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SPRING 2008

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"Unfolding" *by Pat Donohoe*

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Cover Artist

For watercolorist Pat Donohoe, painting is a spiritual practice that integrates everything from the silvery half-moon poses of yoga to the "gold enameling" of Yeats. "It's all of a piece," she says.

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Revisiting Adam and Eve

Randall Tremba

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat,
for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.
Genesis 2

Myths are stories about things that never were; but always are.
Thomas Mann

Humans will become better when you show them what they are like.
Anton Chekhov

On German Street there's a coffee shop. On the counter in that coffee shop there's a box with a closed lid. On the lid is a sign: CAUTION: DO NOT OPEN THIS BOX. A patron of that shop told me that he had stared at that box, walked away, came back, stared at it some more, walked away, came back, and lifted the lid.

The LORD God took the man [that would be "Adam"] *and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* [meaning: "the knowledge of everything"; or, as we might put it, "the knowledge of A to Z"] *you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."*

Do not eat that fruit. Do not open this box. Do not touch that stove. Do not play with fire. Do not sail over the horizon. Do not split the atom. Do not experiment with stem cells. Do not clone. Do not question authority. Do not question the Bible. Do not eat that fruit. Or else!

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman [that would be "Eve"], *"Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" "Oh," she said, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, nor touch it, or else you shall die.'" Then the serpent said, "You will not die; God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

The woman saw the tree was good for food, a delight to the eyes, and could make one wise. So, she took of its fruit and ate; and gave some to her husband. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves and hid among the trees of the garden.

Myths are stories about things that never were; but always are.

This mythic tale of the Garden of Eden has been around for a very long time. Many Christians see it as depicting the *fall* of humankind from perfection and consequently blame Eve and punish all her sisters. Others see the tale differently, as the *emergence* of humans out of the animal world and consequently credit Eve for her courage and initiative. I once saw it the first way; I now see it the other way. (When in doubt, trust a Jewish view of Genesis.)

When you take the Bible seriously, you can't take it literally in all cases.

But ambiguity's not so bad. We now know things about the Bible that our Christian predecessors didn't. Not because they were ignorant, but because certain scholarly tools had not been invented and because some questions that occur to us never occurred to them. That "crafty serpent" slithering through our minds has more than one question up its devilish sleeve. And that's a good thing. Questions are the tools of the human quest.

In the past 200 years, we have grasped yet another fruit; in this case, knowledge about the Bible's evolution and composition. In doing so, we have lost a certain innocence, including simple faith and absolute certainty. Knowledge can be scary. The Bible, as it turns out, is a human product—inspired but human.

The Bible is a human product and, as such, it is flawed, much as our parents are flawed. We respect our parents and can learn much from them. But we do not worship them!

Whether we like it or not, the Bible is the foundational document of the Christian tradition. It is full of wisdom. *Sacred* wisdom, we could say. But the Bible is sacred, as Marcus Borg puts it in his book, *The Heart of Christianity*, not because of its alleged divine *origin*; but because of its actual status and *function* within the tradition. We'd be fools to dismiss it, and even bigger fools to worship it.

Do not open this box. Do not eat that fruit. Do not question the authority of the Bible. Or else!

But what are we going to do? Questions are the tools for the human quest. It's our nature to reach and reach and reach. It's how we became and become human.

No one knows exactly how it happened in the misty past, how the first humans stood apart from humanoids. Genesis, on the one hand, offers a mythic story full of symbolic props including a first couple, a garden, a serpent, and even God as a prop. Evolution, on the other hand, offers a scientific, physical, and biological story. But no matter how it's told, we can say this much: Mother Earth gave birth to a wild and wonderful, yet dangerous, child.

Is there anything on this planet that is at the same time so marvelous and so despicable as human beings? The birth of self-awareness, symbolized by the shame and fig leaves, brought the death of our animallike innocence and contentment, a contentment marked by an unquestioned sense of belonging to this planet.

Given our godlike creative powers and freedom, what is to become of us if we go awry? Given our million-year-old "survival of the fittest" mentality inherited from the animal world, can we find a way of being a benevolent creative force on this planet? Can we find a way to live "East of Eden" without destroying each other and the Mother that gave us birth? How can we find our way home? Is there anyone to help us?

In this prehistoric, mythic tale from the Great Ancestors, Adam and Eve personify our species; personify the first earthlings to feel estranged from themselves and the earth itself. According to the tale, they ran and hid, overcome by terror and dread.

And then…

And then they heard someone call their name.

Myths are stories about things that never were; but always are.

War is the ongoing activity of the children of the earth. Most of us are more skilled at warmaking than peacemaking. If we are warriors by nature, then the call of Jesus to be peacemakers is indeed an evolutionary call. Perhaps it is as radical as the command "STAND UP!" was to our ancient ancestors who moved about on all fours. **G.K. Chesterton**

The young man in the coffee shop stared at the forbidden box on the counter, opened the lid, and looked inside.

It was empty.

Good one, eh?

Sometimes we are nothing if not downright clever, funny, and harmless. Sometimes we're not.

Founding Farmers

Christopher Robinson

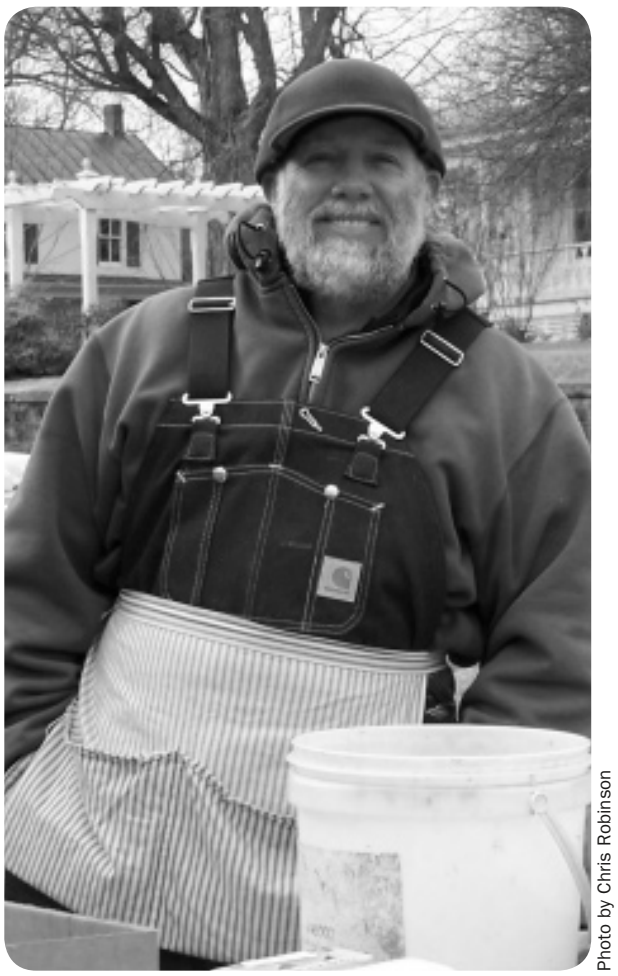


Photo by Chris Robinson

Bill Grantham of Tudor Hall Farm

I have lived in Shepherdstown my whole life. I was born here, but my family came from other towns, so I don't consider myself a true local yet. However, a lot of people ask me what the local expression "been here long enough" means. Well, the answer is more complex than it would seem. If you moved here and weren't born here, you are at quite a disadvantage. Unless you are extremely adaptable and sympathetic to the myriad complex relationships weaving themselves into the beautiful tapestry that is *local color*, you don't have much of a chance to figure out how subtle changes affect the overall picture of the place. Most newcomers will never understand how much Shepherdstown has been changed by the influx of new developers and businesses. These folks might need to take a look at how attempts to affect a sea change in local politics only end up widening the gap between those who have been here for generations, and those who want to make their own imprint on a community that has been here for hundreds of years.

If asked for the perfect example of someone who's "been here long enough," I would not hesitate to point out local farmer Bill Grantham. Bill's ancestors moved here over 200 years ago and have been farming in the county ever since. Bill is also one of the original founders of the Shepherdstown Farm Market. With all the talk of *big change in the air* around town, I thought it might be appropriate to look at a little local history. I found Bill in his normal spot by the post office on Saturday morning. Between the sessions of witty banter and garden advice he likes to call commerce, I got a chance to ask him about his heritage.

The first generation of Granthams to move into the county was a pair of orphans from Albemarle County, Va. They came here in 1763 with their uncle, John Smith, who started the Smithfield Food Company. Having sold all they owned in Virginia, the young Granthams bought a wooded piece of land and spent their lives timbering and clearing the land, and working the soil so it could be farmed by future generations. Their children began farming cattle and hogs, and wheat and other subsistence crops, as did most farms of the period. Almost everything for daily life was produced on the farm and anything left was sold or traded for luxuries like salt and sugar.

By the fourth generation in the 1890s, the family attempted to put in orchards for a cash crop. Many farms at the turn of the century were getting electrical service and had to come up with cash income to pay the bills, essentially ending the reality of the independent American family farm. The orchard experiment ended with a bad frost and the slightly imperfect position of the fledgling trees. The patriarch of this industrious generation was also the local superintendent of schools in the county and created his own breed of horses called the Grantham, a cross between a Percheron and a Morgan.

The fifth generation turned the farm into a dairy around 1917 and became quite successful, shipping milk and butter to the Washington D.C. markets. This was how the farm stayed, working on a rigorous milking schedule for well over 50 years. Bill inherited the farm as a dairy around 1970 and ran it as such until 1989. While running the dairy, Bill decided to attend the biology program at Shepherd University, taking classes around the milking schedule, of course. It was at this time he met his wonderful wife Phyllis. They found true romance washing Petri dishes together in Paul Saab's biology class. They were married in December 1973 at 1:30 in the afternoon, "in between milkings," to put it in Bill's own words. Their first daughter, Natalie, was born in 1978 and Olivia was born in 1984. They are the eighth generation of Granthams in Jefferson County. Natalie was married and became Natalie Friend. Her daughter Nell is the ninth generation.

Bill decided he had enough of living his life around the limiting social calendar of a dairy and converted the farm to produce in 1989. He and Phyllis put in irrigation systems and built a roadside market stand. They had the farm certified organic by 1991. At this time, Bill also started the Shepherdstown Farm Market with Paul Elliot and Lee Griner. In 1996, after struggling for years to sell healthy but not perfect vegetables, they switched from strictly organic practice to an integrated pest management system. He had always raised a few chickens, but he expanded his poultry holdings. Using the birds as pest control, he could raise fairly good-looking produce and use only a minimal amount of spray. His first successful experiment was with broccoli. He had tried planting some early in his farming career and found it all but impossible to keep insects out of the delicate heads. Recently, he moved a large flock of *banty* birds, a small variety of chicken, near the broccoli, and the industrious birds kept the area virtually insect-free—plus they provided eggs. He now grows green beans, lima beans, and other hard-to-care-for crops with the help of his birds.

Being fairly confident in his growing abilities and the quality of his product, Bill is once again working to bring his product into the markets of D.C., much like his early relatives with the dairy. I asked him what were some of the challenges making a living from the earth. The largest cost in farming is, of course, labor, and Bill has decided that to make a profit he has to minimize this overhead. So he and the family do all of the work. He and family member Andrew Upright do most of the heavy lifting and mechanical work, while the whole family chips in for the time-consuming tasks of picking, planting, and selling the crops.

Bill's favorite vegetables to grow and eat are traditional favorites, tomatoes and squash. However, he has been finding himself branching into the exotic worlds of international eggplants and dilettante desert melons to stay competitive. He says it's a challenge to figure out what he really has the time to grow when there is such a small labor pool. He would like to plant raspberries and other small fruits but is afraid he won't have the labor to pick them while taking care of the many other crops he grows. The art of farming was summed up by Bill in one Zen statement: "It's not how many things I can grow, but how many things I can grow well." And that, folks, is having "been here long enough."

Tudor Hall farm stand is located at 6280 Middleway Pike. Bill can be found every Saturday outside of the Shepherdstown Post Office and at the Shepherdstown Farm Market behind the library every Sunday beginning March 23.

*Freelance artist and writer **Christopher Robinson** is a part of the local color and can usually be found slumming it downtown. He graduated from Shepherd College and his family runs a small produce farm in the county. Contact him at Skeetahawk@gmail.com*

Professor With a Washboard

Claire Stuart

Photo by Ruth Weese

Hannah Geffert, Shepherd University professor of political science

If you Google the name Hannah N. Geffert, some of the hits that come up include The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a book called *John Brown Mysteries*, and a directory that lists "Washboard Players Known to Exist in the U.S.A." Could these all be pointing to the same Hannah Geffert? They are, and this is also the Hannah Geffert who may be more familiar to you as a member of Shepherd University's faculty in the department of political science.

Born in Philadelphia and an alumnus of Temple University, Geffert has been teaching at Shepherd for 22 years. Although her degrees are in history, she teaches political science and enjoys it. "Politics are a living study," she said. "They are always changing. Things are always going on."

