, maple, pine, and many others, as well as from ragweed and grasses (hence “hayfever”). Insect-carried pollen tends to stay on the flowers where the bees and butterflies can find it and deliver it to other flowers of the right species. It’s a risky process, and plants must produce huge amounts of pollen to ensure future fruits and seeds. Pollen is metaphorically “sperm,” in that it carries the male gametes, but is more complex. Every seed we see represents a successful pollen-delivery story, whether by wind or insect, bird or bat. 🌿



Pollen grains range in size from 10 to 70 microns, from about the thickness of cling film to that of a sheet of paper. They vary widely in ornamentation. Grass pollen is nearly as smooth as beachballs, others are sculpted in intricate patterns, or have pores or furrows. Many are covered with spines or spikes. [image public domain, via Wikipedia]

## WILLIAM PRESTON

### What Are Things in Guacamole?

Apologies to E.Y. Harburg and Burton Lane, and their “How Are Things In Glocca Morra?”

What are things in guacamole?

Avocado begins it there, but that’s just a start, there are other parts that make up guacamole anywhere.

Other things in guacamole are added carefully, pair by pair: pepper that will cause a crinkling eye, by and by, joins with some salt at play deep inside it there, roiling freely there.

Then you add a fine tomato and you grind a certain way while you whistle as you’re sighing Toolaray, mixing things in guacamole any day.

## Review from p.43

For me, one of the absolute most intriguing things about the prospect of cooking with dehydrated foods, especially powders, is that they can provide a very concentrated flavor boost. What’s more, a person does not need to search to the far corners of the world to enlist the support of these magical ingredients. They can be made utilizing foods grown right in the neighborhood.

Recipes in this book take up about 75% of its pages. I am thinking of making some dried fruit leathers first, then a couple of vegetable powders, and then I’ll try my hand at some grain-free flax crackers. This copy I’m presently consulting belongs to the public library. I think I am going to need one of my own soon! 🌿

### ONLINE FOOD FIND:

*Food Impromptu (YouTube)*

When fresh garden produce is in plentiful supply, this vegan channel might provide a ton of simple, low cost recipe ideas, for bringing variety to meals. The presentation is very relaxing to watch, with its gentle pace and soothing music. Even if you are not a vegetarian, there are some delicious ideas here to explore.

# PUZZLE<sup>©</sup>

#22

By **GEORGE URICH**  
 Edited by **Marilyn Clary**

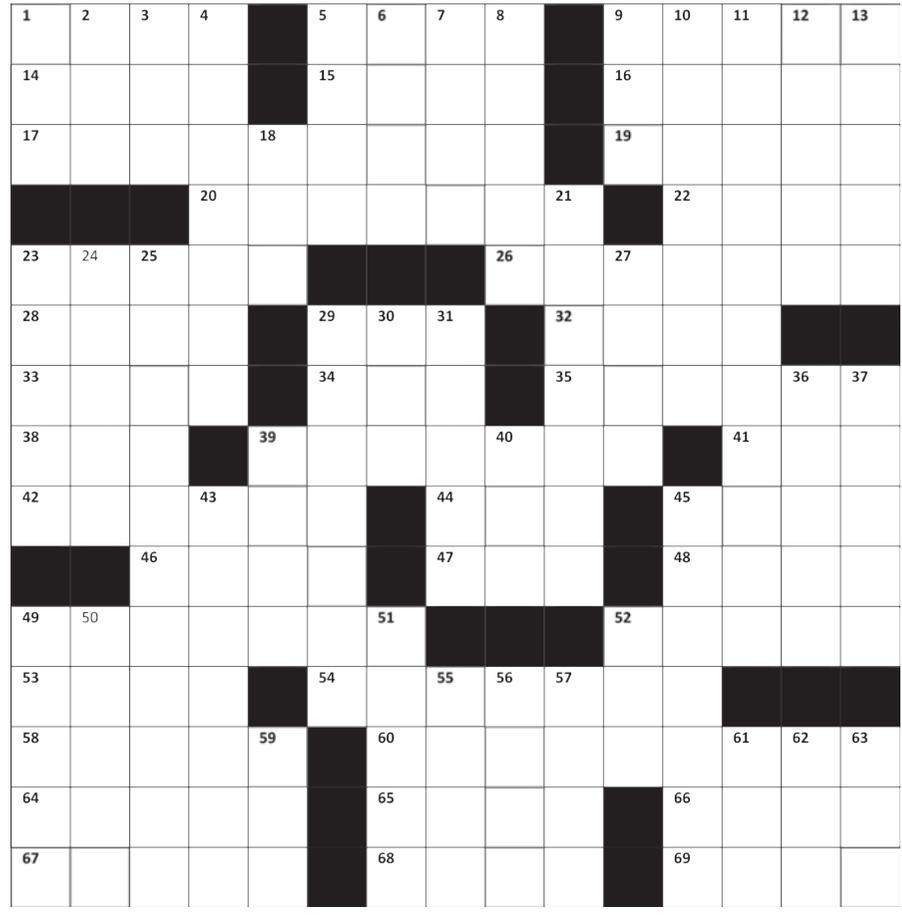


• [gurich@frontier.com](mailto:gurich@frontier.com)

## Place Names!

### ACROSS

- 1 Civil Disturbance
- 5 South Korea's armed forces
- 9 Penny \_\_\_\_\_e
- 14 \_\_\_\_\_enemy, a person extremely hostile toward you
- 15 Midwestern State
- 16 Farinaceous
- 17 Fort Drum location
- 19 Fido is one, \_\_\_\_\_e
- 20 Cool again
- 22 What tatters make
- 23 An organ that produces gametes
- 26 Longed for
- 28 Fashion designer \_\_\_\_\_ Cassini
- 29 Viet \_\_\_\_\_ war
- 32 Got it all right
- 33 If you are indebted
- 34 Black Cuckoo
- 35 Edit
- 38 Neither's partner
- 39 National Parks
- 41 Anger
- 42 Baseball players wear them
- 44 Big shoe size
- 45 Curved molding
- 46 Bank name
- 47 Free of
- 48 People obsessed
- 49 Get rid of stuff
- 52 Two vowel sequence
- 53 Possible sign in Chicago's Loop
- 54 Imposing
- 58 Small arm of a lake or river
- 60 A New York city in the Leather Stocking region
- 64 Young horses
- 65 Chemical suffixes
- 66 European auto



