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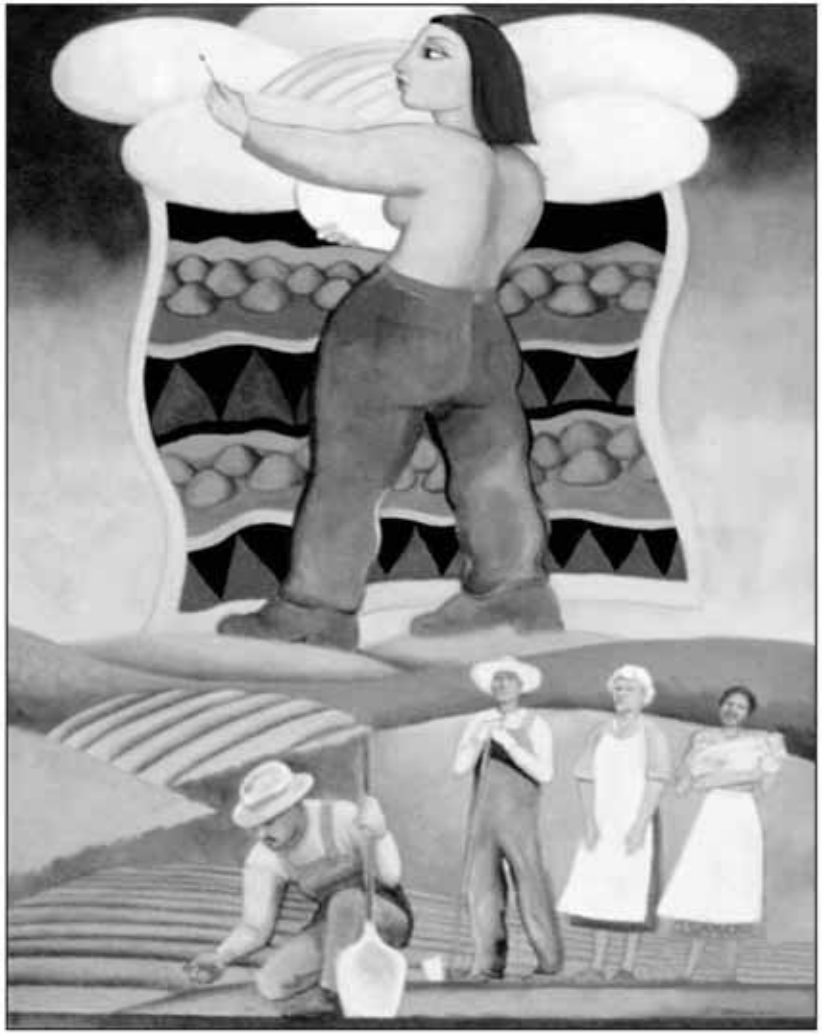

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Cover Artist

Joanna Morrison finds ways to explore personal experiences with color, shape, and movement. Her paintings are expressive rather than realistic, showing how we see the world through our memories, desires, and meanings. Her sculpture is purely abstract.

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Silent Paws

Randall Tremba

Do not fear; do not let your hands grow weak. I will deal with all your oppressors. I will save the lame and gather the outcast and will change their shame into praise. I will bring you home.

— The Prophet Zephaniah

It's been a grim couple of years in more ways than one for many of us here and elsewhere. Here's a story that might make your way a little less grim and perhaps a little more expectant. The subject of this story, a Vietnam vet, gave me permission to tell it.

He had been in and out of VA medical and psychiatric units for more than 25 years in several different states. He tried and failed to take his own life. He'd been in prison. He'd been declared permanently and totally disabled, even though he looked healthy and fit. He was surviving on about $10,000 a year. He had no family to speak of. He had a few friends and one mysterious cat.

He came to me in order to get a second opinion on that cat. A friend had referred him to me. He told me his friend said that I could be trusted. But he wanted some proof. He wanted to know if I was a doctor. Yes, I told him. I have a doctorate of ministry from Princeton Seminary, but I can't fix bodies or prescribe medication.

That's OK, he said. He just wanted to be sure I was educated because, as it turned out, he was well educated in philosophy, psychology, sociology, literature, and religion, and he was about to entrust me with his complicated physical and mental history.

I don't know exactly what happened to him in Vietnam, but I know enough Vietnam vets to know that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an accurate if vague diagnosis. Many vets return from war with severe mental and emotional impairment. It's one of the enormous costs of war.

Which is why presidents must be honest with themselves and the nation when it comes to war. Is it truly a just war, Mr. President, or just a war to feed the voracious appetite of what President Eisenhower called the military-industrial complex? Is it a just war, Mr. President, or just another war to preserve the plush American way of life at any cost? War is not a video game. The president and Congress must renounce duplicity and speak honestly with the American people. The costs of war are enormous. The evidence of that was looking me in the eye.

I don't know exactly what happened to this veteran in the VA system, but I know enough vets, including my own nephew, to know that, as good as VA centers are, getting the help you need can take years of humiliating battles.

The man in my office bore deep wounds. He slumped under a heavy load. But clearly he was a fighter, a survivor.

Over the course of 40 years he had investigated various religious, spiritual, and ethical traditions hoping to find a mission or purpose for his life, the kind of focused mission and clear purpose he had as a soldier. He searched and searched but came up empty.

To make a long story short, let me just say: A year or so ago he decided to eliminate hope from his life. He saw no point in it. He reminded me that "hope" was the last thing released from Pandora's box of woes and misery. Hope came out last. So, is hope the ultimate salvation or the ultimate curse of humankind? He had come to see, as many others have come to see, that hope can be a cruel hoax, a sick joke.

This man lived without hope for a year, going through the motions, just staying alive until that wore thin. He resigned himself to die. He embraced death.

And then something happened.

As he lay on his bed that night, awaiting his death, counting his final minutes, he suddenly woke up. His cat was tapping his cheek with its paw—something that cat had never done before. Then he heard a whisper. He would later come to believe that whisper was the spirit of courage, or as he said, the Holy Spirit. The whisper said: *Not what, how.*

That was it. *Not what, how.*

I asked him what those words meant to him. It meant, he said, it's not what I do that matters; it's how I live. There is no mission or purpose per se; it's all about living life fully in this moment. Not what, how.

He thought that cat and that whisper had been a "religious experience," and he said so to his VA psychiatrist soon after. The psychiatrist, he said, told him it was a hallucination prompted by a neurological disorder. Now, as I said, this vet is well educated. So he couldn't completely dismiss a scientific, materialistic explanation of his experience.

And thus he came to the point of his visit: He wanted a second opinion from me. Was that cat and that whisper a religious experience, something "supernatural"?

Well, what would you have told him?

Before I answered his question, I had to ask him a question—which is what wise rabbis and ministers do: We answer a question with another question. What difference, I asked him, had that experience made in his life? That's easy, he said. It saved my life.

And that made it easier for me. After all, the ancient traditions tell of a spirit that brings life out of death, light out of darkness, hope out of despair time and time again. In the hour of darkness Mother Mary whispers: Let it be. Or as the prophet Zephaniah put it:

Do not fear; do not let your hands grow weak. I will deal with all your oppressors. I will save the lame and gather the outcast and will change their shame into praise. I will bring you home, says the LORD.

Yes, this ancient but living tradition tells of a spirit that regenerates life out of death, light out of darkness, hope out of despair. Sometimes we call that spirit God, sometimes Lord, sometimes Emmanuel, sometimes Tao, sometimes Wisdom, sometimes Word, sometimes Day-Spring, sometimes Great Spirit, sometimes Jesus.

Sometimes it comes to a whole nation in a time of darkness. Sometimes it comes to one soul in his or her hour of darkness.

I will bring you home.

I'm not sure how it comes, but it comes. Sometimes you see it when morning dawns. Sometimes you hear it in the midnight hour. Sometimes it comes through a voice or a piece of broken bread. And sometimes it comes on the silent paws of a cat.

Tyler's Mountain Magic

Claire Stuart

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MALCOLM ATER

Malcolm Ater

Malcolm Ater was a wrestling coach at Harpers Ferry Junior High School when he met a boy named Tyler in 1997. At that time, Ater had never heard of cystic fibrosis (CF). He just knew that Tyler was a skinny, pale kid who was sick a lot and, according to other kids, spent a lot of time in the hospital.

Cystic fibrosis is a chronic illness inherited through a defective gene. It is characterized by the production of thick mucous that clogs the lungs and affects the digestive system. People with CF suffer from persistent coughs, wheezing, difficulty breathing, poor weight gain, and frequent lung infections.

A half century ago, children with CF only lived a few years. By the 1990s, survival had improved, but many young people could not hope to live to adulthood. New treatments have vastly improved quality of life and extended survival, but CF sufferers still only have a life expectancy of about 30 to 40 years.