Geffert came up through the turbulent days of the civil rights movement. Her father was active in civil rights, and she followed his example. She went south to live in the city of Wauchula in central Florida, which was totally segregated at the time. There she worked with grassroots organizations and lawyers on civil rights cases throughout central and northern Florida. "Wauchula was what they called a *sundown town*," she recalled with a grimace, "which meant that all blacks had to be out of town by sundown."

As a researcher, Geffert assisted lawyers of The Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law to put together civil litigation to enforce civil rights legislation. The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization was formed in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy in order to move the increasing strife in the battle for civil rights out of the streets and into the courtrooms. "We worked on education cases," said Geffert. "For every law case, there are two sides—the law and the facts. The lawyers worked on the law, and I did research and worked on the facts."

In those days, civil rights activism in the south could prove to be dangerous and sometimes fatal. Geffert and her colleagues were met with insults and even death threats. Asked if she had actually feared for her life, Geffert simply shrugged and smiled, "I was young then." She added that she had played lacrosse in college. "A contact sport teaches you about life!"

In keeping with her interests in both civil rights and history, Geffert became involved in a Shepherd University project to identify black cemeteries, particularly unmarked graves, in Jefferson County and write a local history of African Americans. She was frustrated by the lack of material she could find. Delving further into local black history, she became interested in black participation in abolitionist John Brown's ill-fated raid on Harper's Ferry.

According to Geffert, at one time the prevailing belief held by historians was that blacks didn't really support and participate in John Brown's raid. "It was thought that things were simply happening around the black people but that they were not actually engaged," she said. "That was wrong."

Geffert's research, pieced together through documents long hidden away, showed that John Brown was trying to make a common cause with the black community of the north. Geffert's publication, "John Brown and his Black Allies: An Ignored Alliance" appeared in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* in 2002, and black involvement in the raid is now accepted by scholars studying that period.

Geffert is a member of Allies for Freedom, a national research group focused on John Brown and his connection with African-American communities. This group, made up of historians, teachers and librarians, conducts research, shares information and writes on the subject. Geffert met Jean Libby, a California historian and founder of the group, at a conference. They found they had a similar focus, so decided to keep in touch and share information. As a result, Libby and Geffert co-authored a book called *John Brown Mysteries*, which Geffert describes as "for the general public, but scholarly."

"Libby is really good at digging things up," said Geffert. "She found old documents that were out of public hands. I put them together and did the analysis."

The most important thing they found was a foreign-made *fowling piece*—a gun taken from Colonel Lewis Washington's house at the time of the raid that, according to senate hearing records, was "last seen in the hands of a Negro on the Maryland side of the river." They located descendents of a black family who had lived in the area during John Brown's time and who still have the fowling piece and other historic guns in their possession.

Geffert definitely has a life beyond the classroom, books, and dusty documents. She is mother of two grown daughters and a son in high school. She is co-host of a local radio talk show called Political Roundtable on station WEPM every Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. She describes her co-host, David Welsh, as "more conservative, and I'm more liberal." They chew over local and national political events and sometimes have guests, including local and state politicians and candidates for public office.

And then, there's the washboard! Geffert plays washboard in a local blues/soul band called the Chef Eric Band. The other band members are Eric Fredenburgh, Scot Barham, Jeff Jolbitado, Ed Gulli, and Mark Laue. Geffert notes that as a washboard player she isn't simply a novelty. "I play on every song," she declared.

She put in a quick plug for their new CD called *Today's Special*. "Because of the Internet, we've had air play in South America and around Europe, especially in France because they love blues," she said. "We've even been played in Croatia!"

Geffert learned to play the washboard from an old African-American man named Percy Reid, Sr., who was a close family friend with whom she spent a lot of time. When he died, his washboard and its case came into her possession. She offered it to a band he had been jamming with, but they would not accept it. "They'd noticed me keeping time with the music, told me that I had rhythm and encouraged me to play the washboard," she recalled. So, the band took the case as a keepsake, and Geffert kept Reid's washboard.

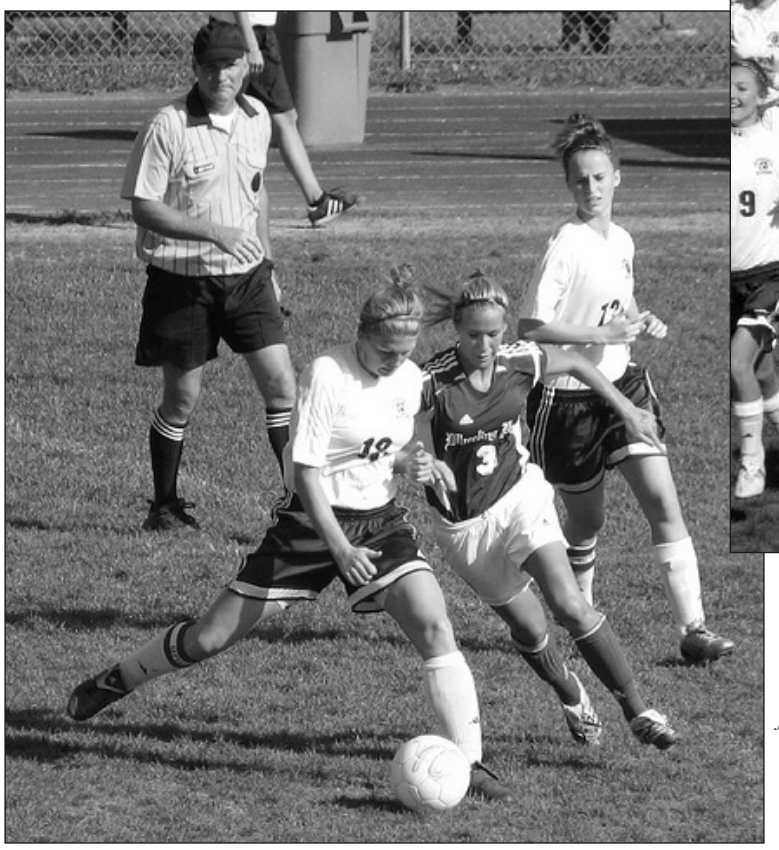
The Chef Eric Band jams on Sunday afternoons at Hilltop House in Harper's Ferry and plays gigs at Tony's in Shepherdstown as well as in clubs in the D.C. area. They were finalists in the 2007 Baltimore Blues Society's Battle of the Bands.

In the past, Geffert was active in community theater, and she says the collaboration aspect was what she enjoyed the most. "This is what I love about being in a band," she said. "The sum is greater than the parts." She prefers playing in a band to being in a theatrical production because she doesn't have to dedicate the large blocks of time that theater demands. "You don't have to commit for six weeks at a time," she said. "You play a gig and then you go home."

Kids Page

Nothing Good Comes Easy

Sarah Cogswell



The Lady Cougars after winning their first state title.

Captains Tiffany Banks and Shannon Conway fighting for the ball at the semifinal game.

Photos by Jack Hooper

We had dreamed about it, we had worked for it, and now here we were. Hands gripping other hands, teeth clenched, it was the West Virginia state soccer championship game and the score was tied. Still. After the first half of the game, Parkersburg was ahead 1-0, but that didn't last long; in the second half, Katie Perry scored the tying goal. So, we went into overtime: two ten-minute overtimes, two five-minute golden goal periods, and finally, penalty kicks.

To really understand how much this game meant to the Jefferson High School Lady Cougars, we have to go back to the previous November. It was only the second time the Lady Cougars had gotten to the state tournament—the first being about ten years ago—and we were beaten by Parkersburg. If you asked anyone on the team whom she would consider rivals, you'd hear Martinsburg or Hedgesville, of course, but Parkersburg would be on the top of the list.

That winter, we began working for the following season. Four or five days a week, we would go to weight training with Coach Katie Myers, and meet once a month to watch game film from the previous season. As winter turned to spring, we headed outdoors for conditioning after school, and as spring turned to summer, our training really began.

Throughout the month of June, soccer controlled our lives. I remember so many mornings getting up early and going to Morgan's Grove to work out with my best friend, Kirsten Chaney (who plays sweeper on the team), followed by lunch before heading over to the Jefferson County Board of Education for practice.

July was our month off. Since the West Virginia Soccer Association did not allow us to be coached during this month, the players got together by themselves once a day to work out.

Come August, we had a little more than two weeks until our first game, and we worked our butts off. Intense two-a-days left no time for anything but sleeping and eating, but that's all we wanted to do after a day of conditioning.

Eventually school started and the season was in full swing. Everyone knew what we were working for, and work we did. One of the wonderful things about my team is that no one or two players are expected to do it all. Our rock-solid defense was the foundation for our offense and our offense was the first line of defense. Coach Harold Bache and Coach Myers emphasized what we called it—total soccer: everyone plays offense, and everyone plays defense.

It was the picture of what a team should be. Everyone had a part, and if someone got injured, another person would step right in so the team wouldn't suffer until she returned. Our captains, Shannon Conway and Tiffany Banks, led the way by working hard in practice and setting the standards high. Kirsten Chaney, Heather Shaffer, Shannon Conway, and Sarah Cooper always seemed to be exactly where we needed them most to keep the ball out of the back of our net. Then there were our midfielders, Kaitlyn Mahoney, Tiffany Banks, Eva Marshall, Caitie Klug, Hilary Adams, and Amelia Park, who constantly ran up and down the field to make the pass, cover their defender, or score the goal. Up front were the forwards, Kelsey Barnholt, Jenny Perry, and me, who worked endless hours on overlapping runs, finishing, and virtually every aspect of scoring there is. Finally, there was Katie Perry, who doesn't really fit into any single category above. She was stupendous everywhere she played and didn't complain, regardless of where she ended up, because she trusted that it was best for the team. Everyone worked incredibly hard no matter how much time they were getting, and that is what made us a great team.

This was the last year for our seven seniors (Shannon Conway, Tiffany Banks, Tessa Turek, Anna Lloyd, Kaitlyn Mahoney, Sarah Cooper, and Heather Wilson) and it is hard to describe how much they will be missed—on and off the field. It is difficult to think that I will never again play with most of these girls, or that I have taken my last long bus ride through the back roads of West Virginia with them.

Coach Bache and Coach Myers hold a special place in my heart. They were probably the first to believe that we could go all the way and they made us believe it, too. They knew we had it in us, so they pushed us as far as we could go, and because of this we went farther.

After the last golden goal period on that momentous day in November, we were confident. We had practiced penalty kicks religiously throughout the season. Normally, it is the best out of five penalty kicks that wins the game; if it is still tied after that, the game goes to the first team to make a goal when the other team misses one. After five kicks, it was still tied. In fact, after 10 it was still tied. This had never happened before in a West Virginia playoff game; the previous record for number of penalty kicks taken by each team was seven. On the 13th penalty kick, Sarah Cooper made an amazing save and it was left to Heather Shaffer to notch the final goal. She put it in the lower right corner and the crowd went wild. For the first time in Jefferson High School history, the Lady Cougars had won the state championship.

We would never have gotten as far as we did without every single person involved with the team: from our incredible coaches, to our more than dedicated managers, to the parents and our supporters. Next year we will work to return, but without our seniors, our team won't quite be the same.

***Sarah Cogswell** is a sophomore forward on the Jefferson High School Lady Cougars varsity soccer team. She was named* The Martinsburg Journal*'s Player of the Year for the 2007 season.*

Animal House

Claire Stuart

Photo by Ruth Weese

Tyler and Madison Quinn with Lulu, an umbrella cockatoo; Zig Zag, a bearded dragon; and Buddy, a mini lop-eared rabbit.

A few months ago, local youngsters met an unusual pet, when Zig Zag the bearded dragon lizard visited the Shepherdstown Library. He belongs to 12-year-old Tyler Quinn. The GOOD NEWS PAPER had a chance to meet many other household pets when visiting Tyler's house.

Starting the tour, Tyler reached into the junglelike interior of a 55-gallon tank and pulled out a beautiful lizard-like creature about six inches long. It was black, its back studded with rows of small red bumps resembling shiny beads. He identified it as a Mandarin emperor newt, native to Asia. Other exotic occupants of the tank were a firebelly toad and a White's tree frog, along with a local salamander from the wilds of Morgan's Grove Park. They live together in relative harmony and dine on crickets and earthworms.

"They won't eat store-bought worms," Tyler reported. "I have to go out and dig them. So, in the winter they have to eat crickets."

A "Hello!" followed by squalls and screeches came from a large cage across the room. Lulu, an umbrella cockatoo, demanded attention, spreading out the impressive crest on her head that gives the birds their name. In a neighboring cage, Fred and Julie, a pair of diamond doves, sat silently. Karen Waugh, Tyler's mom, noted that they are very quiet birds, as opposed to the noisy cockatoo.

Waugh explained that they bought Lulu in 1992, but they learned from her leg band that she had been wild-caught before 1985 and entered the U.S. before the ban on wild birds. For that reason, Lulu's age is unknown but thought to be between 25 and 30, and her ability to learn human speech is limited. She could live to be 60 or older.

Lulu had lived in a pet store for about two years and was frightened of people at first, especially children, but she soon adjusted to family life. Lulu bonded strongly to Waugh, and the bird looks for her and rides around on her whenever she can.