- 67 Evaluate, (one "s" missing)
- 68 Tot's request maybe
- 69 NY baseball team

### DOWN

- 1 Uncooked
- 2 Lead in to two Mideastern Countries
- 3 Fall month, Abbr.
- 4 "Its all \_\_\_\_\_", latest fashion
- 5 College Mil. group
- 6 "Look out"
- 7 A New Zealander
- 8 Being nice to his father is a \_\_\_\_\_ thing to do
- 9 It made Ramblers Abbr.
- 10 Face color after exertion
- 11 City in the Finger Lakes region of New York
- 12 "\_\_\_\_\_ in Wonderland"
- 13 The world's leading provider of English learning software
- 18 Traffic sign, "Right on \_\_\_\_\_"
- 21 Having much knowledge acquired by study
- 23 Auctioneer's call, going \_\_\_\_\_ gone
- 24 Star of "Lawrence of Arabia" L=T
- 25 Big city in Westchester County, New York
- 27 Same as 32 Across
- 29 "no" votes and Tax coll.
- 30 Furthermore
- 31 Long foot racer
- 36 Large island off Greece
- 37 What a duffer does, \_\_\_\_\_ ball
- 39 Greek cheese
- 40 Start of a vowel sequence
- 43 Purple flowers
- 45 Weight of one cubic centimeter of water
- 49 City in New York's Mohawk vally
- 50 Things we are not supposed to do
- 51 Hoot, \_\_\_\_\_l imitation
- 52 Chemical suffix
- 55 Retirement healthcare savings account, Abbr
- 56 Cardinal headings, Abbr.
- 57 \_\_\_\_\_ girl!
- 59 Bacterial infection carried by the blood stream, Abbr.
- 61 Item on an invoice, \_\_\_\_\_ Date
- 62 Big letters in home security
- 63 Prefix meaning false or wrong

# RICHMOND HISTORY

## Come WITH Rejoicing – Historical Fiction

JOY LEWIS

• [historian@townofrichmond.org](mailto:historian@townofrichmond.org)



**I** am the resurrection, and the life; whosoever believeth in me shall never die...

Ellie giggled. A rippling peal of laughter that caught Linnet's attention. What was that girl up to now? She turned away from the fire and poked her head through the door to the setting room. "Ellie! You let that baby be!"

"Mama, he's awake. He needs me."

"He needs nothin' of the kind. Come here; mind this pot. I'll see to Gordie." Impatiently Linnet stood in the doorway between the two rooms, holding a long-handled spoon, until Ellie came reluctantly to her.

"Those beans need stirrin' ever now and again. Set out the plates for dinner. And give your mind to the task. There'll be no more broken dishes!"

*For I know that my redeemer liveth...*

The infant's wail pierced the air, shrill in the closed room. Linnet let go the tension of her propped elbows and sank against the pillows behind her.

"It's a boy!" Jenny crowed. "Here's your little Luke."

Linnet raised herself again to peer between her angled knees. "Walt will be pleased. Will you give him me?"

"He needs a bit of tidying up first." And to the squalling mass of humanity she balanced in her expert hands, Jenny crooned, "There you go, little one. Just a tick and you'll be with your mama."

*Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.*

Linnet felt the warm breath of the boy's whisper against her ear. "Mama?"

"What you need, Luke?" she asked

without looking up from the sock she knitted.

"Mama," the boy continued to whisper, "Jimmy's got Papa's red book and he's eatin' on it."

"Law! That child!" Linnet rose from the chair, slapped her needles and the wool into the vacant seat, and strode purposefully across the room. "Luke, you were set to mind the little 'uns! What's the baby doin' in the front room? And where's Ellie got to?"

In her wake Luke followed at a trot. "Ellie's fell asleep. Under the settee. Jimmy was a settin' here quiet as you please and next thing I know, he's scooped himself through the door. And he's eatin' on Papa's red book."

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me.*

Behind her Gordie coughed. Linnet straightened herself from where she bent over Jimmy's pallet. "Close your eyes," she told the boy, smoothing tendrils of damp hair from his forehead. The child nodded mutely and let his eyes drift shut.

"Is he some better?" Linnet asked, her eyes lighting on the baby as he lay mewling in his cot. Walt stooped and lifted Gordie to his breast.

"There's no membrane." He pried Gordie's mouth open and ran his forefinger around the baby's throat. "Yet he fights for every breath."

"Like Ellie at the last."

"Now, Linney, don't fret. You know what Doctor said. There's every reason to hope the boys'll come through this."

*In my Father's house are many man-*

*sions. I go to prepare a place for you. I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*

"Got you!" Luke hollered. "Fair and square! I got you and you gotta go to the jail!"

"No fair!" Ellie countered. "I only come out 'cause Jimmy said it was safe! He said you was on the back side of the smokehouse. He's cheatin'!"

"He is not cheatin', he's my depity! He's the lookout."

"Awww! I'm tired of this game anyway. Let's play tag. You want to, Jim?"

The little boy nodded in agreement, tugging Ellie by the hand toward the side of the house. "Me first," he insisted and sprinted away. Luke gave in to his wheedling brother and sister with little grace, on condition he be "it".

At the kitchen window Linnet stood, the crisp white curtain pulled aside. Riding her hip, Gordie mouthed a sopping bit of rag. Mother and baby watched the older children in the yard. Ellie and Jimmy ran across and back from the snowball bush to the springhouse, dodging Luke as he chased after them. Then of one mind the children stopped racing, circled the bottle tree holding hands, and let their voices rise in their familiar chant: "Ring around the roses..."