As head wrestling coach, Ater recruited every boy he could for the wrestling team. Without understanding the seriousness of Tyler's condition, he recruited Tyler the same way he recruited many other boys. He simply approached him and said something to the effect, "How would you like to be a champion?"

This approach apparently worked very well. Each boy he recruited seemed to take his question seriously and personally, because in the school of only about 225 kids, Ater recalls, around 40 boys were on the wrestling team. On the other hand, the school had never had a winning season in any sport.

Tyler told the coach he had wrestled two years in the county Youth League but did not mention the fact that he had never won a match. In his first year on the team, as a seventh grader, he finally won one—the final match of the season.

The wrestling team practiced three hours a day, five days a week. Tyler worked hard to improve and never complained. Once Ater learned of the serious nature of the boy's illness, he told him to sit out any time he needed to, but Tyler didn't want special treatment. He just wanted to be a normal kid.

"He was the most courageous kid I've ever known," says Ater. "I can't even imagine how he must have felt, getting up every morning knowing that he probably didn't have long to live."

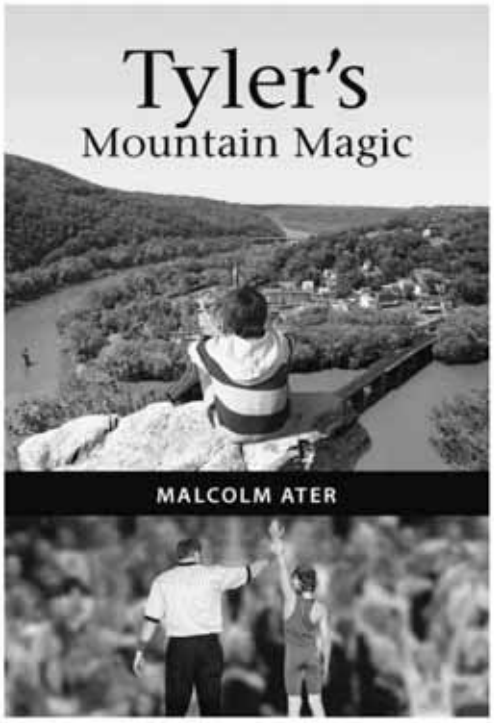
Tyler wanted to be remembered, and he believed he could do it by being part of a team with a record that could not be broken. He saw the possibility of being a member of the only team in a public secondary school in West Virginia to win 40 games or matches in a single season in any sport. Wrestling was the only sport that would allow that many matches. If they were lucky, that could be possible if at least 45 matches were played.

Tyler's courage and determination inspired his teammates and coaches to believe they could reach that seemingly impossible goal. If they did, their record would have to stand because the school system was being revamped. The junior high schools (grades seven through nine) were being converted to middle schools (grades six through eight) with ninth grade becoming part of high school. This would limit the number of games that could be played and change the way future records could be set.

Ater has never forgotten that amazing young man, and he tells Tyler's story in his book, *Tyler's Mountain Magic*, released this year. It won first prize for Best Book-Length Novel in the West Virginia Writers, Inc. 2011 contest.

More than a sports story, it is a story of courage, friendship, team spirit, moral fiber, and hard decisions. Ater describes it as a fictionalized account inspired by real people and events. "Tyler was a real person and I wanted to keep his memory alive," he says, "but some names, places and events are the products of my imagination."

Ater is donating part of the proceeds of book sales to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. "When I was writing the book, I did a lot of research on CF, and it is a no-brainer that I would donate to CF," he says.



A resident of Shepherdstown for 28 years, Ater was an editor for the GOOD NEWS PAPER in the 1980s. He has written human-interest stories for the *Spirit of Jefferson* and *Goldenseal* magazine.

Ater is a special education teacher at Harpers Ferry Middle School. He has taught special education reading for 24 years and has served as both assistant coach and head coach for the wrestling team.

He began his teaching career as a substitute teacher in 1987. He worked as a long-term substitute for a teacher who was pregnant, and he was later invited to be a long-term special education substitute teacher. It was supposed to be until the end of the semester but ended up being for the whole year because the teacher did not return.

Ater had a degree in education but he had not done his student teaching, so he could not be certified and hired as a full-time teacher. He returned to college to take graduate classes at night and earned certification to teach grades K through 12.

He loves teaching special education and does believe that his students are, indeed, special. A champion of the underdog, Ater says, "Special ed kids often get a bad rap, but I think they are the best group of kids. I love to see them start out reading at first grade level and then watching them progress. If I have them for all three years, I can watch them until they're reading above grade level."

He is proudest of his 2008–2009 students who were the highest scoring group of middle school special education reading students in West Virginia.

Ater has a new book that will be coming out in spring, a mystery story called *The Returner*. It is aimed at young readers (age 11–15). It takes place in the local area and features a boy who uncovers the hidden secret of his deceased, alcoholic mother.

Tyler's Mountain Magic can be purchased at Four Seasons and through Amazon.com. It is listed in the Top 100 at Amazon under Sports. It is available in paperback and for Kindle.

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Dear Reader,

This is our *one and only appeal* for financial gifts. Thanks to you we are entering our 33rd year with no debt but one: a debt of gratitude to you.

With your generous help, we have kept a good thing going for 33 years. And with your continuing help we can keep on publishing *the best little free (but not cheap) news paper* in the whole world! As always you hold the future of the GOOD NEWS PAPER in your hands.

The first issue of the GOOD NEWS PAPER was published in May 1979 with a press run of 1,000 copies. We now print 13,000 copies and mail nearly 12,000. Virtually every mailbox within five miles of Shepherdstown gets a copy—and, by request, hundreds more from Maine to California and from Alaska to Florida. Nearly 20,000 people read each issue.

The GOOD NEWS PAPER is *free* because dozens of people—writers, editors, typists, photographers, illustrators, proofreaders, and designers—donate their time and talent. We are grateful to John Snyder for the donation of design and set-up services at HBP in Hagerstown.

The GOOD NEWS PAPER not only reads well but looks good too, because of a talented production team: designer Melinda Schmitt, photographic editor Nan Doss, copy editors Rie Wilson and Claire Stuart, proof-readers John Foxen and Betty Lou Bryant, typist Kathy Reid, pre-publication editor Libby Howard, and regular writers Claire Stuart, Nan Broadhurst, Ed Zahniser, Mark Madison, Wendy Mopsik, Chris Robinson, and Sarah Soltow. Jessie Schmitt is our new photographer, interning with mom Melinda! Ed and Kitty Kelly retired this year after many years of faithfully distributing 1,000 copies to shops, restaurants, and visitor centers. Lex Miller has taken up that duty.

Volunteers keep the cost of producing this community magazine to an absolute minimum. Each quarterly issue costs about $3,000 to print and mail. That adds up to $12,000 for the year. Our Business & Service Directory brings in $4,800. The several religious communities of the Shepherdstown Ministerial Association contribute another $1,500. The rest—$6,000—must come in gifts from you.

And your gifts do come in—ranging from $5 to $300. Please send your gift today. You may use the enclosed self-addressed envelope—if it hasn't fallen out! If it's missing, please put GNP, P.O. Box 1212, Shepherdstown, WV 25443 on an envelope, stamp it, and mail it. Make checks payable to the GOOD NEWS PAPER, or simply GNP, and help keep a good thing going for another year.

Sincerely,

Randy

Randall W. Tremba
Executive Editor

P.S. Give *a gift subscription* to your friends or relatives. Absolutely free, of course. Use the handy coupon on page 2. They'll thank you for it.

Thank you very much for sending us your special newspaper. The people in your community are blessed to have the paper there. Blessings to all, Jeannetta

Thanks for another good year! Lyndell

Thanks so much for many years of enjoyable GOOD NEWS PAPER reading. Phil

Thank you for the paper. We enjoy it. Shirley

Thanks and keep up the good news! Paul & Lisa

I always look forward to reading the stories in the GOOD NEWS PAPER-especially your excellent article at the beginning. It is always insightful and challenging-a great message. Thank you for sending the paper to me. Shalom and Namaste, Ray

plum

Sarah Soltow

PHOTO BY JESSIE SCHMITT

plum storefront off German Street in Shepherdstown

PHOTO BY BRITTANY CUSTER

Cari Rosen

When Cari Aliveto was a little girl, her mother, Susan Aliveto, the art teacher at Shepherdstown Middle School, took her shopping for supplies at Shepherdstown Paint and Art on German Street. Many years have passed, Susan Aliveto has since retired, and the shelves and aisles of Shepherdstown Paint and Art have moved from 108 E. German Street to a brighter spot a few doors up. Cari Aliveto Rosen now presents her plum finds in that storefront which has been familiar to Shepherdstown artists, residents, and students for many years. Since she comes from a family of educators, it is not surprising that Rosen's career background is in education. She taught elementary school in Berkeley County, W.Va., and in Loudoun County, Va. She also earned a master's degree in education administration. She says she misses education, but with seven-year-old twins, Eve and Zoe, life is pretty busy.