Tyler's 10-year-old sister, Madison, took Lulu from the cage and left the room. They returned with Lulu clutching a cracker in one handlike claw and nibbling it, while looking around with inquisitive, intelligent eyes.

Lulu loves pasta, chicken, and bacon-egg-cheese biscuits but doesn't like to eat her vegetables. "You can't just offer her food and expect her to eat it," said Madison. "You have to set it down where she can take what she wants. She won't eat food unless she picks it out."

Tyler's room is home to a baby box turtle, smaller than the palm of his hand, and of course, Zig Zag the bearded dragon. "Tyler wanted a big lizard," said Waugh, "so we researched and found that this lizard is very doglike and makes a good pet. They know when you're in the room, and they watch you. They're very friendly."

Zig Zag, at about two feet long, resembles a small dinosaur, with a *beard* of fierce-looking spines around his neck that he can expand by puffing out his throat when he wants to look intimidating. He is sandy beige, but Tyler explained Zig Zag can change color, although not dramatically the way chameleons can. "His beard turns black when he's excited," Tyler said.

Bearded dragons are native to Australian deserts, and Zig Zag lives in a huge desert-habitat terrarium with sand, a cavelike retreat, and places for basking. He requires a temperature range of 65° F at night to 110° by day, so a lamp keeps his tank warm.

"His light is on a timer," said Tyler. "He needs 12 hours of light. If the days are short, he slows down. When I'm in bed and his light goes out, he digs down into the sand."

Zig Zag was born in August 2005, and he was only a few inches long when Tyler bought him. He is now fully grown and will probably live to age 10 or 12. Young lizards grow rapidly, and they primarily eat insects, which provide protein for growth. When full-grown, they eat mostly vegetables. Now, the majority of Zig Zag's diet consists of greens, kale, broccoli, and other vegetables, and fruit. Crickets from the pet shop and mealworms that Tyler raises provide protein. "And he loves raspberries," said Waugh.

Tyler keeps a small dorm-room refrigerator near Zig Zag's tank for the lizard's food, and he chops and mists Zig Zag's greens. "When he hears you open the door, he'll look around," said Tyler. "When he hears me spraying his vegetables, he knows he's going to get food. When his food dish is empty, he'll wait by his dish."

Zig Zag was basking lazily, but his large, raised eyes were alert, rotating to watch everyone in the room. "At night, when we feed him, he'll run all over the cage," said Tyler, pulling out a container of live crickets and dumping them into the tank. The crickets quickly hopped off in every direction. In a split second, the lazy-looking lizard sprang into action. Zig Zag was everywhere, rapidly snatching up the insects with his long tongue. He also checks out his surroundings (including people who hold him) by touching them with the tip of his tongue.

In warm weather, Tyler takes Zig Zag outside to walk on a leash. He explained that the only natural predators of bearded dragons are birds, and the lizards have an instinctive fear of them. "When I take him outside and he sees a shadow from above, he freaks out!" said Tyler.

Madison was anxious to show off her own pet, a soft, gray mini-lop rabbit named Buddy. He lives in a cage in the house and he's litter-box trained. Madison brushes him, clips his toenails and takes him out on a leash. The gentle bunny patiently puts up with children's games. "Sometimes we play doctors on him," Madison reported. "We have doctor stuff."

Buddy was allowed the run of the house until he started chewing on electric cords. He ruined the printer and lamp cords, but fortunately did not chew on anything with enough voltage to seriously injure or kill him. Waugh explained that rabbits, like other rodents, have teeth that continuously grow, so they must constantly gnaw on things to keep their teeth worn down. Now Buddy is restricted to chewing on things provided for that purpose.

Madison advised that Buddy eats rabbit pellets and he likes kale. "It's weird, but he doesn't like carrots. He doesn't really care for them," she said. "He also eats Yogies [yogurt-based animals treats]. He doesn't answer to his name," she added. "You have to shake the Yogies to call him."

Madison introduced the final pet, Patch, her aged calico cat. "She's nice to people she knows, but if she doesn't know you, you can be petting her and all of a sudden she'll smack you!"

Some raucous screeches indicated that Lulu was lonely. Waugh observed that some people get tropical birds because they are attractive, but when they realize how noisy the birds are, they want to get rid of them. She cautions people who want large tropical birds to be informed and prepared to make a long-term commitment.

"We usually have more animals," said Waugh. "This is low for us. We lost three other old cats and our old dog. Madison is hoping for a new dog. When we lived in a larger place, we had sheep and more rabbits."

Claire Stuart *loves to write about animals and people. She began writing about neighborhood cats at age 8. She began writing about people later.*

Exercise From the Inside Out

Tai Chi: Ancient Movement for Modern People

Eldon T. Winston

Photo supplied by author

Eldon Winston leading a Tai Chi class at Berkeley County Senior Center.

Tai Chi started as a martial art in China when self-defense was self-preservation. It differs from many martial arts by its usually slow movements and, as now practiced, by its emphasis on self-awareness. It is called an internal martial art for using and building internal power ("chi") rather than just physical strength.

The self-awareness aspect grew on me, though I was attracted initially by the idea of relaxed but strong movements. I had been interested in martial arts since high school, and once I tried Judo, I realized that the best part of any martial art was the resulting physical fitness. Over the years I read and heard about Tai Chi, but the only class I ever found was 7:00 a.m. on a Saturday, and I don't do that. Finally, in the mid 1980s, I found a class that met in the evenings and Saturday at noon. That introduced me to Tai Chi.

In practicing Tai Chi, called "playing" by practitioners, the Chinese say that learning it takes years. Yet any one of the many forms of the art can be physically imitated in a few weeks to a few months of regular practice/play. Developing the internal awareness that marks Tai Chi is what takes a long time, not the movements themselves.

Tai Chi, with its focus on the internal becoming external, is an antidote to haste and violence. If you are thinking and feeling what you are doing, then you have better things to do than gun the car's engine or try to intimidate someone else. You have "you" to improve, and the measure of that improvement gradually builds in you.

Today, though Tai Chi is still a martial art, it has a new reputation as a modern means of building balance, fitness, and health in its players. For older players, Tai Chi has proven to reduce hip fractures because of improved balance and fitness. In China, research suggests that Tai Chi reduces blood pressure, though that is true of any exercise done regularly.

So, what is Tai Chi? It is a set of forms consisting of moves from the traditions of families (Yang, Sun, Chang, Wu, etc.) who developed their special means of self-defense. If you want to try it, the most important thing for most people is convenience of location rather than a concern with the style of a given family tradition.

If Tai Chi interests you, what might you expect in a class? A class may start with some gentle warm-ups that improve flexibility, but are unlikely to include push-ups—are there soft, gentle push-ups? Rather the idea is to reach, turn, and open up your body to movement. The next day you may have some soreness but not the aches that sometimes follow more vigorous exercise.

One warm-up I find helpful is to stand with my feet shoulder-width apart and hands on hips. Then try to slowly rotate the hips like you were rotating a hula-hoop. You quickly find out as you rotate left and then right whether you are relaxed and just what muscles may be hurting as you gyrate *slowly*.

The point of a Tai Chi warm-up is not to warm up (sweat) but to regain flexibility lost since you last played at Tai Chi and to get your mind reacquainted with your body. Self-awareness reconnects you with your body, making you aware of what is happening. If things don't feel right, it's a message to change what you are doing. Your body may tell you that you are tense, but if your mind is on something else, you can be building up to a sore shoulder, headache, or backache, and not realize it.

Later in a Tai Chi class, you will do a sequence of movements called a form. The form may be a long or short series of movements. It may even be one of several forms used in competition when Tai Chi players all perform a form to see who does the form correctly and at a proper pace in the judges' opinion. Yes, if slow and gentle is not enough, there are competitions where timing, posture, attitude, and performance of the form are judged.

In the form, the movements have names translated from the Chinese such as "Grasp the Sparrow's Tail" or "Golden Cock Stands on One Leg." Some of these names may seem stilted, but they serve as mnemonics for those whose movements are informed by remembering the names of each successive movement.

When the movement is a punch, it may be slow and gentle in one style or faster and harder in another. Yet the movement is a punch and should be performed as correctly as you know how to do. So where is the martial aspect if you are slow and gentle? One aspect of slow and gentle is to ensure that you can learn and improve the move rather than rush through the move in the wrong way and ignore an error that would make it ineffective if used in self-defense or cause tension because it strains the body.

After learning a form's many movements and knowing how to correctly hold the body, hands and feet, you would try the next steps if self-defense were your primary goal. At this point you could try "push hands" or other applied forms of Tai Chi that can teach the use of the form in self-defense. I play at Tai Chi not for self-defense, even though I know the world has its violent aspects, but for self-reliance, self-improvement, fitness, and self-control, which seem more important to me. Age, stiffness, and incapacity are more likely attackers in my life than are muggers. Rather than worry about how to go faster or harder, it seems more important for most of us to practice moving relaxed, aware, and balanced. Avoid high blood pressure: instead of taking a pill—relax.

In practicing Tai Chi for health, one goes through several steps. Learning the warm-up exercises is important so you can start practicing/playing at home. If you only do warm-ups and the movements of the form in class, you deprive yourself of the chance to grow your health as well as you might.

What can one expect from Tai Chi? As with any fitness practice, you should become more limber and increase strength. Slow movements improve your balance since you stay on one foot longer while placing the other foot. The most difficult aspect may be self-awareness and feeling your body move. After learning a form well, you may feel the body areas that would be moving if you did the form, even while you are sitting in a chair.

The goal is to integrate the inside with the outside so you are a movement, not a puppeteer pulling strings to make your own body take a step. While Tai Chi masters may say it takes 10 years to learn Tai Chi, they are not referring to the movements or flexibility or balance, but to the integration of the mind's intent with relaxed movement and balanced stability all together. This is the whole that builds slowly and feels right as you join the pieces into a whole.

***Eldon Winston**, a retired ergonomist, teaches Tai Chi at the Berkeley County Senior Center on Wednesday mornings. During the school year, he teaches through Jefferson County Schools Adult Education in the evening. He can be reached at eldon@winstongardens.com.*

BELLYDANCING WITH JENSUYA

Sheri Fedorchak

Once a month, if you are on German Street on a Saturday evening, you may catch a glimpse of a bellydancer sashaying her way towards Shaharazade's Exotic Tea Room, her colorful scarves floating behind her, bracelets dangling from her wrists, a smile on her face. Behind her travel several men, dressed in their own splendor, carrying a variety of instruments unfamiliar to most of us. Enter—Jensuya and TarabRaqs!

TarabRaqs is a Mediterranean/American ensemble doing, as they say, the quintessentially American thing—"grabbing a hold of what we love to do and doing it." TarabRaqs consists of Jensuya and Bob Peak, a couple from Berkeley Springs who founded the group; Farid, who plays the *ney* (flute); Guillermo, who plays the *oud* (lute) and guitar. Most recently, Cam Millar of Shepherdstown occasionally adds his sounds of trombone to the ensemble. Bob plays percussion and the *mizmar*, the instrument that makes the sound we associate with snake charmers.

Last November, my husband, daughter, and I enjoyed watching TarabRaqs perform at Shaharazade's. What a perfect union for those lucky enough to partake of the evening's performance—Mediterranean/American music accompanied by a Middle Eastern meal. Susan Dom, owner of Shaharazade's, has been hosting these monthly evenings of bellydancing, dinner, and music for several years. Dom prepares the food for these meals, served in courses that include complementary sangria, several types of *mezza*, or appetizers, such as salad and phyllo pastries, lamb, flat bread, hummus and vegetables, fruits, chocolate, and more. Certainly it is a fortuitous union. What could make the Persian atmosphere of Shaharazade's come alive more than a bellydancer and the sounds of classical Middle Eastern and North African folk music? The décor, the ambiance, and the meal unite with the sights and sounds of TarabRaqs to give you an evening of enjoyment, if not rapture.

After meeting Jensuya, I became interested in how she learned bellydancing. Over a pot of jasmine tea at her home in the mountains outside Berkeley Springs, she unfolded her story. I asked Jensuya why she bellydances. "I dance because I must move! Dancing is not just moving to the music, it is becoming the music; and music is an expression of life."

When Jensuya talks about bellydance, it is evident that she has found what she hopes to give audiences through the music of TarabRaqs, which is *tarab*, an Arabic word for something like ecstasy or the deep emotional response one can get in listening to music.

Jensuya studied ballet while majoring in mechanical engineering at the University of Maryland, but it was when she took part in a bellydancing workshop that she found her true dance love. Jensuya explained that bellydancing is multi-tasking at its best. The body is doing four to five things at once. She may be shimmying her hips while undulating her abdomen, on top of turning in a circle and ringing her *zils* (finger cymbals) to the music as her arms wave like entranced cobras. She explained that such discipline appeals to both her engineering and creative sides.

While people sometimes associate bellydancing with so-called exotic dancing, Jensuya laughs as she demystifies this myth. She says that while bellydancing is sensual, a true bellydancer is never sleazy or suggestive. The art of the dance she sums up like this: "If there were a person in the audience who was deaf, he or she should be able 'hear' the music by watching the bellydancer."