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*

Jimmy's scream cut through the house. "Mama! Mama! I needs you!"

Linnet flung aside the paring knife and apple. She ran out the back door wiping her hands on her apron. From

the sound of it Jimmy was in the outhouse. A snake? Linnet grabbed up the hoe as she sped across the yard. Snatching open the outhouse door, she ordered, "Don't move, Jim! Is it a snake?"

Before the child could answer, however, she dropped the hoe and clutched at the open door frame. A wave of mirth rose through her, yet she dare not laugh at the plight of her little boy. She saw at once why the child had cried out in such panic; at least it was not a rattler she'd have to face.

Jimmy had set over the smallest hole as he knew to do, but he'd forgotten to latch back the seat cover. The heavy board had fallen forward, bending Jim double and pinning his bare fanny securely into the hole.

*To the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, both now and forever. Amen.*

Doctor's voice was a distant murmur in her ears. Linnet struggled to give her attention to his instructions. She was grateful that Walt was there as well to understand what they were being told.

"How much honey?" she asked. "How much should I give them?"

"A teaspoon should be sufficient. Give them the powder first. Two ounces mixed in a noggin of warm water. Give Ellie a tablespoon every hour. After each dose, then the honey."

"And Jimmy?"

"Half what you give Ellie. Luke and Gordie, paint their throats twice a day. And keep them well away from the front room. They show no sign of the fever, but we're not out of the woods with this yet."

*As it has pleased Almighty God to take from this world the souls here departed, we now commit their bodies to the grave: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.*

Jimmy's reedy voice lent a trilling counterpoint to his sister's booming monotone in the only words he knew of the song. "When Johnny comes



Dr. Leonidas Wilbur was one of the doctors practicing in Richmond in the 1860s who did battle with the dread diphtheria.

Image courtesy of Joy Lewis

marchin' home again! Hurrah! Hurrah!" As they sang, the children waved their arms in a syncopated rhythm. They marched through the setting room and into the kitchen, where they circled the table. In passing they eyed the platters of food waiting in readiness for Walt, Luke, and the men hired to help with the threshing.

"You git!" Linnet scolded. "Here's Papa and Luke come in now. You've had your dinner, so in the settin' room you'll stay. And mind you're quiet, or I'll pack you off to nap with Gordie!"

The children scuttled into the other room where they continued to march, whispering their refrain.

In the kitchen Linnet invited each of the seven men hired for the day to take a seat on one of the benches flanking the table. Walt slipped into his accustomed place; he bowed his head and waited, silent. Presently the men fell quiet and Walt asked the Lord's blessing upon the meal Linnet had

prepared for their benefit.

Heaping bowls of mashed potatoes and green beans made their way round the table. Platters heavy with thick hunks of ham were passed from hand to hand. Luke piled his plate with great dollops of everything on offer. Today was the first time he'd been allowed to help with the threshing; he hadn't known such a morning's work in all his eight years.

At the end of the table Ollie Truehart lifted the cider pitcher, asking Luke with a silent nod if the boy wanted some. Luke held out his cup and Ollie poured. The man handed the pitcher past Luke, shoveled a scoop of cherry compote into his open mouth, and without a pause to chew, announced, "They say the diphtheria's over to Anderson's place. Both his boys've got it, what I hear."

Linnet, handing round generous slices of apple pie, flashed Walt a look. She'd not been aware of illness at the Andersons, yet she recognized in Walt's return gaze that he'd heard the news already.

*In the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life for all who trust in Christ who will change our frail and mortal bodies to be like his glorious resurrection body.*

Jimmy choked on the spoon. Linnet held the boy in her arms, coaxing him to sip the warm liquid Dr. Flynt had recommended. "If you can swallow this down, you can have the honey," she wheedled. "Just a sip?" The child opened his mouth, but gagged when the spoon touched his lips. Unable to speak Jimmy turned his head away, wracked by violent spasms.

For ten days the boy had languished, struck down the same morning as Ellie. A week Saturday that was, the last day of threshing. At breakfast that morning Ellie's flushed face and her puny appetite had alerted Linnet. She'd sent Luke

Continued on page 48

## Rejoicing from p.47

for Dr. Flynt and when Jim began to cough, she tended to him as well. The two children she tucked up in a snug pallet before the fireplace in the front room. And she kept the door closed.

When the doctor arrived, he confirmed Linnet's fear: both her chicks had the diphtheria. He gave her a foul-smelling concoction to paint Luke's and Gordon's throats with, in the hope they'd be spared. He warned her to keep Ellie and Jim quarantined, explained what to expect as the disease ran its course, and left behind careful instructions for mixing and administering his powders.

Four days Ellie lived; on the Tuesday, just as the sun was going down, she choked herself to death, limp in her father's arms. And now, a scant week later their three dear boys lay prostrate. Luke and Gordie had yet a chance, Dr. Flynt told them, for the deadly membrane at the back of their throats had not materialized. But Jim...



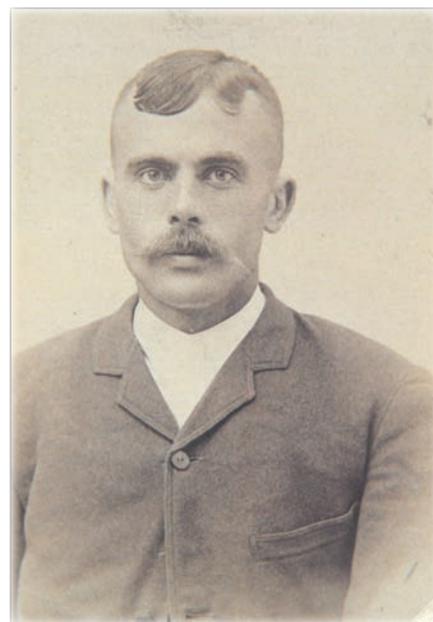
Grave marker in West Richmond Cemetery commemorating the Beebe children: Frank, Alice, and Mary, who all died in February 1862.