Eight years ago, while pregnant with the twins and homebound awaiting their birth, she was looking for a creative outlet to pass the time. She dabbled with painting until her mother-in-law brought her a jewelry project that involved basic beading. *Aha!* Here was a pleasant creative outlet that could be picked up and put away easily during the in-between times of child care.

Her creative experiences with beading expanded until she was selling jewelry items to family and friends. This business, called Pixie Dust Designs, continued to grow as she attended craft fairs and developed a market with in-home shows. Rosen says that she still has the first pair of earrings she made and that she cherishes them as the beginning of her jewelry career. At some point along this creative path, Rosen began to incorporate metal initials into her beadwork. The aspect of working with metal attracted her more and more until she simply wanted to learn the basics of metal work. Once she had taken that step, it wasn't long before she stopped beading completely and devoted herself to creating unique jewelry pieces based on metal shapes and stamping techniques.

She opened a small shop in Shepherdstown with her jewelry designs. The shop is called **plum** to indicate that one can find a special item worth the search here, and recently **plum** has expanded to fill a much larger space more centrally located in downtown Shepherdstown. At this point, it is interesting to note that Cari Aliveto Rosen's husband, David, is also an artist. He creates digitally enhanced photography, also displayed at **plum**. The familiar architecture of Shepherdstown vibrates with the color and dramatic skies that are the hallmarks of his art. Cari Rosen readily admits that he is the artist in the family. She also admits that one of the attractions of metalwork for her is the monochromatic nature of the work—she doesn't have to worry about intimidating color blends anymore! Her workspace in the rear section of **plum** is exceedingly neat and tidy. She arranges her materials and custom orders in front of her on an old oak roll-top desk. One small box holds bits and pieces of interesting metal work (an old ornate spoon, some brass bits, etc.) that she says will someday be incorporated into a piece of jewelry. Beside the desk is a huge upended log that is used for the pounding and stamping of her metal designs. A hammer and solder await the metal rings, raw copper bits, and brass pieces that will become her unique pieces of jewelry.

With her expansion into this new space in downtown Shepherdstown, orders for Rosen's custom work have also increased. While her desire is to offer more and more of her original creative designs, running the business is encroaching on the time she would otherwise spend in creative bliss. One aspect of running such a unique business is the need to be constantly adapting in order to offer products that are interesting and affordable. To this end, Rosen offers other artists' work that is as original and creative as her own. Currently, 17 artists have work on consignment at **plum**. This provides a wide variety of interesting artisan objects to browse. Along with Rosen's metalworking talents and her husband's photography, **plum** offers fine beadwork, dichroic and fused glass, and sandblasted designs on stone pendants. Rosen is always seeking artists who are "up and coming," and she loves to support new artists' initiatives.

The shop offers unique hair accessories, precious metal clay work, resin art, some vintage clothing, locally knitted caps, and hand silk-screened shirts. Wood-fired pottery items and fair-trade beads take their place beside delightful Jimi Hendrix earrings. All are lovingly hand-created and amazingly integrated into **plum**'s artistic interior space. And there is more! Along with an ever-expanding base of artisans' work, Rosen has a few surprises of her own waiting for us. Browsing in **plum** is an inspiring experience on several levels. Upon hearing the stories of the artisans whose work is on display, a similar theme emerges. Many of the artists have former careers in organizations or corporate entities. Maybe it is a sign of the economic times, or maybe it is a sign of the emerging times, but many of these artistic endeavors are a result of an individual saying, "Forget the corporate hustle," or "If I'm already struggling, I might as well struggle for something that is more meaningful to me."

We all have pieces of the artistic within us; for many it is a matter of degree whether we play at these endeavors or decide to pursue them more seriously. A person who decides to forgo the planned-out life of structure and income and delve into the possibilities of creative pursuit makes a decision to walk the creative path. Cari Aliveto Rosen took the first step on that path several years ago, and she is now in a position to offer support to others, while **plum** offers us the fruits of their journeys.

Sarah Soltow *spent the fall with her three-and-a-half-year-old grandson, Riley. It was an incredible adventure of joy and endurance.*

Lisa Olney: 150 Percent Focused

Wendy Mopsik

PHOTOS BY WENDY MOPSIK

Sitting down during a spare moment is restaurant owner Lisa Olney.

A camel graces the windowsill of Shaharazade's Restaurant and Tea Room.

Lisa Olney is the daughter of parents born and raised on working farms in Myersville, Md. She is the youngest of three siblings and the first in her family to go to college. She figured out early in the game that if she wanted to make something happen, she would have to do it by herself. And indeed she has worked hard to create her own winding path that, after a number of years, landed her in Shepherdstown as the owner of Shaharazade's Restaurant and Tea Room. Along with her husband David and four children, Olney is now part of the town fabric.

The strong message from her home and community was that young people should learn a skill or trade because rural Maryland was the world they would live in. Abiding by this principle, Olney enrolled in the vocational technical program at Middleton High School, studying cosmetology. After graduation, she worked for three years cutting hair while getting her barber's and manager's licenses. She was quickly noticed and offered a position as a manager with Estée Lauder Cosmetics at a Frederick, Md., department store.

The next step on the road to making something happen had a small detour. Olney was offered a position at Lord and Taylor's cosmetic department in New York City. She knew that although this was exactly where she wanted to be, the time was not right to expand her horizons. Instead, she enrolled at Frederick Community College, bent on the long-range pursuit of a law degree. She also realized that she wanted to be more involved with helping others and became a volunteer at the San Mar Children's Home in Boonsboro. These two tactical choices would eventually shape her professional career and personal life.

Thanks to her strong academic record in the paralegal program at the community college, Olney was one of three students selected to intern at the Frederick County State's Attorney's Office during her last semester. The exposure to sexual abuse cases where children were involved made such an impact that she vowed to become a prosecutor in defense of those unable to defend themselves. Olney was also exposed to life outside of Myersville and grew increasingly aware of the many different cultures and backgrounds of the families she met. Prior to graduation, she decided to apply to Pace University, in New York, to finish her undergraduate requirements and a degree in social work on the road to becoming a lawyer, thinking "If I can make it there [New York], I can make it anywhere."

And make it she did, receiving dean's list recognition every semester and graduating cum laude while also working to pay for college. "My ability to focus 150 percent and prove myself made the difference," explained Olney.

On to City University of New York Law School at Queens College, selected because its motto was "law in the service of human needs," which best described her ultimate goal. More of that determination, hard work, and steady focus earned Olney her degree in two and a half years rather than the customary three, while working in a local grocery store and teaching gymnastics at the Westchester Ballet Company to pay tuition.

Olney's goal was to defend children who had been abused, but after one summer working on a fellowship in child welfare law in Brooklyn, she realized that the amount of abuse and neglect that she witnessed was too difficult to endure. The experience of seeing children exposed to multiple factors working against them left her feeling sad and overwhelmed, so she returned to Maryland in 1996 to practice law with a firm in Frederick County. As the first female in the practice and the one with the least seniority, Olney was given the cases no one else wanted. The one that changed her life was a case brought by a couple from New Market seeking to adopt a child from India. Meg, the hoped-for adoptee, had a face that haunted the young lawyer, and her photo graced Olney's office wall long after the adoption process was successfully completed.

Lisa and David Olney married in 1998. He was practical and well grounded. He had already traveled to Egypt, Puerto Rico, and Nepal and possessed a worldview similar to his wife's. Trained as an archeologist, he later became an engineering project manager in Frederick County.

As Lisa became more involved in international adoptions, she issued this challenge to David: "If we can save $10,000, can I start my own adoption agency, and can we begin the adoption process ourselves?"

Saving the money turned out to be an easier job than meeting the myriad rules and regulations imposed by the State of Maryland. But on June 4, 1999, a license was granted and For the Love of a Child Adoption Agency was born.

Exposure to children in orphanages all over the world had a profound effect on the Olneys. The first child they adopted themselves was two-year-old Emily, who came from India. She was expected in March of 1999, but political turmoil in her region had shut down all adoptions and the outcome was uncertain. While waiting, the couple learned about one-year-old Maria, who was in Russia suffering from complications of malnutrition. At only 11 pounds, the infant presented many potential difficulties. The Olneys wasted no time traveling there to complete the adoption in November. Less than one month later, Emily was able to become part of the family, arriving just before Christmas.

The girls were joined by their brother Shawn from Vietnam in 2001 at age eight. Not entirely complete as a family, the Olneys wanted one more child and were rewarded with the adoption of two-year-old Kasenia from Russia in 2002.