She stresses that bellydancing is about helping the audience to experience the tarab. "When I dance, I feel like sunshine is filling me up," said Jensuya. And if you were to sit and watch her performance, I think you would not only see the sunshine filling her up, it would be splashing on you as well.

While Jensuya studied the art of bellydancing, Bob pursued Middle Eastern and North African drumming styles. Eventually Bob attended an Arabic music retreat in Massachusetts, where he met two other musicians, Farid and Guillermo, from the D.C. area, and their group was born.

Along the way, Jensuya hopes to remove some of the stigmas associated with bellydancing. She elaborates that bellydancing shares its roots with flamenco and Gypsy styles of dancing because of their evolution, coming originally from ancient India, settling in the Middle East, then migrating to Europe and North Africa. Modern bellydancing takes most of its influence from Egypt, where the movements of the country dancer have been refined for the stage.

Of all unlikely places, bellydancing was seen by many in North America for the first time at the 1894 World's Fair in Canada. Here a performance by a bellydancer named Little Egypt intrigued many people. At a time when Victoria's Secrets really were kept hidden, the "danse du ventre" or "bellydance" was scandalous and termed the "hootchie kootchie."

Hollywood furthered the "naughty" identity in films, though it also had tremendous influence on the classic bellydance costume. The fringed-bikini-with-a-skirt look was created and caught on in Egypt as it showed off the bellydancer's skills and amplified the subtle moves of the dancer. Most of Jensuya's costumes come from Turkey, where she buys basic *bedlahs* (sequined bra and belt sets). Then she embellishes them with coins, beads and rhinestones and sews ethereal layers of chiffon for her skirts, clouds of silk for her veils and a treasure chest's worth of jewelry and glitter. It's obvious what a labor of love the costuming part of bellydancing is for Jensuya.

In closing, I asked Jensuya what she hopes for her audience to get from performances by TarabRaqs. "Every one of us has so many anxieties and irritations in our lives, not to mention the big problems, that if I can help people take a break from it and remember the joy of just having fun I will feel successful," she said. "As my favorite quote goes, 'If you find you are walking on thin ice, dance!'"

Next time you see that woman wearing scarves and bracelets, follow her into Shaharazade's, and enjoy a night of *raqs sharki*, or bellydance. You will be moved, even as you sit in your seat.

Photo by Susan Fluharty

Jensuya and TarabRaqs embarking on a "magic carpet ride" at Shaharazade's Exotic Tea

Photo by Bob Peak

Jensuya "showing the music" at Shaharazade's

Photo by Bob Peak

Jensuya, Bob, Farid, and Guillermo of TarabRaqs

For more information on TarabRaqs, visit: www.tarabraqs.com. Performances at Shaharazade's are held on the second Saturday of each month. For reservations, call Shaharazade's Exotic Tea room at 304-876-1000 or visit www.shaharazades.com

Sheri Fedorchak *lives and works in Shepherdstown and enjoys writing about other people and their interests.*

EDUCATING THE FUTURE

MARY BETH VICKERS

Marie Carter

Photo by Ruth Weese

Mary Beth Vickers, mathematics teacher at Shepherdstown Middle School

Mary Beth Vickers, a math teacher at Shepherdstown Middle School, has consistently demonstrated the qualities of discipline and hard work since childhood. She credits her parents Lawrence and Debbie Vickers with instilling in her a strong work ethic.

Vickers was born and raised in Kearneysville on a dairy farm that was first owned by her great-great grandfather in the early 1900s. Her father works the family farm, while her mother is a homemaker. She notes, "Working hard is something that your family teaches you. Living on a dairy farm teaches that you definitely have to work hard."

Vickers attended North Jefferson Elementary School, Shepherdstown Junior High School (now Shepherdstown Middle School), and Jefferson High School. She was very active in high school, serving as president of the Varsity Club, editor of the school yearbook, and a member of the National Honor Society. In addition to her academic credits, Vickers also actively participated in sports. "I grew up as a tomboy," she says.

Her love for sports came from her parents. Her father played football as the starting center and defensive end through high school, and her mother was a majorette and kept statistics for the track team. Vickers played tee-ball, softball, basketball, and volleyball. While still a student at Shepherdstown Junior High, she was the first freshman to start and play softball at Jefferson High School. She was a starter all four years and was captain for two years. She lettered in all sports while also obtaining the State Sportsmanship Award, an award of great stature.

After graduating in 1999, Vickers continued her education at Shepherd University (then Shepherd College), which is a family tradition. She earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education with a specialization in mathematics, grades 5 through adult, in 2003.

Vickers paid her way through college with the help of several scholarships from the high school and the community, in addition to a small softball scholarship from Shepherd. She also contributed to her financial support by working several jobs. She kept statistics for the football and basketball teams. She worked in the school's dining hall during the school year and stocked shelves at night at Wal-Mart during the summer. Her ambitious collegiate schedule consisted of attending classes, participating in athletic practice, and working ten-hour shifts during the weekend.

In addition to her full-time teaching job, Vickers is currently working on her master's degree in public school administration at West Virginia University. She serves as the head coach for the volleyball team at Shepherdstown Middle and head coach for the varsity softball team at Jefferson. She has also served as part-time athletic director for the past two years at the middle school level and serves on the Hall of Fame Board at Shepherd University. Vickers believes that sports are important in the school system as the students "not only get a great education, but they make friends they will see every day in the community."

Vickers's enthusiasm for sports is reflected in her community service. She says, "My dad, brother, and I volunteer to do the chains for the Jefferson High football games. During that time, my mom also volunteers collecting money at the gates." The whole family pitched in to help build the new softball field located behind the football field at Jefferson.

Vickers's brother, Larnie, graduated from Shepherd in 2004 and is currently a physical teacher at Williamsport High School in Maryland. His wife Samantha teaches at Jefferson High School, and the couple has a two-year-old son named Ty.

Vickers's youngest sibling continued the family tradition. Her sister Amy graduated from Shepherd in December 2007 with a degree in secondary education with a specialization in English. She is currently substitute teaching for Jefferson County Schools.

About her education-oriented family, Vickers states, "We all had great teachers in high school that influenced us. We all tutored kids. I had a wonderful teacher in high school named Mr. Snyder. He made it so much fun, and I knew that is what I wanted to do." By becoming educators, she believes that the Vickers siblings "are giving back to our community."

Vickers shares how important her family is to her. "My parents have always supported me." Vickers adds, "Sometimes they push me when I need it. They're there if I need them."

Although she loves sports and coaching, Vickers most enjoys teaching. "Kids keep you young," she claims. "It's great. I love the kids I work with. I get so attached to them, as I have some of them two years in a row. I think it is an advantage to get to know them so well. I always try to do the best I can for them."

Vickers believes that parents as well as teachers can have a major impact on children's educational success. "I think that parents need to know their children's teachers. Just go in and let the teachers know you are there. Parents and teachers need to work together." The successful education of students requires the involvement of the student, the parents, and the educators.

Considering herself an educator of the future, Vickers commends Jefferson County officials for trying to keep up with the neighboring counties. "I am a strong believer in the public school system. I think we work hard for our community. I'm a product of the public school system, and I think I turned out OK."

Vickers has been influenced and helped by teachers she had when she was a student, some of whom are now her professional colleagues. She claims among her mentors educators such as Leslie Simpson, Judy Marcus, Greg Morgan, Susan Aliveto, Max Derr, and Robbie Brown. "They are all there to help me get through anything if I have questions."

Enjoying her students and players, Vickers thrives in her current positions. However, she would like to some day become a full-time athletic director when she is ready to leave the classroom. She might want to be a vice principal or even a principal in the future. For now, she plans to kick back with her family and her pet Chihuahua, Bruiser, and continue "educating the future" in mathematics and athletics.

***Marie Carter** is Director of Human Resources at Shepherd University. She and her son Ethan live in Shepherdstown.*

POETRY: Paul Grant

Mr. Whisper

Where I came from
the best times to be had
were swimming in tea:
cypress red with possible
slashes of amber
and flashes of green.
Only the sky
was allowed to be blue,
& for every soldier
in the Army of the Lord—
every child falling
in love with the girl
next door after
getting baptized
in shallow wisdom—
there were two
who went AWOL
looking for action
& wound up missing
therein.

Where I've come to
has another name
than the one I was cautioned
to call it by—one I'm
not supposed to know, but do—
and many secrets
beneath the weapons of
mass distraction
it's famous for.
Totem animals
make unscheduled
appearances in my nights:
Bear lumbers magically
down out of his stars;
Coyote plots his jokes
in the old growth;
Crow still collects keys,
& all the Owls
are Vipers.

Folk Art

A crazy quilt that once
covered a bed that saw
bad enough things rippling
on its surface it never dared
imagine what things might
move beneath that surface unless
it could call them haunted
by a Holy Ghost;

the cane bottom chair
used for questioning,
you could still see
the marks the ropes left
on the legs and rungs,
the shine the oils left
when they screamed out what-
ever answers they could summon;
the toys that bobbed
and ducked in the slightest
wind, that spun
on a dime, that collected dimes
for a war effort
effortlessly
forgotten, that brought
smiles home for supper;

in another part of the state,
a garden of leftovers
and odd gods drawn
to sin and sandwiches,
full of signs
and portents made out—
just barely—of bits
of glass and old crockery.

& all the while, while all
we coveted was beauty, there
it was, everybody had some
tucked away somewhere: any
madness passed, so long
as it could be
confined (so to speak)
in a bit of craft.

There Is a Balm on Rt. 67

Children in black and white—
white shirts and blouses,
black skirts and trousers—
playing crack-
the-whip for Jesus
in the parking lot before
a rambler church
come to hopeful rest
by the side of the road
in these oldest of mountains,
where we worn-down feel
right at home, & so came so
many years ago it no
longer matters nothing
was built, to speak of, nothing
raised, even all pets outlived.

All mocked and blessed at once
by these children flying
through the air into
the waiting arms of their
despised siblings, loved
at-a-distance neighbors,
feared schoolmates—
all in a godly détente that
may or may not please The One,
but sore enough enchants the air
noon breathes, and the wind I hear
past my window as I have
to keep on going while
they catch each other,
& keep each other from falling.

Until Then

Betrayals and jubilations galore
ago, when the world was acetate
and something unknowing
that would come to be
worshipped as innocence
once its absence appeared,

you'd be sitting happily sated—
greasy-fingered and full
of harmless, corny cholesterol—
in a baroque dark
friendly as family, when
reality would spring a hole

in its middle and begin
to curl out from there
until the screen went black.

Between that moment and
the next, when a chorus of protest
would rise from your imaginary play-
mates,

you'd know fear for the first
time—if only for a split
second—how it was probably
going to end for you:

a break in the film,
when fire would talk to you
in tongues for the first time,
and for the first time
and the last, you'd understand
what it had always been
trying to tell you.

From the Ninth Ward

Throw your arms around me
like a circle 'round the sun,
rock me on your waters
(o.k., we can skip that one),
hold me close and tell me
everything's not come undone,

haul off, Lord, &…
lie to me.

Tell me that reality
is just in flux between
this chaos and the order
we know usually. I've seen
how helpless you can leave us,
any more proof's just plain mean—

I mean, have a heart, Lord…
lie to me.
I've tried to second-guess your will
till I'm blue in the face,
I've followed you as best I could,
you've brought me to this place
aboard
a mystery with tarpaper on
it slipping out to sea.
Say,
when your eye's not on that sparrow,
could you spare a glance for me?

The boats are passing, full of souls,
there's not a hint of breeze,
the food's run out—it's just as well—
there's floaters in my trees;
as jokes go, this one's gone too far,
you've sunk me to my knees—

com on back now, Lord…
& lie to me.

& So Was Love

We knew work
Was rhythm,
& so was love.
Yusef Komunyakaa, "Poetics of
Paperwood"

The life played hide-and-seek
with its tiny plastic
toys past and future.

It pouted. It cajoled.
It bargained, & eventually
it learned the art of seduction.

Sometimes it worked hard,
doing a good day's
in two or three hours,

but most of the time,
it just stared at one
cluttered wall or another—

Natchitoches, Louisiana,
Washington, D.C.,
Iowa City, Hell—

until its face in the mirror
was closer than
it appeared to be.

The past was closer.
The future was closer.
The void was closer.

God and his Opposite
Number were closer.
& so was love.

__Paul Grant__ is one of the area's most accomplished poets. He is a graduate of the renowned Iowa Writers Workshop two-year residency program and has been widely published in literary magazines. He is a long-time member of the Bookend Poets group in Shepherdstown. This is his second appearance in the GOOD NEWS PAPER. He lives in Keedysville, Md.

Photo by Nan Broadhurst

ARTWORKS

Pat Donohoe: *Creation's Beauty and Mystery in Watercolor*

Nan Broadhurst

Pat Donohoe's interest in her heritage has taken her on a circuitous path that has traversed teaching, journalism, ministry, genealogy, and creative writing—all contributing depth to her current artistic expression.