Hours through the dark night and into the dawning, Jimmy strove with every ounce of his wasted frame to breathe. Linnet cradled him to her breast; in vain she struggled against the disease. Then, he had not even the strength to gasp. By soft moments the life drained from him.

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all for evermore and evermore.*

The baby drew a rasping breath. His wasted body arched with the effort to draw air into his lungs. Silently Linnet moved from Gordie's cot to where Luke rested upon his pallet beside the fire. The older boy lay curled into a tight ball, scarlet with fever and breathing noisily. Into the room the Sabbath dawn flooded. Linnet hefted Gordon into her arms; holding him close she settled into the rocker before the window. Walt slid himself onto Luke's pallet and lifted the boy to his lap, bracing his back against the wall.

Throughout the two agonizing weeks of their children's ordeal Walt and Linnet had followed strictly the



Charles Mason was five months old in the fall of 1865 when five of his older brothers and sisters died of diphtheria.

Image courtesy of Joy Lewis

doctor's advice, dividing the nursing between them. Faithfully they painted the boys' throats; spooned into each of them the vile-tasting liquid, enticing them with honey; kept them well-bundled and warm; and endeavored to keep them fed.

Continued on page 53

### THE HISTORY BEHIND THE STORY

Diphtheria is a respiratory illness, characterized by high fever, a swollen throat, and chest congestion. A dreaded complication is the tough membrane that may form at the back of the throat, choking the patient. There were a number of outbreaks of the diphtheria in Richmond and nearby towns during the 1860s.

In the spring of 1862 Jasper and Harriet Chase buried their three youngest children: Nathan, 21, and Fanny, 10, died on the same day; Amelia, 18, died a week later. Another West Richmond family, Warren and Mary Beebe, lost three of their four children: Mary was five; Alice, ten; and Frank – their baby – was eleven months and twenty-five days old. Three years later John and Susan Mason suffered the loss of five children in a single week: twelve-year-old Helen and two sets of twins: Mary and John, eleven; and Sarah and James, six.

"Come With Rejoicing" is a fictional piece, an illustration—drawn from the available history and beliefs prevalent at the time—of a family's ordeal fighting diphtheria.

# ETCHED IN STONE

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## — EXPLORING NEW YORK'S

## BURIED PAST

DAVID PIERCE

### The Search for Pioneer Leader Abraham Doolittle (1620-1690) —and his Four Times Great Grandson Alvah Wilson Doolittle (1827-1906)

*Man is his own star; and the soul that can  
Render an honest and a perfect man  
Commands all light, all influence, all fate,  
Nothing to him falls early, or too late.  
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,  
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.*  
—John Fletcher

This quote from 16th century English playwright John Fletcher is description of the spiritual human condition. Author O.P. Allen used these words on the cover page of his 1893 book, *Abraham Doolittle and some of his Descendants*, to personify my eight times great grandfather Abraham Doolittle.

Abraham was born in Kidderminster, Worcestershire, England in 1620. He was one of the earliest known ancestors who migrated to America, with his wife Joan Alling/Allen. He was the first Doolittle in the New World. The couple settled in New Haven, Connecticut. There were six children born to Abraham and Joan. Joan passed away in 1661 and Abraham remarried Abigail Moss in 1663. Abraham and Abigail had seven children bringing the total of Abraham's offspring to thirteen. Records place Abraham in Wallingford, Connecticut in 1669.

Abraham actively participated in his community. He was one of four trustees managing the Wallingford plantation, he participated in the committee to found the first church in town, he was Marshall of New Haven Colony, a New Haven court deputy, and town treasurer in 1671. He was Sergeant of the first train band, an early form of militia, in 1673. He was also a member of the vigilance committee, a group of private citizens administering law and order through violence, where governmental structures or actions were inadequate to keep the peace.



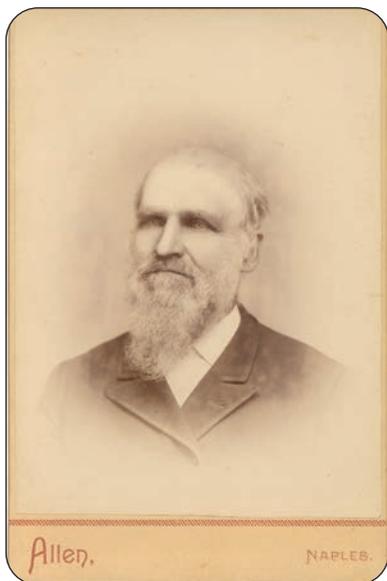
Unique gravestone of Abraham Doolittle  
— Photo Courtesy of David Pierce

Abraham died August 11, 1690, at the age of 70. He is buried in Center Street Cemetery, Wallingford, Connecticut.

Nearly a century ago, in memory of pioneer ancestor Abraham Doolittle, The Society of the Descendants of Abraham Doolittle was established. The Society's motto was "Do A Little More A Little Better". The Society held biennial gatherings of the Doolittle family to honor their pioneer ancestor, Abraham, and his coming to America. At that time it was estimated that Abraham's descendants numbered some 11,000 individuals, each one of whom could trace their descent directly to this sturdy pioneer and the 13 children borne by his two wives. The Society eventually evolved into Doolittles of America, Inc. which continues operating to this day as a Connecticut nonprofit organization.

Alvah Wilson Doolittle is my twice great grandfather and the four times great grandson of Abraham Doolittle. He was born in Canadice, New York, August 1, 1827, the son of Thomas Doolittle and Zeruah Olive Rudd. The family made their way from Connecticut and Vermont to New York.