As an older adopted child who spoke no English, Shawn benefitted from the assistance of the larger community. He was also fortunate that the local high school he later attended offered Chinese, and his affinity for language quickly kicked into gear. Now 19 years old, Shawn is on a full scholarship at Southwest University of Economics and Finance in Chengdu, China.

After 11 years of facilitating adoptions for families in the United States and abroad and 1,200 placements of children from seven different countries, Olney made the decision to close her agency. The Hague Treaty, formulated to curb child trafficking, changed the adoption landscape. Added regulations and significantly increased paperwork made the job much more difficult and prohibitively expensive, but the work Lisa Olney accomplished has been acknowledged on many fronts. She was a 2000 recipient of the Congressional Coalition's "Angel in Adoption" award and was later honored, along with others who facilitated Russian adoptions, at a formal dinner at the Russian Embassy where she met former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev. Families continue to call with questions and updates on the progress of their children. Adult children remember the woman who was instrumental in finding them homes and new lives with loving families.

Remembering Shaharazade's from an anniversary weekend spent in Shepherdstown in 2005, Lisa and David were intrigued to learn that it was up for sale and thrilled to have their offer accepted. Lisa's position "that I know how to find out what I don't know" gave her the confidence to follow this new dream. After redoing the kitchen, adding color and life with new lampshades and paint, and tweaking the menu, they reopened the restaurant and tea room on April 1, 2011. Specialties are three-tiered trays with Middle Eastern delicacies and homemade desserts, teas from around the world, cream of crab soup, and weekend breakfasts. Poetry Night, open to the public, occurs on the first Sunday of every month at 6 p.m. This event featuring local poets reading or reciting their work has become the staff's favorite.

Lisa Olney finds herself working six days a week overseeing all operations, but she knows she is making people happy. Whether by providing healthy sustenance in an attractive restaurant or finding good homes for less fortunate children, this determined woman has made a difference.

Ben Thompson

Barber and Blacksmith

Cassie Bosley

PHOTOS BY JESSIE SCHMITT

Ben Thompson, Shepherdstown's barber

Ben gives one of his best customers a trim.

I'm sure, if you live in Shepherdstown, you've walked by the Lost Dog Coffee Shop. Perhaps you noticed groups of people sitting on the stoop of the shop next door, "Cutting Class." There's no mistake about the inspiration for that name—nestled in on the main street of a college town. Ben Thompson, the owner, is often seen sitting on that stoop, talking, laughing.

Thompson grew up in Butler County, Pa., in a small town among other small towns. I could see the dreariness in his face as he talked about it. At 17, he trained to be a hair stylist at a trade school, and then went to work for the Regis Corporation. We've seen their salons, like The Hair Cuttery, in the malls. After coming to the area through friends—and the family of friends—Thompson worked for eight years at The Hair Cuttery in Martinsburg, becoming the shop manager.

Ben Thompson is, like most of us, interested in more than his job. Besides being the father of two little boys (you can see photos of them in the salon), years ago he developed an interest in blacksmithing. Thompson got interested in metalworking at festivals. Blacksmiths appear locally at the Mountain Heritage Craft Show held twice a year at Sam Michaels Park in Jefferson County. Most people are attracted to the flame of the forge, the smell of the metal being shaped, the clanging of the tools…This is what attracted Thompson. He has met two of Shepherdstown's smiths, Jay Hurley and Dan Tokar. He admired both of their forges, but says he is a *mere hobbyist*. Traditionally, forges are fed by wood or coal and kept stoked to a high heat, but forges take up a lot of room, and that room needs to be away from the house. Part of the fascination is the sparks that fly, and most blacksmiths have burn scars on their arms. Thompson uses a propane torch, which he says puts out a consistent heat, but it's expensive. Its biggest plus is the convenience—no mess from the burning wood and no bellows.

Blacksmithing energy has a playful side. Thompson talked about "ringing the anvil." Two anvils are placed atop each other, the top one upside down. Gunpowder is placed between the two, with a fuse. The object is to see how far the top anvil will fly after the explosion. Thompson says that playing cards are put between the anvils (he wasn't sure if this is a trade secret), to act as gaskets.

"I'm interested in the sculpting side of iron work…something so seemingly inert going through such change," he said. He talked about beauty and function, how art is always trying to favor one or the other. "Many artists," Thompson said, "focus too much on function. We lose the beauty of form." Blacksmithing has the attraction of working with base elements: fire and metal. He has an appreciation for the traditional skills of smithing, skills that are almost lost. Thompson made the ironwork that holds the Cutting Class salon sign.

Artistic masks on the mantel greet customers.

After working for a big corporation, Thompson was intrigued when a friend mentioned the empty store space in Shepherdstown. Not only was it on the main block in town, it had been a hair salon before. It was not a quick decision for Thompson; it's a huge move to shift from being an employee to being the boss. Needless to say, the choice was made, and Cutting Class opened in early May 2011. Thompson likes the variety of clients that pass through his doors: some of his clients from Martinsburg have followed him to the new location (and have to face the same parking problems we all do); fathers and sons come in, but not always for matching haircuts; college students come in for that quick cut before going home for the weekend.

Thompson feels that he has a great advantage in his site—Shepherdstown has such a relaxed feel about it. Thompson is finding that he enjoys being the boss and making all the choices for the salon. He likes the "stoop energy," and says that the people who hang out are often the best patrons. They help promote the salon because they are often outgoing, social, and know lots of people to spread the word to, and they're friendly and supportive. Thompson likes to sit on the stoop with some of the locals and watch the world go by. "Shepherdstown is full of fantastic people. It has a wealth of diversity of art, music, architecture, individuals, and activities."

The windows of the salon contain art from some of the locals, like John Gaugeau, who paints on found surfaces, and Chris Robinson, painter and printmaker. At the foot of the steps is a water bowl for all the dogs that walk by. When I walk by, I often see Thompson inside with a client in the chair.

Restoring Duffield Colored Cemetery

Claire Stuart

Sometimes it isn't easy to do a good deed, when good intentions are thwarted by tangled requirements. But with determination and community help, even a "Catch 22" can occasionally be overcome.

Travis Barnette was saddened when he noticed people visiting the Duffield Colored Cemetery that adjoins his grandparents' home in Uvilla. The little graveyard was overgrown with weeds, the ground was badly sunken, and stones were fallen or missing. Visitors often could not find their family members' graves. Barnette felt it was disrespectful for the deceased to be left that way, and as a Boy Scout, he wanted to do something about it.

The Duffield Colored Cemetery was originally a slave cemetery serving those who worked in a large orchard that once took in the whole area. It predates the Civil War, but burials still took place there until as late as 1981.

When Barnette's grandparents, Stephen and Carole Brooks, bought their property in 1999, the cemetery was being maintained off and on by a group of veterans from the Martinsburg VA hospital. However, when the veteran behind the effort was released, maintenance ceased.

The Brooks mowed the cemetery occasionally. Another neighbor, Lloyd Fink, also mowed, as did his daughter, Molly Fink, who cared for the cemetery as her high school community service project.

Travis Barnette decided that restoration of the cemetery would be an excellent choice for his Eagle Scout project. However, such projects require both permission and documentation that they will benefit the community. Someone had to sign off on the project, but seemingly no one had the authority to do so. Anyone who had anything to do with the property had died or moved away.

He went to the tax office to see who owned the property and was surprised to find that nobody of record did. As a cemetery, the property was tax exempt. The earliest tax records only went back to 1852, and the cemetery was already there at that time. A search of deeds found nothing. The cemetery was mentioned in the deeds of neighboring properties as a boundary marker, but there was no deed on file for the cemetery itself.

He inquired at the County Commission. They checked and could find no one responsible for the cemetery, and they informed him that their office was not authorized to sign off on his project.

Hopeful of finding some solution, he went to the National Park Service to inquire whether they might take the cemetery over, since it is pre–Civil War. However, he was told that they could not take it or buy it because it did not belong to anyone.

Calls and inquiries finally led Barnette to George Rutherford, president of the Jefferson County NAACP and an officer of the Jefferson County Black History Preservation Society. Rutherford did not know of anyone who could sign but encouraged the young man to go ahead with the work.

Unfortunately, this did not satisfy the Boy Scout requirements. Their policy specified that someone had to sign the papers and verify that the project would benefit the community. It was highly frustrating for Barnette. He had simply wanted to do something useful but was blocked on both sides.

To keep the project from being shelved, Rutherford finally agreed to sign off on it. In his capacity as an officer of the NAACP and the Black History Preservation Society, he could verify that the project would be a benefit to the community.