Pat was born in Texas, but spent her childhood continuously on the move to and from cities in Texas, Ohio, and Virginia. Her father was a pilot instructor in the Navy, and then went into the shoe business. Both of these career choices resulted in moving his family frequently. Most of the 12 schools Pat attended through high school had no art classes. One teacher in junior high did encourage her to continue seriously with art, but the opportunity to do so wouldn't present itself until quite a bit later in her life.

Meanwhile, Pat was involved in newspapers, yearbooks, and other school publications, which gave her a taste of layout and graphic design—and more immediately interesting to her— journalistic writing. Journalism was in her genes, with her great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather both being newspaper editors and publishers.

She entered North Carolina State University in Raleigh with an eye on a career in journalism, but graduated with a degree in English and education on the advice of one of the first of several extraordinary mentors. She entered graduate school at NC State while teaching high school English and journalism.

After six years of teaching school, Pat gave birth to her first child, Lora. Soon after, Pat moved to Wyoming with her husband and baby to find some excitement. Along with having many stimulating adventures, she gave birth to son Scott, and she finished her graduate degree in English literature at the University of Colorado in Boulder. She took classes in photography and creative writing, and worked as a freelance photographer and writer. When the kids began school, she taught English at Casper College in Casper, Wyo.

When Pat's first marriage ended in divorce, she and the kids moved to Westminster, Md., where she got a job at Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College) as the first editor of their alumni magazine, *The Hill*. The magazine won many awards, and Pat was involved in all aspects of production. Then, two years later, Pat got a job as director of public relations at Prince George's Community College. While there, she met Joe Mayer and his good friend, Dave Borchard. She and Dave were married three years later.

Pat is of Scots Irish descent, and had been raised with a strong appreciation of the fact that her ancestors' countrymen had brought the Presbyterian Church to the United States. She was always keenly interested in the church, and so fulfilled another dream from childhood by beginning classes part time at the Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

Pat and Dave would come to West Virginia to visit their good friend Joe Mayer, who had moved to Shepherdstown. One of those visits was on an Easter weekend, when Joe introduced them to Bob Beckett, who had just decided to put his Terrapin Neck property on the market. After a series of serendipitous happenings, including hearing Randy Tremba preach at Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church (SPC), Pat and Dave knew they had found their true home and moved to Shepherdstown.

Pat continued her classes at Wesley, graduating with a Master of Divinity in 1999. She was ordained as Minister of Word and Sacrament at the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church in 2000 and served as associate minister there for three years, working with Randy Tremba, the senior pastor.

Pat asked to be relieved from the position of associate minister at Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church to become a minister-at-large so that she would have more time to follow her literary and artistic passions. She has pursued her interest in her family heritage by visiting her ancestral home town in Ohio several times, investigating the lives of family members who lived in the 1800s. She has collected about 300 family letters and other documents that offer windows into their daily lives and illuminate their personalities and personal joys and trials. Pat has transcribed these and is in the process of integrating them into book format, both documentary and novel.

In Shepherdstown, Pat finally got her chance to pursue art. She began with watercolor classes from Pat Barnes, and has taken workshops from Joe Mayer, Robin Young, Skip Lawrence, and Jean Carbonetti. Joe Mayer has been the most important influence on her painting and philosophy of art, giving impromptu instructions and critiques when they have visited or been on vacations together. Her friends in the Friday Painters group, especially Don Black, have also been influential.

Pat loves the fluidity, unpredictability, and nontoxicity of watercolors. She expresses her reactions to the natural world through lush and colorful landscapes and florals, which are becoming more and more abstract. She has also begun using her creative writing skills to write short statements that accompany her paintings in shows. She sees painting as a spiritual practice that presents an opportunity for celebrating the beauty and mystery of creation.

In Shepherdstown, her paintings are on display at J Cooper Gallery. They have also been on exhibit in various other local shows in Shepherdstown, including those of the Arts and Humanities Alliance; the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church 2004 art show; the Friday Painters exhibits; the 2005 Emerging Women show; and the 2006 Art of Friendship show. In Maryland, her paintings have been featured at Rising Phoenix Retreat Center in Flintstone; at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Hagerstown; and in the Cumberland Valley Art Show at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts. She has also participated in several juried shows at the Burwell-Morgan Mill in Millwood, Va.

City Lights

Beckoning

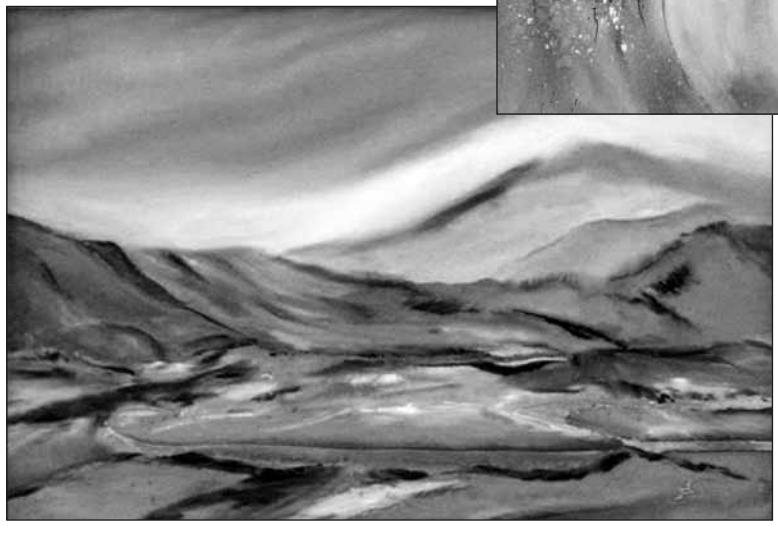
Frolic

Once Upon A Time

Moon Glories

Spring Burst

Moon Salutations



Shenandoah Meandors

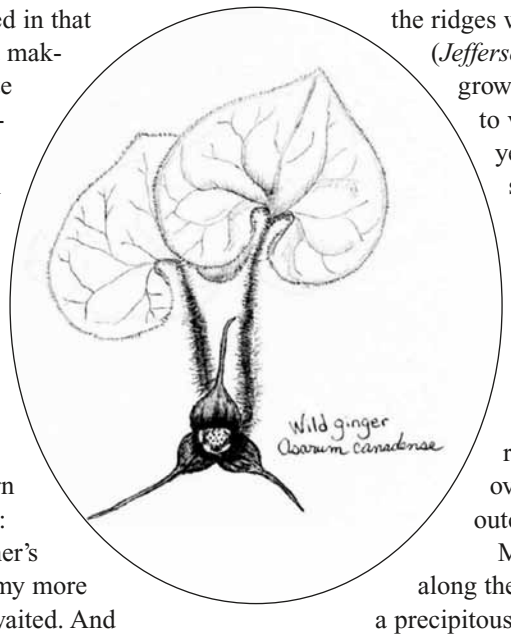
The Untended Garden

Monica Grabowska

As spring dawns anew, I am awakening from a Van Winkle–like hiatus from the garden. Like Rip, I wandered into the woods one day and fell under a spell. That was almost five years ago. In the meantime, my trowel and gloves have been packed away in the garage while season after season, garden catalogs have gone directly from the mailbox to the recycle bin.

Van Winkle was shirking "profitable labour" and hiding from a nagging spouse when he stumbled upon some mysterious men bowling in the autumn woods. That is how he came to sip the tranquilizing grog that cost him 20 years. When I walked into the woods, it was spring and my spouse was at my side. Our intentions in the woods were less Irving, more Thoreau; less Winkle, more Walden. We, all of us on this side of the Mississippi River, live in the great Eastern Woodlands of North America—or at least what is left of them. John and I had decided to move into the woods to connect our daughters and ourselves more deliberately, more closely to that unique landscape.

The spell was cast upon us as we looked at a house and lot in one of the area's oldest and most wooded subdivisions along the Potomac. We were disappointed in the rattletrap house and soon found ourselves heading out the back door, down a path, and into the woods. It was early spring, when the season is as much a scent as a sight. The trail wound farther and farther into the woods, beckoning us onwards. Just as we stepped onto a limestone point, gasping at the view of the river flowing far below, a red-tailed hawk in the tree above us screamed. We moved in that summer and started making plans to renovate the house. The project would include major disruption all around the house, so planting would have to wait.



In the 10 years I had spent learning to garden at our first home, there was one lesson I needed to learn over and over again: patience is a gardener's best tool. I stowed my more tangible tools and waited. And watched. Garden writers often advise new homeowners to spend the first year getting to know the property, waiting to see the fruits of the previous owner's labors as the seasons change. There were virtually no flower beds around our house, so I did not have much to watch . . . except in the woods.

The woods became my garden, though not the sort that most people envision. Do not imagine me on my knees, squeezing plants out of black plastic pots. I did not plant or tend this garden, but I did take great joy from it, delighting in the design of the greatest gardener of all: the natural world.

I spent many hours in this garden, sometimes hunting for a hard-to-find showy orchid *(Galearis spectabilis),* sometimes trampling (with regret) the tiny pink and white blossoms of spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) that carpet the forest floor in mid-spring. I know the ridges where the twinleaf (*Jeffersonia diphylla*) grows in masses. I try to visit them each year before April showers wash away their delicate white petals. Even when I miss the blossoms, I am enchanted by the mass of butterfly-wing leaves that remain to flutter over the limestone outcrop.

My favorite stop along the garden path is a precipitous one. The north-south running stone seams, familiar throughout Jefferson county, dolphin-dive through our forest, then suddenly plunge to the river 80 feet below. By midsummer, when the water is slow and clear, you can follow the ridges with your eyes as they ford the Potomac on their way to Maryland. But in the spring the view on the cliffs themselves is enough to hold your gaze and make you ignore the roiling river below.

These steep, rocky slopes and vertical cliffs seem an unlikely flower bed, yet they hold the greatest number and the most beautiful of the wildflowers in these woods. My theory is that many of these plants would gladly populate the woods, but have been pushed over the edge by the marauding herds of deer that call my garden their lunch. I sometimes inch down the slope, gripping a rope that the previous owners left tied to a tree at the top, to get a closer look under the heart-shaped leaves of a mass of wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*). This is a common woodland plant, but few people ever see its unique, maroon-brown blooms because they are sheltered beneath a handsome pair of dark green, deeply veined leaves, often as large as six inches across. The leaves alone make this a garden-worthy plant; the flowers are the gardener's secret treasure.

My favorite cliff dweller is perched in an especially out-of-reach and nearly out-of-sight location on a crumbling rock shelf just over the edge of a steep drop-off. I often use binoculars to get a good look at the unfortunately named sharp-lobed hepatica (*Hepatica acutiloba*). It is named for the shape of its leaves, but I see no resemblance between this plant and liver. The three-lobed, leathery leaves are attractive and persist throughout the winter, but it is the almost electric blue lavender of its daisylike blossoms that lure me to the cliff edge in early spring.

I am always excited to go back to these spots each year to look for these now familiar plants, but what I love most about this untended garden is its capacity to surprise. One morning last June, I headed down a well-worn path on the edge of the woods close to the house. The sight of a knee-high, blue-flowered plant right next to the path literally stopped me in my tracks. It was blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium*), a wildflower I had never actually seen growing wild, but which I had always admired in books. It looks like a sturdy grass with improbably tiny blue flowers atop some of the blades. A closer inspection reveals the "blades" to be the leaves and stems of an iris family plant.

It seemed to be the perfect garden—already planted, weeding optional—but as the years slipped by, something began to gnaw at me. At first I thought it might be guilt. How can I call this my garden when I cannot even remember the last time I spent an afternoon on my hands and knees fighting off gnats, and my work gloves are in better shape than my winter gloves? Then I read about the woods that Ralph Waldo Emerson used to call his garden. It was a 14-acre woodlot a mile and a half from town . . . on the shores of Walden Pond.

My guilt was assuaged, but that growing dissatisfaction continues. The construction project is finished and the gardener in me is finally stirring again. I have unpacked my tools and started a plant list.

My inspiration does not come from any of the seed catalogs or garden magazines flooding my mailbox. It comes from the woods. The gardener in me has awakened, but I am still happily under the spell of the untended garden.

Where to See Spring Wildflowers

The untended gardens of the eastern woodlands are about to burst forth with wildflowers. April and early May offer the best shows. The Gardeners' Exchange Group has compiled a list of recommended pilgrimages (g-e-g.org). My favorites include the Yankauer Nature Preserve on Whitings Neck Road, the Ferry Hill Loop on the C&O Canal and Antietam's Snavely Ford Trail at Burnside Bridge in Sharpsburg. But the Thompson Wildlife Management Area in Linden, Va., is by far the most spectacular. The forest floor here is literally carpeted with the white and pink blooms of large-flowered trillium. Thompson is renowned as the largest colony of this iconic woodland flower in the country. A trip with my family to this special slice of the untended garden is all I ever want for Mother's Day.

Monica Grabowska *is an award-winning freelance garden writer. She has been writing about nature and gardening in our area for 10 years.*

All Creatures Great and Small
A Nightmare on Elm Street

Mark Madison

I think that I shall never see,
A poem as lovely as a tree.