Continued on page 50



Alvah Wilson Doolittle – circa 1880  
– Image courtesy of Canadice Historian,  
Margaret Bott

Alvah was one of ten children. He spent much of his life in Canadice, New York, marrying Caroline Moon March 6, 1849. Alvah and Caroline had five children, including my great grandfather Lucius Melvin Doolittle.

Alvah was a very successful farmer and businessman in the Canadice, Honeoye, Hemlock, and Springwater, New York vicinity. Day after day of hard labor was accepted as part of his everyday life. He was a hop grower and merchandised hop poles, which he handmade. He grew timothy, barley, buckwheat and wheat. He raised cows, pigs, sheep and horses. He grew corn and potatoes. He also sold wood which he spent considerable time sawing, chopping and sculpting for various purposes including the making of spindles for a bed.

And on top of all this, he was also a beekeeper. Alvah also served his community, being elected to serve as the Ontario County Overseer of the Poor.

Alvah was a devout man of God. He regularly attended prayer meetings and church services. He was also an avid journal writer. His journals have

provided much of the information that I am sharing in this article. I had the good fortune to obtain transcripts of Alvah's journal for the years 1869 – 1881 from the Canadice Town Historians Margaret and Dave Bott. The 159 pages in the transcript provide fascinating insight into the opportunities and challenges of life in 19th century Ontario County, New York.



### **Excerpts from the Journals of Alvah Wilson Doolittle**

1870 Friday July 22 – Caroline and Mrs. Mary Dalrymple went up on the Town line to pick berries. On the return home at the top of the hill by John Purcell, Mary got out to walk down the hill. The holdback strap gave way and the buggy ran against the horse and she ran and kicked all the way down the hill throwing Caroline out and hurting her badly. I went up and just at night got her home although it was a hard job for her.

1870 Sunday July 24 – Wesleyan Quarterly meeting on Austin Hill. I went to our school house, Elder Rathburn preached. He was mobbed by the Masons the 27th of last June and was severely beaten.

1870 Saturday April 2 – George Andrus died this morning with heart disease while eating breakfast he waited on the table as usual and died without a struggle.

1870 Sunday April 3 – Went to the meeting house in am. Called to Mr. Andrus saw him cold in death. Oh how soon our hopes are blasted death enters and there's no defense.

1879 Tuesday April 5 – George Andrus buried today.

1871 July 27 – Richard and myself went fishing. We caught 55 fish.

1869 February 13 – Straw stack tipped over last night buried two sheep under it got them out alive.

1869 April 2 – In forenoon went to Springwater Valley to take Father Thorp to Dr. Grays to have his arm undone and fixed. It is badly swollen it has been bandaged too tight and long that the fingers have formed matter between them. I got some Ox liniment made at Densmons.

1869 June 22 – Hoed hops all day.

1869 June 23 – Hoed hops all day. 1

1869 June 24 – Hoed hops all day.

1869 June 25 – Drawed stone all day.

1869 June 26 – Drawed stone am, pm pulled stumps.

1869 September 8 – Suffered very much with my head. My bones ache.

1869 September 22 – Caroline and myself went the Slab City (Hemlock) and to Thurstons. There was a terrible fire in Slab City 5 stores and 1 dwelling were burned on Monday 20 th.

1869 December 25 – Manured hops in am. Drawed 2 loads of clover.

1871 October 24 – Attended Mother's funeral, Elder Day preached the funeral service from Revelations 14-13. So mother is gone but not lost. The body is in the Tomb the soul in paradise. Her sufferings were great but her trials are over she has gone where the inhabitants no more say I am sick or sorrowful or distressed but where God "will wipe all tears from our eyes". I hope to meet her there when done with this earth.

**As the year 1869 came to a close,  
Alvah's New Year's Eve entry  
combined spiritual insight with  
the reality of the challenge of life  
in the 19th century.**

1869 December 31 – Now 11 o'clock soon close the year 1869 with all its cares, sorrows and joys. Many have passed to their long home, sealed their destiny for eternity secured to themselves the favor of God a

*seat in the mansions of light and an inheritance among the saved ones in heaven or the frowns of an offended God and a banishment from the presence of God and the glory of his power forever. If we that now live could be assured to a certainty that before this year closes we should have to grapple with the grim monster death, to die and give up the ghost. How careful would we watch and how earnestly we would pray and ask God to keep us in his love and guide us safely to himself.*



Zeruah Rudd Doolittle  
Mother of Alvah Wilson Doolittle  
– Photo Courtesy of David Pierce

The Canadice Corners Cemetery is the final resting place of Alvah Wilson Doolittle. With Honeoye Lake stretching out below, the rolling hillsides of Canadice surround the cemetery. The setting of Canadice Corners Cemetery gives the visitor a feeling of going back in time, to the small, white steepled churches of 18th and 19th century New England. The early inhabitants of Canadice came from various New England states to make a home and to farm the virgin, fertile farmlands of the region. Such was the experience of the Doolittle Family.



Alvah Wilson Doolittle –  
circa 1887  
– Image courtesy of Canadice  
Historian, Margaret Bott

### The Obituary of Alvah Wilson Doolittle 1 August 1827 - 22 April 1906 From the Naples Record, 27 April 1906

*A. Wilson Doolittle died at the Memorial Hospital, Canandaigua, on Sunday morning, April 22, 1906, aged 79 years. He was taken to the hospital last November suffering with acute blood poisoning. A few years ago he suffered the amputation of one limb below the knee from the cause named and from which he never fully recovered.*

*Mr. Doolittle was a native of Canadice, where he spent nearly his whole life, and where he was prominent and highly respected, having for periods of many years held offices of public trust, having been for twenty years a justice of the peace and overseer of the poor for an equal term. His wife died eight years ago, and a year later he removed to Naples, where he built a nice residence which was presided over by his daughter, Miss Zeruah.*