The project was a huge one, involving both adult community members and Boy Scouts. Adults were required to run power equipment. Barnette and his grandfather removed the old fencerow of rusted barbed wire that was overgrown with bushes and weeds. Jerry Whitmer helped remove fallen trees. About 60 tons of dirt were moved to level out the sunken areas. A work team from Barnette's Scout Troop 274 of Frederick, Md., raked out rocks, filled in holes, cleaned, repaired and reset tombstones, spread fertilizer, and seeded grass.

Many graves had no stones and were only marked with the metal plaques from funeral homes, and many of those plaques were crushed and broken. Large granite slabs left over from counter tops were donated by Scoutmaster Ron Layman of Troop 274, and Stephen Brooks cut them into tombstone size.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BROOKS FAMILY

The newly restored Duffield Colored Cemetery off Melvin Road in Uvilla

The work team from Boy Scout Troop 274 of Frederick, Md.—Left to right, Scoutmaster Ronald Layman, Stephen Brooks, Brian Terwilliger, Travis Barnette (top), David Miller (in skid loader), Zachary Miller (in bucket), Nick Kokoski, Douglas Terwilliger, and Michael Kokoski (holding shovel).

The scouts affixed the plaques to the granite and installed the tombstones.

The biggest problem was, and still is, the identification and location of graves. Inquiries to local African-American families provided some names. Local funeral homes were able to provide names of some deceased but no maps to the graves. Using a book of Jefferson County cemeteries and two Internet sites that listed names of deceased supposedly buried there, names that appeared in all three lists were presumed to actually be there.

Brooks says that there are probably 90 graves in the cemetery, but the names of only 36 deceased are definitely known. Some graves are unmarked, although the names were documented. Brooks noted that Monny Harding of Martinsburg, who had helped set stones, recalled digging some of the graves around 40 years ago. Harding said that the graves were so close together that it was nearly impossible to distinguish where one ended and another began.

Most of the cemetery's graves remain unmarked. There are a few large 19th-century original stones standing. There are stones of veterans from both World Wars, a few modern stones (the latest dated 1981), and the stones set by the Scouts.

The oldest original marked stone is inscribed "Isaac Dust" with a date of March 9, 1858. The top of the stone is broken off, although the words "Wife of" are still legible, so the name of the woman buried there is unknown. The grave of the youngest person found is that of "infant son McDonald" who died in 1960.

As much work as could be done was completed. American Legion Post 102 held a ceremony at the cemetery on November 10, 2010. In a letter to Travis Barnette, George Rutherford said, "The work that you have done far surpasses anything that I could have imagined."

However, now that Barnette's project is done, the question of the future upkeep of the cemetery remains. The Brooks have been continuing to mow. "Carole does most of it," says Stephen, "and George Rutherford and his son have done some."

There is granite for more stones if any more graves can be located. Alan Norton of Eackles-Spencer & Norton Funeral home, who was very helpful to the project, offered to provide metal plaques for any more verified graves. Alternatively, the granite could be used for building steps for people to walk in from Melvin Road.

Brooks hopes that another Scout troop will step forward and take over the maintenance of the cemetery or that someone will continue the research for another Eagle project. Or, possibly some other community members will find time to help keep this little orphan cemetery from falling back into ruin.

For further information, you can contact Stephen Brooks by e-mail at: br00ksn00k@aol.com. (Please note that the large 00s are the number zero and not the letter O.)

Travis Barnette repairs one of the old tombstones as part of his Eagle Scout project.

Wildwood Middle School Murals

Students Joe Stimmel, Emily Pumphrey, Savanna Ott, and Alyssa Fedwik

PHOTO BY SUSAN CARNEY

Joe Stimmel, Alyssa Fedwick, and Savannah Ott; not pictured, Emily Pumphrey

The murals at Wildwood Middle School are full of cultural diversity and artistic skill. The diversity of the murals includes Arabic tiles with African and South American images. Another amazing thing about the murals is the educational value. For the students to paint the murals they would have to learn about the subject featured. The students learned teamwork, which is a very important skill to have. The murals are important to the students because it teaches them about other countries around the world.

The murals on Wildwood's walls are a symbol of the students' hard work, which will be a part of the school for a long time. It shows that the students are creative and dedicated to their school. Wildwood has become a very culturally diverse place to learn. It is relaxing to walk through the school and look at the beautiful and dramatic artwork. The murals include the different characteristics of cultures, life cycles of organisms, different forms of lettering, graffiti, our mascot, and so much more. The artwork is very important to each and every student at Wildwood because many students have had the privilege to work on it. Our stunning and breathtaking paintings will forever illuminate the halls of Wildwood. The murals give a sense of accomplishment to the students who have worked on the amazing art—especially when they see people stunned as they walk into the school.

The mural begins with a section of a blank hallway or part of a wall, followed by the development of a plan for the mural. Once the mural is designed it slowly starts to appear as the artist imagined it. After it is complete the students step back and congratulate each other on a job well done. Both students and staff are mesmerized by the stunning artwork.

Wildwood's art teacher, Susan Carney, is the reason for all of this. She is very devoted, caring, nice, and helpful. She is what made the murals possible. Without her, the halls of Wildwood would be blank and bland. Ms. Carney, with the help of many students, managed to turn Wildwood into an amazing and beautiful environment to learn in.

MURAL PHOTOS BY JESSIE SCHMITT

Artworks

Benita Keller

Colorful in Black and White

Nan Broadhurst

Self-portrait, Window Reflection, Shepherdstown, WV

Benita Keller is easily recognizable in her vintage '50s dresses and hats, with cameras around her neck. Her traditional black-and-white silver prints and, since 2004, color digital photos, give voice to political statements and environmental portraits that are dear to her heart.

Keller's first 18 years were spent on a 40-acre farm in Kearneysville, W.Va., and this infused her with a love of the land that would shape her choices in life. Her family raised cows, chickens, horses, pigs, and goats. The garden supplied most of their food, and Keller learned daily lessons in self-reliance. Her mother and 4-H offered opportunities for all sorts of craft projects, including photography, hooking her for life.

Keller attended Kearneysville Elementary School, a two-room schoolhouse, until seventh grade, when she began taking the bus to Shepherdstown, graduating with the last class of Shepherdstown High School. Keller then attended Shepherd College (now Shepherd University), obtaining a Regent's bachelor of arts degree in business and photography.

At that time in academia, photography was usually treated as a commercial subject, with little or no discussion of photography as art. But Keller found and studied with a highly esteemed teacher, John Gossage, at the University of Maryland. His emphasis on aesthetics over technique resonated deeply with Keller. She obtained her master's degree in photography, thus launching her career as a freelance fine art photographer and photojournalist.

Keller is a very hard worker, full of determination and a wide variety of skills. She worked in the Registrar's office while attending Shepherd and continued after graduation. She met and married Ronald Keller, moving to Big Pool, Md. A daughter, Sarah, was born, who has been a major inspiration for Keller's photography and life. Some years later, Keller separated from her husband and moved to German Street in Shepherdstown. She now lives in a sweet house on the hill just outside town with her partner, Steve Parker.

One of the perplexing and confusing issues for Keller was why she constantly needed to struggle so hard with her studies at school. It wasn't until she was in graduate school that she was diagnosed as dyslexic, finally giving her some understanding of her challenges. The resourcefulness learned at her mother's knee helped her to compensate for her difficulties in creative and expressive ways. Her diagnosis and treatment gave her the courage and confidence to go forward with a career in photography and teaching, and she generously shares the insights she has gained in overcoming and working with dyslexia with her students and others who face similar challenges.

Keller's teaching career began as an adjunct instructor at Shepherd College, teaching full time for 20 years, also running the Frank Center art gallery and the darkroom. She left Shepherd in 2006, then teaching photography at the Art Institute of Washington, Washington, D.C.; Montgomery College of Art & Design, Silver Spring, Md.; and Hagerstown Community College, Hagerstown, Md.

In spring 2005, Keller and her Shepherd students created a very visible splash with an installation called *Trailer and Trash or Looking Through Rose Colored Glasses*, billed as sarcasm about sarcasm. After careful preparation, they put it all up in secret in one night, surprising everyone, including the faculty and staff. They painted Keller's classroom trailer a bright pink, along with everything around it, including the grass. One hundred pink flamingos surrounded a pink Ford Pinto, clothesline, doghouse, and every sort of tacky knickknack they could find. Keller furnished the inside as a living room and art gallery, and used the front of the trailer as a set for a series of portraits.

Her students participated in every stage of the project with excitement and creative energy. The installation was a statement about myth, prejudice, and satire, inspiring the students with ideas and possibilities for their own works. The pink paint was primer, and after one week the whole thing was restored to a much-needed improved version of its former incarnation. A lively website illustrates this local happening: http://www.trailerandtrash.com.