When the American poet Joyce Kilmer wrote his poem "Trees" in 1913, the elm was the most important tree in America's towns and cities. Elm Street remains the most popular street name in the United States, a testament to the elm's former ubiquity. Yet less than a century later, the elms are long gone from most Elm Streets, the victims of Dutch elm disease and the inexorable pathway of ecological imperialism.

Humans like to think of themselves as the measure of all things. Consequently, we often understand our history as one of politics, wars, and colonialism. However, in the case of the elms' demise, "ecological imperialism" was the prime cause. Ecological imperialism is a term coined by environmental historian Alfred Crosby to describe the transfer of weeds, plants, animals, and germs across boundaries. Traveling hand in hand with traditional imperialism, ecological imperialism was often unconscious as fellow travelers like germs and viruses journeyed along with early explorers.

Ecological imperialism explains why weeds are found where they don't belong. For example, the European native species dandelion is all over my yard, for which I can blame Columbus or my own indifference to proper lawn poisoning. When the local species had no previous experience with the weed, they died in droves like the Native Americans exposed to smallpox.

The American elms, isolated for many years, suffered an analogous fate when confronted with the new fungus. Once common in the entire eastern half of the United States, the mighty elms were laid low by a tiny little fungus that later became known as Dutch elm disease. Like Spanish influenza (which did not originate in Spain) the Dutch have been unfairly blamed for a disease that probably came from the Himalayas and eventually made its way to the Europe via the Dutch East Indies. Once there, it hopped the Atlantic in wooden crates or other articles made of elm wood.

The first case of Dutch elm disease hit Cleveland, Ohio in 1930; by 1970, 77 million American elm trees had perished from the disease. The actual disease is a virulent fungus spread by two types of bark beetles. It can also be transmitted by contact between root systems of adjoining trees. Ironically the elm's popularity hastened its demise. With elms planted closely along shady streets and in monocultures, the disease spread quickly and completely throughout towns and cities.

The loss of the American elm was not just a disaster for urban forests and lovers of shade everywhere but also for wildlife. As the poet Kilmer also observed: "A tree that may in summer wear, a nest of robins in her hair." As the elms died in towns, parks, and forests, critical habitat for many birds, insects, and small mammals disappeared with them.

To make matters worse, from the 1940s through the 1960s, the primary method to control bark beetles involved spraying massive doses of DDT on the surviving trees to inoculate them. In this case the cure was worse than the disease, as songbirds and beneficial insects quickly succumbed to DDT poisoning and pesticide runoff polluted local water sources.

Rachel Carson made the Dutch elm disease tragedy a focal point of her book *Silent Spring*. In the eerily named chapter "And No Birds Sing," Carson noted: "It would be tragic to lose the elms, but it would be doubly tragic if, in vain efforts to save them, we plunge vast segments of our bird populations into the night of extinction." Unfortunately that is what happened. Ultimately, the trees were not saved, and many songbirds and other animals perished as collateral damage in a losing war against Dutch elm disease.

With the banning of DDT in 1972 and the general failure of chemical warfare, other attempts were made to find a "cure" for Dutch elm disease. The native red elm has greater resistance to the disease and is sometimes used as a replacement. Botanists also took advantage of some rare individuals that are tolerant to the disease. Princeton Nurseries, a New Jersey tree-grower, created the so-called Princeton American elm in 1920 from a single specimen. When Dutch elm disease broke out a decade later these trees turned out to be fortuitously resistant to the blight. Many of these trees were sold and they turned out to be very tolerant of the disease. They are still used effectively as a replacement elm. Two tree-lined streets in Princeton, N. J., testify to the hardiness of this Ivy-League elm.

Other cultivars have come about more slowly, as only about one in 100,000 American elms are disease-tolerant. After much breeding and selection, two new disease-resistant elms—'Valley Forge' and 'New Harmony'—were released by the U.S. National Arboretum in 1996. In the last couple of years, 'Jefferson' and 'Washington' elms have been shown to possess good disease tolerance. [This narcissistic author eagerly awaits the 'Madison' elm.]

Kilmer's extremely popular poem ends on a melancholy note: "Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree." Yet we are not as fatalistic as Kilmer. Ironically those same forces of science and technology that led to a global trade in goods and diseases also may (just may) allow us to find a techno-botanical fix. This Arbor Day, the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown is going to plant disease-resistant elms on campus to promote restoring this species. NCTC is going to plant five different species of cultivars in the interest of science, education, and history. Scientifically, NCTC is curious to see how the different cultivars adapt to this environment. Educationally, the thousands of visitors and students to NCTC can see that there are disease-tolerant elms and perhaps investigate planting them in their towns, parks, forests, and backyards.

Finally, historically the elm has a played a unique role as the green backdrop to American history. William Penn was depicted as signing a famous treaty of peace with American Indians beneath a gigantic elm. Many a revolutionary protest was carried out in the Boston Commons beneath the American elm Liberty Tree. George Washington took command of the Continental Army under the Washington elm in Cambridge, Mass. It is time to restore this precious part of our botanical heritage, to bet on the future of this historic tree.

Benjamin West, "Penn's Treaty With the Indians" (1771)

The long-term outlook for other species remains dire as ecological imperialism expands. With the growth of international travel, migration, and commerce comes a concomitant introduction of new global viruses, fungi, weeds, and other invasives. As another poet, John Donne, noted "no man is an island" and today no island of biodiversity is safe from the effects of the weediest of all species—mankind.

Mark Madison *teaches environmental history at the National Conservation Training Center and Shepherd University. As a young boy in Wisconsin, he watched all the elms on his street perish from disease.*

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin DNR

Dutch elm disease impact

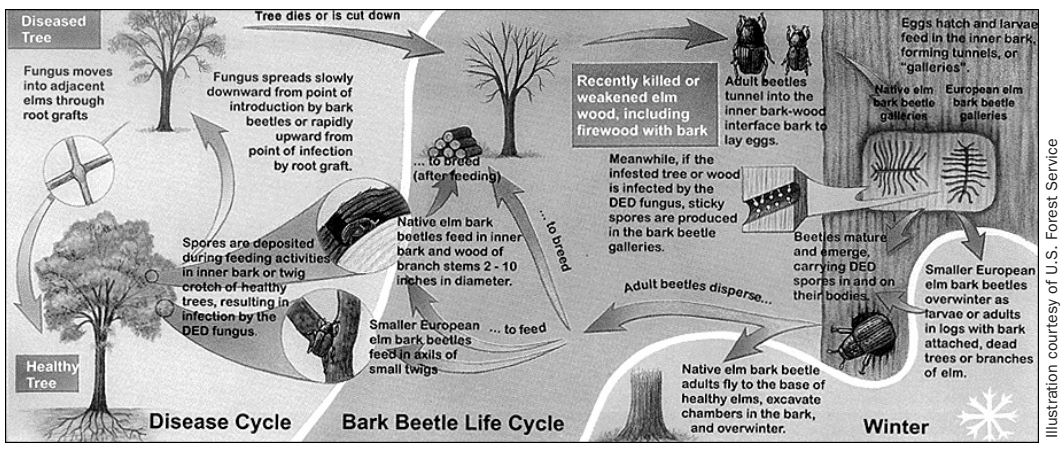


Illustration courtesy of U.S. Forest Service

Life (or death) cycle of Dutch elm disease

As part of its Conservation & Community Public Lecture Series, co-sponsored by The Friends of the NCTC, the National Conservation Training Center will be hosting the lecture "Restoring the American Elm," presented by Tom Zetterstrom, elm restoration specialist and photographer, Thursday, April 3, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in NCTC's Byrd Auditorium. The lecture is free and open to the public.

For more information, go to http://training.fws.gov/history/publiclectures.html#, or contact Mark Madison (Mark_Madison@fws.gov; 304 876-7276)

WILDERNESS BILL WILL PROTECT GOD'S GOOD GIFTS IN WEST VIRGINIA

Ed Zahniser

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come?

Psalm 121:1

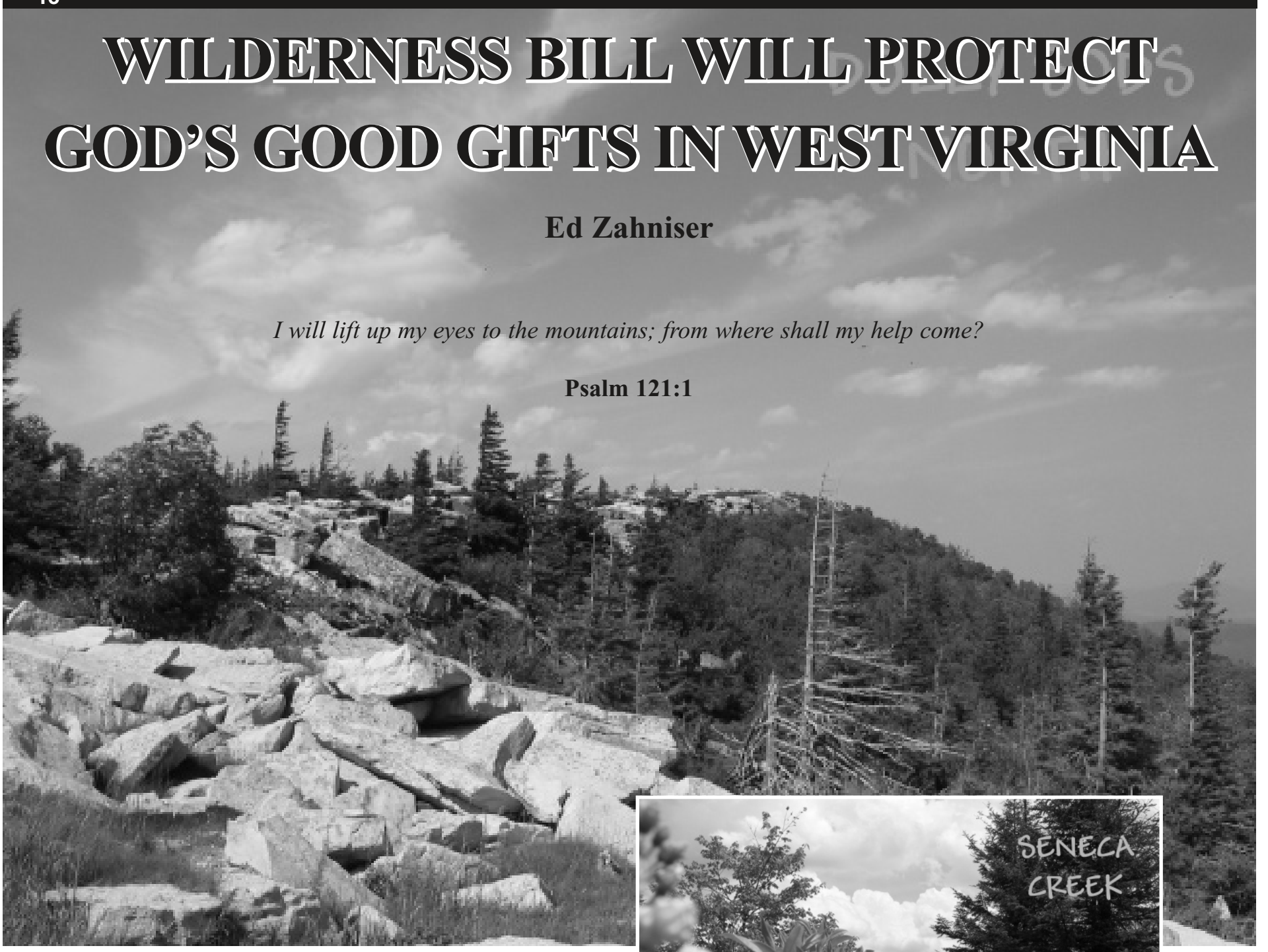


Photo by Jim Sooley

Dolly Sods

For the first time in a generation, the West Virginia Congressional Delegation has introduced wilderness legislation to permanently protect some of the most remarkable, wild, and peaceful places on our state's beloved Monongahela National Forest. This is good news to all West Virginians who love our state's beautiful forests, but particularly to members of the faith community who have long found inspiration, as Rep. Nick Rahall has noted, "deep in our misty hollers and our majestic mountains."

Wilderness designation is the highest protection our nation gives to the most special places in our National Forests. Only Congress can designate wilderness areas by passing legislation that permanently protects these unique areas *from* mining, logging, and motorized access, and safeguards them *for* hunting, fishing, hiking, solitude, and unfolding natural processes. These new wilderness areas will be protected in addition to the five popular wilderness areas already in existence: Cranberry Wilderness, Otter Creek, Dolly Sods, and Laurel Fork North and South. Those areas were designated during the 1970s and 1980s, thanks to the work of West Virginia conservationists and congressional leaders.

This new legislation, titled "Wild Monongahela: A National Legacy for West Virginia's Special Places," was introduced by Representatives Rahall, Shelley Moore Capito, and Alan B. Mollohan, and Senators Robert Byrd and Jay Rockefeller on January 29. The bill will permanently protect roughly 47,000 acres of seven special areas on the Monongahela National Forest. Three of these are additions to existing wilderness: the Cranberry Expansion in Webster and Pocahontas counties, the Dolly Sods Expansion in Tucker County, and the Dry Fork Expansion in Tucker County to the Otter Creek Wilderness. The other four are proposed new wilderness areas: Big Draft in Greenbrier County, Cheat Mountain in Randolph County, Roaring Plains West in Pendleton and Randolph counties, and Spice Run in Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties.