*He is survived by four sons - Thomas, of Naples; Elmer W., of Canandaigua; John E., of Ellicottville, and L. M. of Canadice - and four daughters - Mrs. A. M. Blake and Miss Zeruah Doolittle, of Naples; Mrs. John West, of Springwater, and Mrs. J. E. Norget, of Canadice. They were all present at the funeral, which was held on Monday, and the burial was in Canadice.*

After a life of commitment, hard work and faithfulness, Alvah rests in the Cemetery of the churchyard in Canadice. His journey here on Earth completed, his memory is now preserved as a small piece of New York's buried past. ☛

### Motivation

Inevitably, the day to day lives of our ancestors fade over time along with the cemeteries and gravestones that mark their final resting places. Older burial grounds become neglected, forgotten and many, for better or worse, fall into ruin; some disappear forever. Sharing New York's buried past helps preserve the rich histories of brave men and women who have gone before us. Lives of great expectation, long lives and short lives, lives of joy and sorrow, lives of triumph and tragedy, lives of gain and loss...are all shared and preserved when descendants honor their ancestors through recognition, research and reverence.

# MAKING LEMONADE

BARB STAHL



## Heartfelt Thanks!

By the time you are reading this I hope to have fully emerged from my “COVID Cocoon.” One thing which really helped me do that was going to the Cardiac Rehabilitation series at UR Thompson in Canandaigua. How lucky for me to live about ten minutes away! It proved to do more than get me going again physically from my recent heart valve installation. It placed me among “real people” who were dedicated to helping me to exercise appropriately and get back into my pre-COVID world.

The focus of the program is for people who have had a heart attack, angina, coronary artery angioplasty or stents, open heart surgery such as coronary bypass or valve surgery, heart failure or heart transplantation. Participants are provided with a heart monitor which is continually watched on a computer, and saved to the patient’s medical chart. That allows doctors to have access to the results.

Each person in rehab has his/her schedule, intensity, etc. and this is adjusted as one completes various speeds, levels, times, and moves on to higher challenges.



Josh explains the settings such as speed and level.

or doctor visits. Your blood pressure is taken upon arrival, sometimes at various intervals between exercises, and before you leave. It dramatically demonstrates how very important exercise is in reducing blood pressure.

The staff is most helpful and keeps everyone going in a positive manner. The machines each have a different focus to help certain parts of your body. The professionals determine the machine’s settings to start at a certain level and speed for so many minutes, and as you continue the challenge grows.



Exercise physiologists Joshua Featherly teaches a session.

The whole program consists of physical exercise, with two series of helpful classes offered. One series is taught by a dietician who covers instruction about various kinds of foods, appropriate eating habits, and offers solutions to common “eating problems.” The second series deals with “stress management.” It is taught by an exercise physiologist, a pharmacist, or a nurse. In this series a variety of subjects are taught dealing more with the physical aspects of the heart and cardio-vascular system, or as with the pharmacist, an overview and discussion of drugs we participants would have typically been taking. Questions were always invited and answered which addresses personal needs and concerns. Each day when you attend the program you complete a short form which details health status at that time, exercise done on one’s own, weight, and recent lab



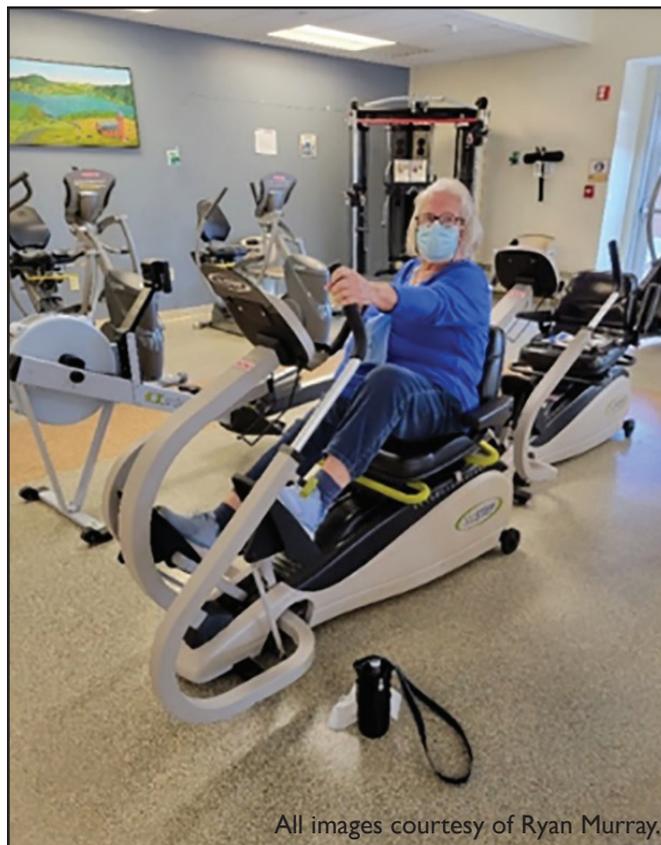
Trying out an exercise for my arms.

You are required to report your “stress” level upon completion of each exercise which is determined by reporting your personal “reaction” response to that exercise. A “Rating of Perceived Exertion (Borg RPE Scale)” chart is used to determine your reaction level following an exercise which helps the professionals assign appropriate upgrades to your exercise program. For example: level 7 exertion is “fairly light,” level 13 is “somewhat hard,” level 17 is “very hard,” and level 20 is “maximum exertion.”

Another number called “mets” (referring to metabolism) conveys the level of energy expended, endurance, etc. Most of the machines determine this number, and some give an average for the complete workout on that specific machine). For other machines the exerciser is asked to note the various “met” numbers shown to determine an average. These met numbers are reported to the staff.

I worked on five different machines throughout my cardiac rehabilitation series. As I progressed, levels were raised, time exercising was increased, and confidence was built. I would like to sincerely thank the excellent staff who guided me through this important series to get me back in motion!