Keller had never ventured far from the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia until she went to the University of Maryland, seeing Washington, D.C., for the first time at age 28. But then the lid was off the traveling Pandora's box! In 1988, she went to Nigeria on a humanitarian mission with a local church, and it opened her eyes to the marvels of immersing herself in another culture. Up to that point, she had always photographed the land she so adored. But she found the African people and customs so fascinating that she took full advantage of her spare time to put them on film. The Nigerian armed guards wanted to confiscate her film at the airport, but a friendly pilot grabbed it and got it safely back to the United States.

After that, there were many adventures in many cultures. She went to Vietnam in 1990 with a group of vets for a monthlong healing trip. There she met a Magnum photographer, Larry Towell, who taught her much about photojournalism. In 1997 she went to Russia for a month to photograph a friend's Russian Orthodox wedding and, coincidentally, the first election after the coup that was going on at that time. An amazing opportunity to photograph a polling place arose. Keller started clicking and was promptly arrested, luckily for a short time. She went to Cuba with her Shepherd photojournalism students twice, and has returned to that country five times on her own. She cites her many friends there as beautiful examples of the special people who have dropped into her life as a result of her photography.

Closer to home, Keller spent a month at Bethany House, the women's homeless shelter in Martinsburg, living with and photographing the residents. The resulting photo collection was a finalist for the Dorothea Lange and Paul Taylor Award. For the last three years, she received grants from the Arts and Humanities Alliance and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History to do an extended workshop entitled The Jefferson County Photography Project, recording a visual history of our county in black-and-white film.

Keller's passion is for black-and-white film, developed to silver prints. She sees them as poignantly beautiful, representing a disappearing art form. Before 2004, she shot her photos exclusively with black-and-white film, but the culture of the times demanded that she include skills in digital color as well. Though reluctant at first to expand into this media, she now appreciates it in certain cases—especially for colorful fabric patterns and architectural patinas—but she still prefers working with film when she can. Portfolios of her work include: portraits, landscapes, nudes, Cuba, circus, Russia, Africa, Vietnam, The Million Man March, 9/11, protest, Sarah, weddings, and Shepherdstown. She is currently working on two books of her photos from Cuba.

Keller has received many artist grants and awards, including a listing as one of the top 100 photographers in the United States with the Ernst Haas Award. She is also in the archives of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C. Her work can be seen at the Bridge Gallery in Shepherdstown, www.bridgegalleryandframing.com, and on her website http://www.benitakeller-photo.artspan.com.

Nan Broadhurst *is a graphic designer and artist living in Shepherdstown and learning to be grateful for all life's lessons.*

Artwork →

ARTWORK PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE ARTIST

Sophia and the Tiger, 2009

Rain in Havana, Cuba, 2000

Wedding, Vietnam, 1990

Red Square, Moscow, 1997

Woman in Doorway Sewing, Vietnam, 1990

Fourth of July, Shepherdstown, WV

Sarah, China Kitchen, Shepherdstown, WV 1999

Lindsay With Timothy, 2009

Three Fulani Women, Africa, 1989

‘Pack lightly: you’re being sent out’

Poems by Christa Mastrangelo-Joyce

Dreaming Red
Last night I dreamt that I was writing
a poem on the front of my dishwasher.

I wrote quickly, thinking the words may be washed
away. I wrote: *you died in the winter*

when there was so much gloom. Inch upon inch
of snow fell onto the frozen ground

that would become your grave.
I was dreaming of my cousin

who was newly buried and so young, only 39.
I wrote three more lines about death, though

I don’t know what they said. It was too hard
to read with my eyes closed.

I wanted to write about the cardinal
I saw just after I heard the news of her death,

of the sudden brightness of crimson that appeared
in the barren trees, just over the peak of a snow

drift. As if from a dream itself, the shape appeared,
dazzling, impossible not to notice, then quickly

disappeared into the white of the snowing sky.
I awoke, though, from the dream

before I could write this. And so the dream
was really about this young woman’s death, but

when I opened my eyes, it was the color red
and the flight of that small bird that I remembered
most clearly.

Magnolia Blooming
You’d never guess blood
could be shed on a day like this—
not with magnolias blooming and laughter
hanging off the mouths of the white men
as casually as their thick cigars.
It could be any autumn day
in Mississippi—Spanish moss beckons
from a Red Maple; the air is ripe,
sky cloudless.
The men lean into their white
police car parked on crab grass,
suck in the stinking smoke
of their cigars. One lifts his club
in jest, swings his arm swiftly down
then back up. The others chuckle,
lean back casually, as his arm
slices a black shadow
across the Southern sun.

Got it Good
This poem’s been eatin’ my bones all day,
keeps demanding a decent meal,
says it wants something with a little sauce.
Poem wants to be a barfly, a booze hound,
swig whiskey from a dirty glass. Poem
just sits on an old wooden stool, wailing,
Mama just don’t love me no mo. Poem’s
been lamenting something since the day
it was born, keeps telling me it ain’t gettin’ no
younger, askin’ when I gonna let it out,
get it a drink, bring it something good to eat.
Poem’s got me near picked raw—
I’m nothin’ but a bag of flesh, left-over rotting
muscle, bucket of blood, nothing to keep me
upright. Poem done used my bones as walking
sticks, got itself to the closest watering hole.
Bound to stay out all night.

They Wish to Grow Old
The couple in the photograph
are not my parents—they are
a young man and his new wife
on their honeymoon in Charleston.
They think the South
is mysterious and romantic—the sultry
heat, sweetened tea, fetid bog,
straw hats and Spanish moss.
He is looking at her,
rather than at the camera.
They’re smiling, sitting on a dock
by the inlet as the tide comes in.
He’s brushing a piece of hair
from her face. The salt air licks
at their necks, making their skin sticky.
This moment is just before he leans
in to kiss her.
She laughs, squeezes his hand,
says she wants to grow old with him,
here, in the Southland, the water
lapping in around them.
This couple does not grow old
together, they do not become
my parents, the man does not die.
They remain here, watching the tide
coming and going, sitting close
in the steamy air.

Meals
You curl yourself into me, baby bear
paws that knead my flesh; against my belly,
your mouth fixed to my breast, we are barely
yet two. I rub my nose into your brown
furry head, nuzzle my lip in your ear.
I could swallow you back into me, whole,
like a sweet summer peach. Your head lolls back, falls
off my nipple, milk rolling down your chin.
You will grow into more than I can hold.
This knowledge sinks its teeth into my heart.
You and me like this is everything
and too soon, you’ll remember none of it;
this nourishment barely a dim memory
as you start to consume the rest of me.

How to Make the Journey
Pack lightly: you’re being sent out
on a thin, wooden glider. Leave
the steamer trunk of family heirlooms.
Burn pictures and letters from old lovers;
they’ll only weigh you down.
Decide once and for all which pair
of shoes is your favorite; which book,
which CD, is the one you’d want for eternity.
Eternity is now.
Chuck anything not filed under ‘absolute necessity.’
You’ll feel better once you do.

Once you’re moving, don’t think about the void,
about how close nothingness is.
Instead stare out the window to the grids
below, the perfectly linear blocks
of brown and green Legos
stacked on the ground.
Realize it’s an illusion. Nothing
is that perfect. Know that distance
allows this illusion.

Decide to breathe deeply; pass
on the cheap booze and peanuts.
You’ll not want to be bloated for this trip;
it’s bad enough you’re defying gravity.
Think about something solid, something
familiar, like home. Know that nothing is more
beautiful. Remember, finally, if you begin
to spin out of control, the best thing to do
is close your eyes.

Christa Mastrangelo-Joyce *teaches Jala yoga above Mellow Moods on German Street in Shepherdstown. Her poems have appeared in many journals, including* Valparaiso Poetry Review, Poemeleon, Reunion Journal, Umbrella Journal, Barely South Review, *and* The Florida English Journal. *She contributed a critical essay on revisionist fairy tale poetry to the book* Fairy Tales Reimagined. *She has taught English for Dean College and for The American University. She and husband Greg Joyce are parents of Ava and Michael. “Dreaming Red” appeared in* Reunion: The Dallas Review *and “Magnolia Blooming” in* Water-Stone Review.

PHOTO BY MOLLY AGUILAR

Seven Billion Birthdays

A Short History of Overpopulation

Mark Madison

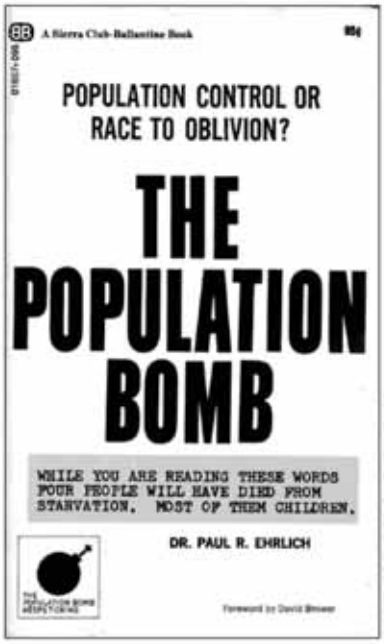

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR

We have met the enemy, and he is us!