"This is about the heart and soul of West Virginia," Rep. Rahall stated in introducing the legislation. "Our southern mountains have been yielding their coal for generations and our northern ridge lines are being targeted by the merchants of wind power. More development is coming, and, in most cases, it is welcomed. But as West Virginians we are intimately connected to our land . . . We know that we will be judged by future generations on our stewardship of this land that is West Virginia. And so I

WILDERNESS
CONT'D

believe that it is of paramount importance that we, once again, set aside some of God's handiwork in our forests by preserving these federal lands in their pristine state." This new wilderness legislation comes in response to the recently concluded forest management planning process for the Monongahela National Forest—the Mon—and a several-year-long citizens' effort by the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition. The Coalition represents West Virginians of all stripes, including conservationists, hunters, anglers, business owners, local elected officials, doctors and other health care professionals, as well as diverse members of the West Virginia faith community. The Coalition was formed in the state to identify and promote the designation of significant additional wilderness areas on the Mon. In 2004, the Coalition proposed the protection of 15 areas, totaling 143,000 acres.
The faith community, in particular, has played a key role in the Coalition's efforts. The group, Christians for the Mountains, for example, joined the West Virginia Council of Churches and other religious leaders in co-sponsoring a publication titled, *God's Gift of a Wild and Wonderful Land: A Christian Declaration on the Spiritual Values of the Monongahela National Forest.* This document explored the many faith values provided by protected wilderness areas and explained why such areas are important from a Christian perspective. Among the many key aspects of wilderness, the declaration noted that:

- **In wilderness we learn about God.** When we leave the crowds of town and city and enter the quiet and peace of wild places, the deep questions of human life rise to the surface

- **Wilderness is God's gift of creation undefiled.** Without wilderness, we lose a reminder of what creation is like in its pristine condition. The clean air, the cold water, the quiet of trees, the moist earth, and everything in between help us to clarify our thinking so that we can be open to God and the nature of creation.

- **Wilderness teaches humility.** The mountains are big and we are small. Surrounded by wildness, we experience God's immense creation as majestic, yet intricate, in its uncountable details.

When the new legislation was unveiled, West Virginia Wilderness Coalition leaders celebrated the bill's introduction and vowed to support the effort, but expressed concern that the delegation is missing a critical opportunity to permanently safeguard several of the forest's most popular and spectacular areas. A number of groups and individuals, including anglers and fisheries biologists, have since encouraged lawmakers to amend the legislation and include important areas like Seneca Creek, all of Roaring Plains, and the East Fork of the Greenbrier areas.

"We have a long proud tradition of protecting our state's wild and wonderful forests, and we owe a great debt of gratitude to our Congressional delegation for coming together to protect these special places," said Dave Saville, coordinator of the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition. "While we support this new legislation, we are deeply disappointed that special areas like Seneca Creek, Roaring Plains East and North, and the East Fork of the Greenbrier have been left out of this proposal. These special places can't wait another 25 years for protection, and we hope that the delegation will amend their proposal to include these places before the bill passes."

Also reacting to the news of the bill's introduction, Allen Johnson, founder of Christians for the Mountains emphasized the religious values of wilderness. "My organization not only supports wilderness, but has been working for the past year to convey to other faith-based organizations and congregations the spiritual value these places hold. Protecting wilderness, however, is more than about what it can do for humans. Wilderness is space for God's untrammeled creation. Wilderness is a reminder that 'The Earth is the Lord's, and everything in it belongs to God' (Psalm 24:1)."

For more information on the new wilderness legislation or to learn how you can get involved in the effort to protect God's good gifts in West Virginia, please visit www.wvwild.org or contact Dave Saville of the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition at (304) 284-9548.

Contact your members of congress about the Wild Monongahela Act. Please make a quick phone call to your Senators and Representatives in Washington D.C. and let them know:

You support the proposed wilderness legislation announced in January.

You hope the legislation will be improved by adding

1. Seneca Creek (Representative Capito's District 2)
2. Roaring Plains North and East (also District 2)
3. East Fork of Greenbrier (Representative Rahall's District 3)

You can also tell them why wilderness areas are important to you.

Sen. Robert C. Byrd: 202-224-3954

Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV: 202-224-6472

Rep. Shelley Moore Capito: 202-225-2711

Rep. Nick J. Rahall II: 202-225-3452

Rep. Alan Mollohan: 202-225-4172

***Ed Zahniser**'s father Howard Zahniser is considered the primary author of the National Wilderness Preservation System Act. Ed is a frequent speaker on wilderness preservation topics throughout the United States. He has lived in Shepherdstown since 1977.*

A Note to the Honorable Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Marjorie Dower

Photo courtesy of Kate Goldfield and Jonathan Dower

Ben holding the Torah Scroll.

In the Washington Post*, January 15, 2008, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was reflecting on the role her Jewish heritage plays in her life. Speaking at a D.C. synagogue during a prescreening of the PBS series on Jewish Americans, Ginsburg said she is not religiously observant, though she was raised in an observant household. She says her estrangement from religious observance came when, as a teenager after the death of her mother, she was not counted toward a prayer* minyan *because she was a woman.*

As a *cradle Episcopalian* (the worst kind), I want to tell you, Justice Ginsburg, about my grandson Benjamin's bar mitzvah.

When number-two son, Jonathan, married our beautiful Jewish Kate, we knew that their children would be brought up Jewish. My husband, John, and I read all of Chaim Potok's books and, of course, the rabbi mysteries by Harry Kemelman, and anything else we could find to help us understand Jewish traditions and practices. We were so proud of Ben, our first grandson.

By the time he turned 13, he had spent many years at Temple Israel studying Hebrew and learning to sing the lessons, and now he was to be a bar mitzvah.

We did feel fairly well prepared when we flew up to Boston from good ol' Wild and Wonderful for his *big* day.

His grandfather and I were thrilled to be invited to the temple in Boston where the big event was to occur during the regular Friday service.

Our first surprise was the size of the temple. There were at least 500 people (the synagogue seats around a thousand). We sank into the comfortable seats—so unlike our wooden Anglican pews. Then followed surprise upon surprise. We were to stand up on the *bema* (a stage in the front from which the Torah is read) and take part in the passing of the Torah. Since his other grandfather was dead, my husband John, as the senior man in the family, was asked to receive the scroll from the tabernacle and to be the first to pass it down.

Son Jonathan explained that the important concept here is *Ldor y dor,* which is Hebrew for "from generation to generation." It is symbolized by the physical passing of the scroll from grandparent to parent to child. For reformed Jews, it is more than just ensuring that the Hebrew faith is passed. It is the entire idea of knowledge, faith, goodness, and *tzedahah* (kindness, charity, and doing good deeds) that is transported. That is why the faith of those passing the Torah doesn't matter.

The rabbi told the congregation that the scroll from which Ben would read the Torah was over 150 years old, and had come from the town of Blatna in Bohemia, Czech Republic. The Jews in that town had been eliminated by the Germans in World War II. The scroll was saved to be added to Hitler's hometown museum in Linz, Austria.

Our hands were shaking as we held it and passed it on to our son who then passed it to Benjamin. We were escorted to our seats and our teary eyes overflowed as we nearly burst with pride to hear Ben sing his Torah portion.

I had not realized that there were to be two readings: first, the Torah from the historic scroll, and then the *haftarah* (the concluding reading, mainly from one of the prophets) from another scroll. To my surprise the cantor carried the first scroll down the steps and carefully placed it in my arms, telling me to be careful and not stand while I was holding it. Ben had selected me to have the honor of holding it while he read the second portion after which the cantor would come back for it and return it to the tabernacle.

The scroll was wrapped in a sheath of maroon velvet with silver hangings and was heavier than I imagined. As I held it, the velvet cover slightly parted and I could feel the cool parchment underneath. It seemed to be pulsing with life. I thought about the 17th-century scribe who prayerfully labored day after day, night after night, in heat and cold, for so many years carefully fashioning each letter perfectly.

I wondered if he, in his wildest dreams, could imagine a temple where men and women were seated and praying together, worshiping in families.

Oh, Justice Ginsburg, could that scribe possibly imagine that a Christian man reverently passed down the scroll from the tabernacle to both Jewish and Christian women, who then passed it to the bar mitzvah?

In his wildest dreams, could he imagine a Christian woman with tears in her eyes holding the scroll—his scroll—for a few minutes?

Justice Ginsburg, you would like this temple. I wish you had been there.

And I almost forgot.

There was another thing that would please you . . .

The rabbi was seven months pregnant!

And that's my thought for the month from the far-off land of Sykesville, Md.

Marge Dower *still looks longingly westward to Shepherdstown. She is now possessed by a 14-year-old cat whose 102-year-old mistress was not allowed to take him with her into the nursing wing. Kirstie, the cat, is busy training Marge to adjust to his ways.*

RIDE ON FOR CASA KIDS

Or How A Beautiful Day in May Became Even More Beautiful

Wendy Mopsik

Photo by Karl Johnson and Ryan Simpson

Joan Piemme with ride supporters and "Pedal & Paddle" raffle bike.

Ever just hop on your bike—be it a gently used two-wheeler, trike, racing bike, or one with training wheels—and pedal off into the proverbial sunset? What a feeling of freedom and exhilaration as you pass rolling hills or familiar streets. The exercise can be challenging or routine, while both mind and body seem to be refreshed by the physical exertion and visual stimulation.

Now take it one step further . . . on Saturday, May 31, 2008 hop on your bike with hundreds of others who share the common purpose of raising money for Court Appointed Special Advocates of the Eastern Panhandle (CASA). The bike ride, now in its fourth year, is the primary fundraiser that generates critical monies needed to continue the work of this outstanding nonprofit organization. ROCK (Ride on for CASA Kids) was lovingly given the acronym by Mavis Ferguson, an avid supporter of the group, which advocates for abused and neglected children in Morgan, Jefferson, and Berkeley County court systems. Funds received from the $30 registration fee, rider sponsorships, business sponsorships, and donations will go toward recruiting and training volunteers, as well as supporting those volunteers' casework on behalf of children.

Cyclists can choose 10-, 25-, 50- or 100-mile routes that wind through the historic countryside, transverse Civil War sites, or simply follow the C&O Canal Towpath. Young biking fans under the age of six who choose to participate on three-wheelers will follow a safe, 60-yard loop in downtown Shepherdstown. There is no charge for Tykes on Trikes. Participants will receive free ice cream cones, compliments of Mimi's Ice Cream and donated by Jackie Lewis of Greentree Realty. Along each of the routes, rest stops will provide healthy snacks and beverages, while support vehicles will be on hand to assist riders in case of any problems. Local biking enthusiast Bill Wilcox will once again chart the various bike routes that meet the needs of the serious and not-so-serious athlete. Fred Jones, who falls in the serious rider category, has already committed to riding 50 miles in memory of Mavis Ferguson!

Speaking as a previous rider, co-chair of CASA, and the originator of ROCK in 2005, Joan Piemme of Bakerton points to several reasons why participating in this fund-raising activity is a winning proposition: event visibility brings new recruits to the corps of trained volunteers; money generated helps to pay for rigorous training programs and materials; much needed attention is brought to the plight of vulnerable children in the tri-county area; and bikers have a wonderful day of riding! Joan hopes that this year will witness the expansion of ridership to 200 bikers and that the amount of funds collected will jump to $35,000.

The story of CASA in the Eastern Panhandle is remarkable and deserves to be recounted. In early 2003, Joan Piemme and Valerie Smith realized that the area still needed to represent abused and neglected children in the court system through trained volunteers. So they rebuilt an organization that had lost much of its original strength and energy. With a tremendous groundswell of community support and countless hours of personal time on the part of the women, CASA-EP became a 501(c)(3) corporation with an 18-member board and, later, a United Way agency. The mission of the organization is to help the approximately 200 children who have been removed from their homes due to severe abuse or neglect and have been placed in foster care. CASA volunteers provide direct service by reviewing cases, visiting children, identifying individual needs and locating appropriate resources, interviewing family members, attending court hearings, and attending multi-disciplinary meetings. Ultimately, they make fact-based recommendations to the judge about timely, safe and permanent placements for each child. Often described as the *extra arms and legs* of Child Protective Services workers and the *eyes and ears of the courts,* CASA volunteers impact the lives of the area's most vulnerable citizens in a very real way.

A Zen teacher once asked his students why they rode bicycles. One said he rode to carry potatoes. Another cycled to observe the world. A third said it cleared the mind, and a fourth said cycling put him in harmony with all sentient beings. The Zen master was pleased, but when the fifth replied, "I ride my bicycle to ride my bicycle," the teacher sat at the student's feet and said, "I am your student."