Thankfully, I was able to laugh and joke with the staff!! I very much appreciate the Cardiac Rehabilitation staff: Heather Williams, nurse practitioner, the two exercise physiologists – Joshua Featherly and Ryan Murray, and Samantha Barnhart - a college intern studying for that role. They became very important to my physical and mental well-being. Thank you all!



All images courtesy of Ryan Murray.

Extra thanks to Ryan for taking all the photos!! (and also for not complaining that I always needed set-up help with “some” of the equipment)! 🐦

## Rejoicing from p.48

And now it had come to this. In the front room the grieving parents sat, each embracing a boy—their youngest and their eldest—praying that all might yet be well, praying without words, scarcely with hope.

So they sat. Linnet snuggled into the rocker with Gordie in her arms, Walt upon the floor with Luke in his lap. An hour passed. Another. Then Linnet stood; slowly she crossed the room to her child’s cot and laid the stilled form of her baby upon his bed. Only minutes passed before Walt rose from his vigil, a lifeless boy in his arms.

*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.  
He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing  
precious seed, shall doubtless come again  
with rejoicing.* 🐦

## WILLIAM PRESTON

### Seeing Rightly

To spy a rainbow in a snowflake;  
to trace horizons in the dew;  
to hear the thunder woo the roses  
or taste the scent of green and blue,

a heart must beat in tune with oceans;  
a soul must meld with wet and wild,  
for, seeing beyond infinity  
requires the heartsight of a child.

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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.



# WARSAW WENDY

WENDY SCHREINER

## When Summer's in Full Swing – It's Baseball Season!

When summer's in full swing I can hear the bats hitting the balls. "It's one, two, three strike's you're out at the old ball game." The "Take me out to the ball game" song by Jack Norworth and Albert Von Tilzer has been around since 1908. The popular baseball number sings, "Take me out to the ball game, take me out with the crowd; buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack, I don't care if I never get back, Let me root, root, root for the home team, If they don't win it's a shame, For its one, two, three strikes, you're out, At the old ball game."

I looked up the top 100 baseball players. I recognized some of the names. Number one of course, was Babe Ruth. Second was Willie Mays. Ty Cobb was third on the list. Lou Gehrig was sixth. Joe DiMaggio was eleventh. Number seventeen was Mickey Mantle. In the twenty-fifth spot they listed Pete Rose. Thirty-five was Joe Jackson. Placing forty on the list was Yogi Berra. Jackie Robinson was forty-four. Reggie Jackson was number forty-eight. Roger Clemens was fifty-three. Cal Ripken, Jr. was seventy-eight. Ozzie Smith was eighty-seven. These were the names I recognized. Not bad for not really being into baseball. Popular baseball names to me are Derek Jeter and Alex Rodriguez.

I can hear the chant now, "Peanuts, Popcorn, Cracker Jacks." I am walking in to the stadium in Downtown Buffalo to catch a Buffalo Bisons game. It's a nice warm summer night. Folks are lined up outside waiting to get in to watch an all American game of base-

### I can hear the chant now, "Peanuts, Popcorn, Cracker Jacks."



Baseball Memorabilia from Bristol Hills Historical Society Collection. Image courtesy of Joy Lewis

ball. I'll get my souvenir plastic baseball cap cup filled with ice cream. Yes, I will eat some peanuts too. Grab me a soda and I will be all set.

When my mother was young, she was a fan of the Cleveland "Indians" baseball team; which recently changed their name to the Cleveland "Guardians." She could name every player on the team back in the day. Little did she know that later on in life, she would have three children and that one of them would relocate to the Ohio area. I attended a Cleveland Indians game several years back when they played against the New York Yankees. It was a very hot day out as we watched the ball game. I never played the sport myself.

Both of my brothers were on baseball teams. My older brother also got hit on the head with a baseball bat. My mother had the misfortune of watching this happen as she looked out the front window. He had a massive goose egg on his forehead and a trip to the hospital that I am sure my mother still recalls to this day unfortunately! My friends were on a softball team and I had fun cheering them on. More fun was had when we went out after the game was over. The team wasn't very good, but they never gave up!

I know a lot of New York Yankees fans. Growing up, a guy in our neighborhood was a Kansas City Royals fan.

I'm trying to think in my mind of

other names of baseball teams. Orioles, Red Sox, White Sox, Cardinals, Blue Jays, Red Wings. This isn't easy. I'm trying to go through the alphabet. Marlins? Penguins? I will have to look this up at home and check my trivia skills. I bet I'll see some of the team names and think oh yeah, duh! We shall see! It will be interesting. In any event, this article will help me to learn more about baseball. I love to learn new things. I always wish to expand my knowledge. My favorite sport is of course, football and "Buffalo Bills" is my all time favorite football team. GO BILLS! I looked up the baseball teams and yeah I did say oh yeah, duh when I read the team names of Atlanta Braves, Philadelphia Phillies, Seattle Mariners, Houston Astros, Los Angeles Dodgers, Los Angeles Angels, Pittsburgh Pirates, Detroit Tigers and New York Mets. Other teams like Tampa Bay Rays, Chicago Cubs, Cincinnati Reds, Milwaukee Brewers, Oakland Athletics, Texas Rangers, San Francisco Giants, Arizona Diamondbacks, San Diego Padres, Minnesota Twins, Colorado

Rockies and Washington Nationals I had no clue about, but now I do. Earlier I guessed Red Wings; which was actually Rochester Red Wings and I mentioned Penguins – Clark College's baseball team's name is the Penguins, even though I was probably confused and thinking about the National Hockey League when I thought Penguins.

When I looked up baseball movies, I couldn't believe how many there were. From the few "Sandlot" films to "Bottom of the 9<sup>th</sup>." Two of my favorite ones are "Field of Dreams" and "For the Love of the Game;" which both starred Kevin Costner. Of course, "The Natural" with Robert Redford is on the top of the list too as well as "A League of Their Own."