—Pogo

According to the U.N. Population Office the global population will reach 7 billion on October 31, 2011. When I was born (1964) there were 3 billion humans, and when I moved to Shepherdstown in 1999 there were 6 billion of us. If current predictions hold, we will flip the population odometer many more times as we stabilize somewhere between 10 and 27 billion humans (demographics is an imprecise science).

This question of overpopulation has a long pedigree of several centuries. Population studies, not economics, are truly the "dismal science" and nobody was more dismal than the dour Reverend Thomas Malthus. In Malthus's 1798 *Essay on Population*, he claimed famously that population tends to increase geometrically (i.e., 1, 2, 4, 8, 16) whereas food resources increase arithmetically (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc.). In Malthus's famous formulation, "the seeds of life" were scattered quite freely around the world but nature "has been comparatively sparing in the room, and the nourishment necessary to rear them." It was a clever and simple postulation unencumbered with much data and it was a bit of a craze in Victorian England—Charles Darwin read Malthus and used nature's fecundity as a critical element of his new theory of evolution by natural selection. Surprisingly for the foremost advocate of limited progeny, Malthus was to leave a large number of intellectual offspring who took his gloomy warnings to heart in a world far more populated than that of 18th-century England.

In the post–World War II era, a number of critics once again raised the flag of overpopulation as part of a group that could accurately be called neo-Malthusians—the most famous being Paul Ehrlich a, Stanford California biologist and expert on butterflies. Paul Ehrlich's 1968 polemic *The Population Bomb* speculated on a world teeming with the too muchness of humanity. Unsurprisingly, Ehrlich stumbled upon the problem of overpopulation while visiting India where he was trapped in a derelict cab in traffic long enough to see a possible future:

The streets seemed alive with people. People eating, people washing, people sleeping. People visiting, arguing, and screaming. People thrusting their hands through the taxi window, begging. People defecating and urinating. People clinging to buses….since that night I've known the *feel* of overpopulation.

In Paul Ehrlich's case, a bad tourist experience led to a lifelong crusade that could best be summarized as "no more Indias!"

Ehrlich, unlike Malthus, had the benefits of several centuries of population studies with which to support his rather gloomy predictions. Ehrlich built his theory on earlier ecological concepts such as "carrying capacity" and "doubling times." Carrying capacity could be demonstrated in a petri dish where bacteria would reproduce too quickly and overrun their food source. To the neo-Malthusians the earth was a giant petri dish. Doubling time, as the name suggests, is merely the amount of time it takes a given population to double its numbers. Ehrlich gave the fictional example of Lower Slobbovia to explain his idea. He noted if the birth rate of Slobbovia were 40 per 1,000 Slobbovians and the death rate was 20 per 1,000, then the rate of population growth would be 20 per 1,000 per year or 2 percent. A rate of 2 percent population increase per year would lead to a doubling rate of the Slobbovian population in a mere 35 years. Clearly the lesson Ehrlich meant the reader to take home was: There would soon be too many Slobs in the world!

These fictional population statistics for Slobbovia were, not surprisingly, almost exactly the same as the global population, which was predicted to double in 37 years. Extrapolating the result, Ehrlich noted that in 900 years there would be 60 million billion humans or about 100 people for each square yard of the earth's surface. In typical 1960s fashion, Ehrlich encouraged people to join Zero Population Growth organizations and write letters to politicians, teachers, and even the Pope.

The second most famous popularizer of neo-Malthusian ideas was Garrett Hardin, a biologist at the University of California, Santa Barbara, whose 1968 article "The Tragedy of the Commons" remains one of the most reproduced articles in biology, economics, and various other disciplines. Hardin looked to the idea of the medieval commons to explain the contemporary ecological crisis. He noted that in common grazing areas it was to the individual's benefit to graze one more cow. The benefit he received would be the full value of the cow; the cost would only be the small percentage of extra damage to a common property. In such a system the cheaters (grazing more cows than their neighbors) would thrive and the law-abiding decline. The medieval example became relevant to the modern period if one considered the planet as a whole a global commons. If one considered the air or the oceans as global commons, then polluting them carried no particular price and offered a potential benefit to the individual. In other words, it paid to pollute. Hardin's pessimistic view of the population issue (and most people in general) led him to conclude that voluntary measures to control population would succeed only in breeding out this form of conscience. Hardin noted those voluntarily limiting their number of children would quickly be outbred by the cheaters, who would become the dominant group in society. As an alternative to this commons Hardin proposed: "Mutual coercion mutually agreed upon."

The neo-Malthusians had reached a critical mass in the mid-1960s, and they touched a public nerve. *The Population Bomb* was published by the Sierra Club, and the book was a huge success, with 22 printings and more than one million copies sold in less then two years. Yet as human numbers have inexorably risen, interest in population control has waned. The rather extreme proposals of Hardin and Ehrlich (including forcible sterilization and legally limiting the number of children in some cases) and slowly declining birth rates have made them seem quaint and outdated—rather like *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson* where Ehrlich was a guest 25 times during his heyday. More recently in the United States, population control advocates have become entangled with anti-immigration groups further muddying the message and movement.

The population debate has too often been reduced to a slogan: "Are you an environmentalist or do you plan on having a large family?" Currently there are 7 billion of us and approximately 1,460 more humans were added in the time it took you to read this article (10 minutes or so). Yet what meanings we attach to these numbers goes back to how we view our humanity.

The fact that children, like all humans, put demands on the environment is unequivocal. However, the idea that population is inherently bad is not as clear-cut. It goes to the heart of a continuing debate as to whether humans are a part of nature and the shapers of ideas of nature, or a hopeless detriment to nature, who can serve nature best by keeping hands off? It remains perhaps the greatest unresolved debate of the environmental movement. I leave the answer to you and all of your children.

Mark Madison *teaches environmental history, environmental ethics, and environmental film at Shepherd University. He has three children and is therefore a contributor to Malthusian nightmares.*

Mom Belonged to Women Welcome Women World Wide

Diane Harvest Boward

Women Welcome Women World Wide, also known as 5W, was established as a nonprofit trust in 1984. The first newsletter was sent out in 1985. 5W has about 2,400 members in 70 countries. My mother, Marian E. Boward, loved this organization. She was a member from 1992 until she died in 2007.

Mom and her friends Harry and Joan Laing from Scotland and me

Francis Alexander of the United Kingdom founded 5W to encourage international friendship. To quote Francis, "If only people would learn that experiencing a different lifestyle is interesting, enriching, and mind-opening. Too many people regard different as threatening.…It pleases me that ordinary women travel the world, discover the joy of befriending people from different cultures, and learn about themselves at the same time in our web of international friendship."

5W now has an e-mail group. Members of 5W can be travelers or hostesses or both. 5W is financed by its members. A yearly donation helps to cover costs of mailing newsletters and the membership list. Get-togethers are organized by members. 5W can be found on the Web at www.women welcomewomen.org.uk

Mom loved traveling and making new friends from diverse cultures. She also belonged to International Pen Friends. From Scotland to Africa, from the Netherlands to New Zealand, she made friends. Corresponding with her pen friends gave her much joy. And we're not talking e-mail here, we're talking about good old-fashioned pen and paper and airmail stamps! After she found out she had macular degeneration and lost much of her central vision, she persevered and kept on writing and reading her international mail with the use of magnifiers! Since it was often difficult for Marian to read her letters, she asked me or my sister to read them onto cassettes. She then used these tapes later to compose her reply.

My mother grew up in Hagerstown. Her parents were from the mountains around Smithsburg, Md. Born in 1925, Mom experienced the Great Depression firsthand. Her family was more fortunate than others because they farmed. They did not go hungry and they lived simply. Mom was a dedicated, hard-working registered nurse. She was a private duty nurse and worked in a doctor's office while she and Dad raised my brother, sister, and me. Then she worked at Homewood in Williamsport where she was director of nursing. She and Dad did much of the building of our home themselves. They went on vacation to Spain together and then saw more of Europe on a second trip where they met lifelong friends from Holland.

My Dad died at the young age of 57. He was a wonderful gardener. The huge vegetable garden he cared for behind our home kept us fed year round. I get my love of gardening from Dad. In her golden years, Mom traveled on her own and through Elderhostel, now known as Road Scholar. On one of her trips to Europe, she met one of her pen friends from New Zealand and they traveled together a bit.