Currently, CASA of the Eastern Panhandle has 42 volunteers, but the number of children and families adjudicated annually points to the need for 100 volunteers in the coming year. Priority casework is targeted for children three years of age or younger and families with multiple children in foster care. If you or someone you know has an interest in this important work, CASA requires a one-year commitment. A 36-hour formal training program provides critical information and gives the volunteer relevant background material. More hours are typically spent early in the process as the volunteer begins to know the case, but less time may be required as the year progresses. Participants may manage more than one case at a time, and each usually lasts for one year from the initial referral to its completion.

Kathy Reid, a CASA volunteer, calls her work rewarding. Although she spends a considerable amount of time on CASA business, she says it is good to know that families are being helped. Her approach has been to work in partnership with another volunteer so they can cover more ground and attend more meetings. In this efficient and dedicated manner, Kathy has closed eight cases in the four years she has served as a volunteer.

One case that she vividly remembers involved working with the children of alcoholic parents. As a result of a domestic dispute, a Child Protective Service professional was called and the children were removed from their home. Over time, Kathy visited the children in foster care, interviewed family members and conclusively recommended a placement with loving grandparents. The mother, realizing that her life had to change, entered a six-month inpatient treatment program. She eventually earned the privilege of having the children live with her at the facility until she successfully completed her recovery work and moved back to the Eastern Panhandle. After finding a job and securing housing, this parent was able to provide a safe, permanent and nurturing home for her family.

CASA and its fund-raising bike ride are making the way a little less difficult and painful for children of the Eastern Panhandle. Every volunteer and ever rider helps lift a child into a brighter future.

For additional information about ROCK 2008, rider sponsorship, route maps, corporate sponsorship, and how you can become a Court Appointed Special Advocate in the tri-county area, call Vickey Wilcher at (304) 263-5100 or E-mail vickey@casaep.org at the CASA-EP office in Martinsburg. Registration for the May 31, 2008 event may be completed online at www.casaride.com.

Wendy Mopsik *and her spouse, Stan, are entering their second phase of retirement. The first stop was a 10-year residency in Garrett County, Md. They recently relocated to Shepherdstown because of its charming ambience, proximity to grandchildren, inviting outdoors, less severe winters, and cultural offerings. Wendy is a former mental health professional and amateur journalist.*

Community Gardens

Robbie Glenn

Photo supplied by author

This piece of land may be ready to be adopted for a community garden.

Community gardening is more than just planting flowers or picking vegetables. It's also about creating healthy, working, sustainable communities. We live in a world where corporations hold power over the land and our lives, and continue to sacrifice trees, streams, birds, squirrels, deer, bears, and human life for parking lots, strip malls, and profits. All the while, communities suffer the consumer culture's extreme, almost absolute, alienation. Kids grow up in pre-fab communities where most likely they don't even know their next-door neighbor.

My generation was raised on television, raised by corporate culture: get a job, consume, and then die. Have we become so alienated, so broken, that our only fulfillment is the *thrill* in purchasing toxic plastic stuff from Wal-Mart? What have we sacrificed by refusing to fight back or even question corporate rule? Have we been transformed into walking machines, simply born to produce and consume? Our emotions, fears, and doubts surge inside us like a hurricane of drunken butterflies, but still we put on the face, put on the smile, and just say everything's fine. Everything is not fine. The world is being killed. In just the last 24 hours, over 200,000 acres of rainforest were destroyed; another mountain in West Virginia sacrificed for cheap energy; 13 million tons of toxic chemicals were released; 45,000 people died of starvation—38,000 of them children. More than 100 plant or animal species went extinct because of our culture, because of our way of life. What are we going to do about this?

This is not human nature. This is the result of an abusive culture. Human beings and our lineage lived sustainably on this planet for over three million years (that's 99.5 percent of our total history, what modern historians deem pre-history) in egalitarian societies. There was relative gender equality, ample leisure time, and a lack of organized violence. The average hunter-gatherer only had to labor for about three or four hours a day to obtain all the basic necessities, having the rest of the day for leisure, games, art, and relationships. No, their lives were not perfect, but their way of life worked because they did not view the earth as something humans *own* but as something humans were *part of*.

The concept of natural resources, or land rape (oh, I'm sorry, *resource development*) was unknown to indigenous peoples. It has only been in the last 10,000 years with the emergence and spread of institutional hierarchies (through conquest; remember Columbus and his genocide? Oh, I'm sorry, *discovery* of America), such as the state, capitalism, patriarchy, and civilization, that human beings have seen themselves as special—better or above other species and human beings. Now, this culture, which sees profit for the super rich as more important than the natural world and human life, has spread over the entire globe, wiping out the last remnants of sustainable cultures. They are seen as unimportant to economic development and therefore not worthy of life. Our self-absorbed, narcissistic mentality that this is the only way to live is killing us and the natural world.

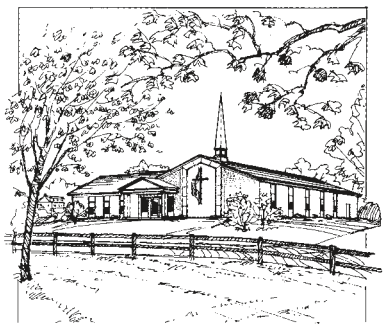
What are we going to do about this? Sometimes I feel like running across cracked sidewalks and through mangled back alleyways and screaming my sorrow and rage at the top of my lungs. Sometimes I feel like doing anything other than just sitting down, working, or watching TV. I want to take over a piece of this cold and broken world. I want to embrace a stranger in my arms and just cry. I want to take action. I want my world back. About a year ago, I became an activist. I found others who felt the way I did. I marched with them. I screamed and went up against lines of police with them. I began to feel like I could be honest about how I felt. We began to plan. We began to take action, empowering others along the way.

To me, a community garden in Shepherdstown would be a great way to empower people to live in a sustainable way. Food grown in a local garden and picked fresh is twice as nutritious as pesticide-laden food transported from thousands of miles away. Those in the agribusiness know they are not in it to feed people; they are in it to make money, to maximize profit. There is plenty of food to go around. The only reason people go hungry and starve is because they lack the capital to purchase their own food. Just last year, over a billion dollars was spent to transport a surplus of perfectly good food to landfills instead of people's tummies.

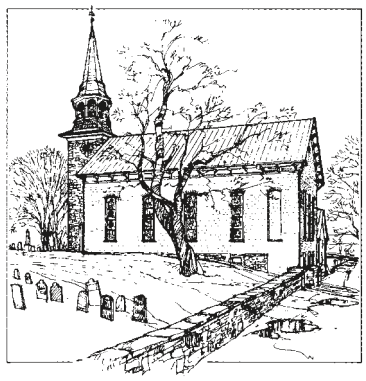
Community gardens are built on sharing food and ideas in a noncoercive space, while creating diverse self-sustaining communities. Community gardening reduces crime and provides a safe learning space for social interaction to take place. In Los Angeles, before its destruction by the greenhead capitalist developer Ralph Horowitz, the South Central Farm fed L.A.'s 350 poorest families, while cleaning the city's water and creating a wonderful free space for a broken, impoverished community. Currently, there are over 5,000 community gardens in the United States. Food has always been a center point in human culture.

Those who control our food control our lives. Coming together as a collective and working together is far superior and infinitely more liberating than the alienating existence we've been sold by corporations. Right now I'm moving into a collective house with other activists on High Street in Shepherdstown. We'll be defiantly working along with the Shepherd Progressive Action Coalition and other community groups to establish community gardens in Shepherdstown and throughout Jefferson County. We will give up all we have previously *believed in* and plunge our hands in the dirt. We're going to grow a new world starting now. If you would like more information on how to get active, E-mail me at rglenn51989@yahoo.com

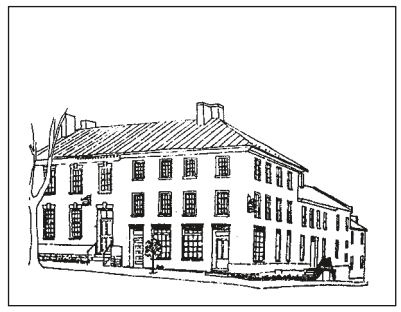
Religious Worship and Education Schedules



Asbury United Methodist
Rt. 480 (Kearneysville Road)
Rev. Rudolph Monsio Bropleh, Pastor
Telephone: 876-3122
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.



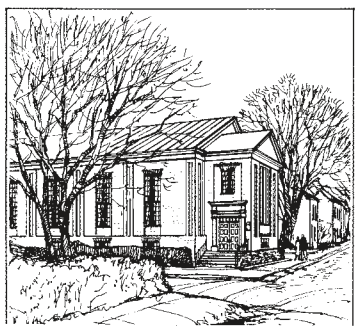
Christ Reformed,
United Church of Christ
304 East German Street
Bronson Staley, Pastor
Telephone: (301) 241-3972
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m.



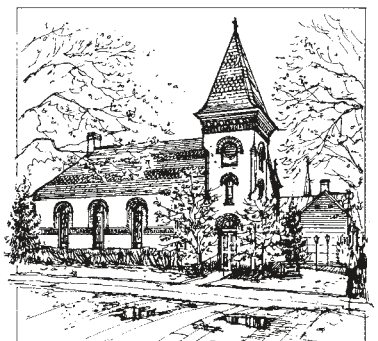
Christian Science Society
Entler Hotel ~ German & Princess Streets
Sunday Worship & Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.
Testimony meetings: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays
3:00 p.m. year-round in the Reading Room

Christian Science Reading Room, located at 203 S. Princess Street, is open Mondays and Wednesdays (except holidays) from noon until 3 p.m.

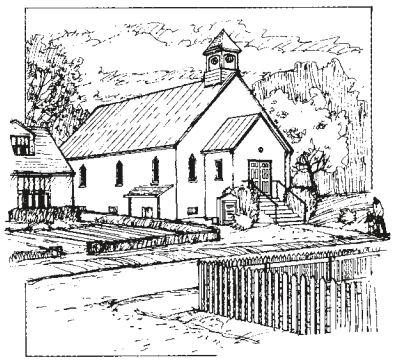
Telephone: 876-2021
Sentinel radio program Sundays 7 a.m.
on WINC 92.5 FM



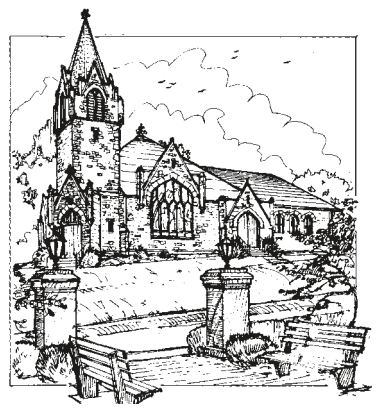
New Street United Methodist
Church & New Streets
Dee-Ann Dixon, Pastor
Telephone: 876-2362
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Children's Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.
Adult Sunday School: 11:15 a.m.



St. Agnes Roman Catholic
Church & Washington Streets
Father Mathew Rowgh
Telephone: 876-6436
Sunday Eucharist: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Saturday Eucharist: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.



St. John's Baptist
West German Street
Rev. Cornell Herbert, Pastor-Elect
Telephone: 876-3856
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.



St. Peter's Lutheran
King & High Streets
Fred Soltow, Pastor
Telephone: 876-6771
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Adult Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Children's Church: 11:15 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship and Bible Study: 6:15 p.m.

St. James' Lutheran Church, Uvilla
Sunday Worship: 9:00 a.m.
Children's Church: 9:15 a.m.

Shepherdstown Presbyterian
100 W. Washington Street
Randall W. Tremba, Pastor
Telephone: 876-6466
Sunday Worship: 8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.
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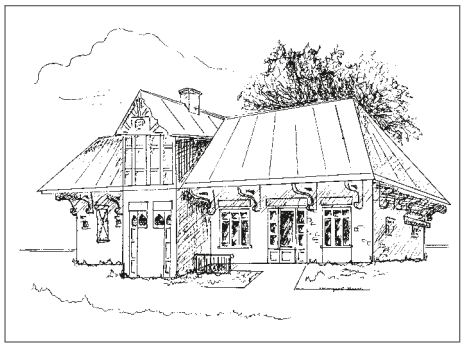
Trinity Episcopal
Corner of Church & German Streets
The Rev. G. T. Schramm, Rector
The Rev. Siobhan Patterson, Curate
Frank Coe, Priest Associate
Telephone: 876-6990
Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.



Unity of Shepherdstown
Minister: Reverend Anne Murphy
Morning Celebration Services
Sundays at 11:00 a.m.
Shepherdstown Train Station
Seasonal Classes & Workshops
Telephone: (304) 268-4222
www.unityofshepherdstown.org

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES — *All are welcome*

Trinity Episcopal	12 noon	Prayer Book Liturgy. The church will remain open throughout the day after the service for private devotion and prayer.
St. James Lutheran, Uvilla	7:30 p.m.	Good Friday service
Asbury United Methodist	7:00 p.m.	An Easter drama
St. Agnes Catholic	3 p.m. 7 p.m.	Stations of the Cross The Liturgy of the Lord's Passion and Death
Shepherdstown Presbyterian	12–3:00 p.m.	Open for prayer. "The Solemn Reproaches of the Cross" prayed aloud on each half-hour.

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