In England during the mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century, bat and ball games were already being played. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, baseball was widely recognized as a national sport in the United States. New York Knickerbockers played on September 23, 1845. In 1871, the first professional league, The National Association of Professional

Base Ball Players was founded. The National League was created five years later. The American League followed it in 1901. The First World Series took place between champions of two major leagues in 1903. By 1905, it had become an annual event.

In Batavia at Dwyer Stadium the Batavia Muckdogs play baseball providing a day at the ballgame for all to enjoy. Recently the Toronto Blue Jays have taken over the Buffalo Bisons place to play, Sahlen Field for their innings due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Buffalo Bisons started the 2021 season playing "home" games in Trenton, New Jersey. No matter where the ball games have been played there is nothing like a good old baseball game!

I think John Fogerty's upbeat lyrics on his "Centerfield" song tell a baseball story best, "... Look at me (yeah), I can be centerfield."

Yes, When Summer's in Full Swing – It's Baseball Season!

Take me out to the ballgame! 🦋

## Queen from p. 41

Instead, the wax is cut such that there is a row of undrawn wax hanging like inverted triangular flags from the top bar of the frame. The challenge I had this time was that I had super energetic bees, who insisted in building out the entire frame (image right) rather than leaving some space along the bottom for multiple queen cells. To compensate, I cut a half circle in one side, right at the edge of day old eggs, in the hopes that I could get a few queens from the frame.

I will be able to produce several quality queens from these early splits, so that I have additional colonies in time for basswood (which I would love to have the bees make comb honey from). Once summer hits, I will try a couple grafted frames and, if possible, "bank" some queens for future use.

I am watching for successful mating of the queens over the next few weeks and will look at production levels as well. One area that I will be observing outcome is the date of the queen bees' emergence and their winter survival. Sam noted that queens emerging before the summer solstice—June 21, 2022—appear less able to survive our winters. A careful comparison of these early queens and the later ones (that the bees raise themselves in splits)—as well as observations of the success of grafted queens—will gleefully occupy me during these delightful summer months and further inform next year's beeyard practices. 🦋



# Meet the Owl Light Authors

**Æsc** is the "Small Town Hound—Finding Creative Venues and Adventures in NYS." He lives with his two humans, his canine companion Winnie, and Cat Stevens in Canadice, NY. When not writing, his favorite pastime is finding people. He loves hearing from his fans:

• [fb@SmallTownHoundNY](#).

**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.

**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. • [garnardc@sunybroome.edu](#)

**William Gentry** is a 10-year-old kid who doodles. A LOT. He likes playing games, reading, and of course, drawing. He mostly likes drawing because he also likes viewing it. He loves reading comic strips and graphic novels. And, trust me, he has a 17th favorite comic strip (no joke!) He lives with his mother and father (of course), and is really happy to be submitting a comic strip to this newspaper.

**Joy Lewis** has served as Town of Richmond Historian since 2013. She offers reflections on the history of Richmond, NY in every issue of the *Owl Light*.

• 585-229-1128 • [historian@townofrichmond.org](#)

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

• [fb@Odonata Sanctuary](#).

**Eileen Perkins**, a native of Rochester NY, 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.

**David Pierce** and his wife Colleen live in the Town of Canandaigua. David has enjoyed exploring local history for many years, documenting people, place and events as far back as 1590. He is a certified member of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants, having documented his ancestry back 10 generations to Francis Cooke and Peter Browne, two of the original passengers on the Mayflower voyage of 1620. Many of his ancestors lived in historic, Ontario County communities for well over 200 years, providing a fitting backdrop for his research on the inhabitants of this magnificent region of New York State. • [piercedave54@gmail.com](#)

**Wendy Schreiner** resides in Warsaw, NY with her husband Dave and two adorable shih tzus, Daisy Mae and Paisley Rae. She facilitates Warsaw's Write Connection Writing Club at the Warsaw Public Library, which is in its 11th year. Her poetry, articles and concert reviews have appeared in several newspapers and publications throughout the years.

**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](#).

**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.

• [makinglemonadeowl@gmail.com](#)

**Kurt Staudter's** thirty year 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 in Substation Operations & Maintenance, every day his work took him someplace along the river. He is 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 BA degree from the National Labor College, and participated with a fellowship in the Harvard Trade Union Program.

• [staudter@sover.net](#)

**T. Touris** is a retired-computer-programmer. He spends his free time designing and working in wood on his small woodland lot in Canadice, NY.

**George Urich** is a retired Xerox engineer living in Canandaigua, NY. He solves and creates crossword puzzles to keep his brain active. • [gurich@frontier.com](mailto:gurich@frontier.com)

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

**Sally L White** is a lifelong naturalist and writer. After 40 years in Colorado, she's getting reacquainted with New York's native flora, exploring one plant at a time and sharing special stories of each. Once a place of youthful memories, the Keuka Lake area is again her home.

**Bill Waterhouse** is the owner of Trail Otter LLC, an outdoor adventure company located in Leicester New York. A native of Dansville, he and his partner Sonni Olbert are having too much fun exploring all the nooks and crannies of area trails and waterfalls. He loves having fellow hikers and backpackers stop into Trail Otter to share trail stories and favorite places to escape civilization. Although he doesn't mind crowds, his favorite places are the rustic east side of The Grand Canyon of the East (Letchworth), the quieter western side of the Adirondacks, and The Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania (Pine Creek). He's always on the lookout for good espresso, fun folks to hang out with, and very dark beer. Email: [info@trailotter.com](mailto:info@trailotter.com)



Summer is all about the flowers, and *Owl Light* regular Wendy Schreiner offered up this image, which she referred to as a “home run” picture of roses.

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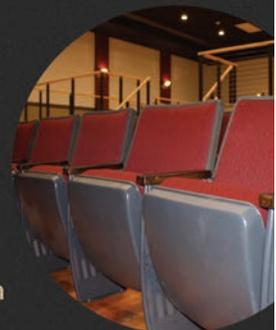


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