PHOTOS FROM BOWARD FAMILY ALBUM

Mom holding baby Helen at her home near Hagerstown

Hissa and me in the tomato patch, Shepherdstown

Mom and Keioko

Mom and Jane with baby Helen at Antietam

Mom welcomed three 5W members to her home and *she did* put out the red carpet! First came Jane with her baby Helen from the U.K. Mom took them to visit several local historic parks and to Shepherdstown. We had a lovely visit. Then Keiko from Japan stayed with Mom and we all had a chance to meet her. What an interesting young woman! Then Mom's last 5W visitor was Hisa also from Japan. I still keep in touch with Hisa by e-mail.

Marian was outgoing and made friends wherever she went. On an Elderhostel to Nova Scotia, she met Betty from Tanzania and they became friends. They wrote to each other for 23 years! Here, in Mom's words from her travel journal dated June 29, 1984, is the story:

"I met a young woman yesterday from Tanzania, Africa and we exchanged addresses. We met again on the street downtown and I got a photo. Her name is Betty. We had supper together. She is 39 and has 3 children and works with the women in her country helping them help themselves. She gave me a 1 lb. tin of African coffee and an ivory carving to put on a neck chain. I gave her my red and blue earrings—we parted with promises to write each other. I look forward to a long and rewarding friendship."

This November I'm participating in a Road Scholar service program at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministry Center near Sharpsburg, Md., in honor of Marian. When she was in her 70s, Mom began donating to Heifer International. I can't for the life of me recall which animals were her gift, but they may have been goats or chickens. Marian believed in, and worked at, helping those less fortunate than herself all her life.

I am looking forward to this program entitled "Ending Hunger Through Education: Help Build A Heifer Global Village." I am doing this with a joyful heart in loving memory of Mom.

Mom seldom wrote poetry but I treasure these two short poems of hers. She sent them to her kids and grandkids before the Christmas holidays:

Christmas may seem far away
But Mom needs to start today!
Jot down for her a thing or two Now!
Tomorrow simply will not do.
Time passes by; the rush is on
Mom wants to be by then
LONG GONE!

Mom loves Christmas,
The Season warms her heart,
It's great to be a Santa Claus
And really play the part!
Her time to shop this year will be
Shorter than last, by gosh, you see
So, write your list 'til I get back
And there'll be goodies for you in Santa's sack!

Diane Harvest Boward *(harvester50@yahoo.com) dabbles in watercolor, talks with the plants in her garden, and appreciates each day. She has lived at her small organic farmette in Kearneysville for 11 years and has participated in several community vegetable gardens. She dreams that one day such gardens will be everywhere, and much more food will be grown locally, so that everyone has plenty. She owes her creative spark to her mother, and is grateful also to her watercolor teacher, Elizabeth Carlson. She wants to thank all the good people of Hospice with special thanks to Cindy Burdette, Sherri Philpott, and Dona Neikirk.*

Chuck Bosley

Sue Kennedy

Chuck Bosley with his grandson Severin Condon

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BOSLEY FAMILY

Chuck with wife Bonnie on their 50th wedding anniversary in 1998

The kickoff of *Shepherdstown 250: Remember, Celebrate, Imagine* is coming up fast and with it the reawakening of memories, palpable excitement, and thoughts of possibilities for the oldest town in West Virginia. Ask anybody who lives here what brought them to Shepherdstown and you'll likely get one of two answers: "I've lived here all my life," or "I came out for a visit and fell in love with the town," the former by circumstance, the latter by chance. Dig deeper and you will also find that a majority of the "latters" settled down with the desire to give back for getting so lucky. Chuck Bosley was one such latter, and for the many years he lived in Shepherdstown he never stopped giving back.

One day more than 40 years ago, Chuck and Bonnie Bosley drew a circle on a map. The center of this circle was Capitol Hill. They lived and worked in Washington, D.C., but they wanted to move to the country, and every small town within the perimeter of that circle was fair game. They were seeking historic, self-contained, small, loaded with character, and served by a commuter train. They found it here, in wild and wonderful West Virginia.

Charles Edward "Chuck" Bosley was born in Evanston, Ill., in 1926 and was raised in Milwaukee, Wis. He served as an officer on a Navy hospital ship during World War II, then went to California and became editor of the *Contra Costa Times* in Walnut Creek. In the early '60s, he came to Washington, D.C., and Capitol Hill as a senior staffer for U.S. Congressman Jeffrey Chelan (D-Calif.) and then U.S. Senator Clair Engle (D-Calif.). His passion centered on issues of civil rights and equality, and he lobbied tirelessly for disarmament and legal aid. He worked for the Agency of International Development in Ecuador from 1965 to 1967 and as Peace Corps director of Northeast Brazil. Still hard at work for the world's underdogs, it was in 1970 that Chuck and his bride Bonnie opted for a richer quality of life in Shepherdstown.

The Bosleys had four children: Dorris, Cassie, Priscilla, and Martha. Cassie and Dorris were in college when their parents moved to West Virginia. Priscilla and Martha were in high school. The family now includes: Dorris Bosley Langley, Jeffrey, Timothy and Emily Langley, and little Lucius Langley, of Martinez, Calif.; Cassie Bosley and Don Berry, Morgan Condon and Severin Condon, and Wayland Bosley Norris, of Shepherdstown; Priscilla Bosley Lynch and Charles Orion, of Shepherdstown; and Martha and Kenny Louden, and Caitlin Louden of Shepherdstown.

The Bosleys settled in a little home (circa 1870s) on Mill Street; and within a year Chuck Bosley was elected Mayor of Shepherdstown. One might ask how he did that. How did Chuck get elected mayor after living here for such a short time? Meredith Wait, chair of Shepherdstown's 250th anniversary celebration, shed some insight on this. "My parents met the Bosleys on the MARC train commuting to D.C. Our families became friends. Martha and I were in high school together. Chuck was a very genuine guy, impassioned in his beliefs and age-blind where people were concerned. He loved to talk with everyone. He was smart, well read, and funny. You couldn't help but like him."

Apparently with all this going for him, the tall, handsome newcomer attacked Shepherdstown with relentless relish. He wanted to get involved with the town, and involved he got. Before bags were unpacked he set about to shake the tag "newcomer."

Wait remembers that "Chuck seemed to be everywhere…chewing on that pipe …endlessly out on the street talking with people. He really cared so much about Shepherdstown from the beginning. He was impassioned in his beliefs and had a great heart. He became a fixture… one of us."

Bonnie, like her husband, had always been a champion of the underrepresented and advocated for taking care of those in need. She was artistic, active in the community, and could talk about anything. Bonnie and Chuck were a very good match.

To the Bosleys, Shepherdstown was perfect for them, but they did discover some things that needed attention. Chuck wanted to do something about these things, so he ran for mayor. He won and immediately set out to do what the people expected of him and what he expected of himself. He put the full weight of his office behind a new water plant project. He discovered that some roads in the town's peripheries were unpaved, so he paved them. He thought the children needed a playground at the far end of town and he built one. And so it went. "Dad was a man who was always looking for what needed doing…and then he did it," said Cassie Bosley. "He worked for the good of the people no matter where he was."

Chuck with three-year-old daughter Cassie in California, 1952

This man of the people loved the woods, and he loved to fish. At the end of his second term as mayor, the Bosleys moved to a home overlooking the river on Terrapin Neck Road. Chuck went on the town council, joined the Men's Club, and continued to maintain his big presence in "downtown" Shepherdstown for the next 20 years. In1995, Bonnie's debilitating allergies forced a move to the Atlantic coast and Stonington, Maine.

Bonnie and Chuck Bosley had been married for 55 years when Bonnie died. Chuck had enjoyed life in the little lobster village but not now, not without Bonnie. He decided to move back "home," and Cassie was making this happen. She walked into Dickenson & Wait one day last year and told Meredith that her dad was coming back to Shepherdstown.

"My first thought was—Great!" said Wait. "Chuck would be a big help with Shepherdstown 250. The advice he gave me over the years with the store and the Shepherdstown Business Association was invaluable, and we could certainly use his thinking now. It would be wonderful to have him back."

Sadly, Cassie's lovingly laid plans didn't work out. Chuck died in Stonington last March, leaving a huge void in the lives of all who knew him. He was a big man with a big heart who devoted his life to advocating for human rights, looking for things that needed doing and doing them. He was a much beloved father, father-in-law, grandfather, great-grandfather; and he was the mayor of Shepherdstown.

The theme of Shepherdstown 250 is *Remember, Celebrate, Imagine.* How better to describe the legend of this man who burst on the scene 40 years ago to instantly become "one of us." To the many who still remember and celebrate their friend, you can imagine how much Chuck would love it.

Shepherdstown 250th Anniversary Reflections

Editor's note: Throughout the anniversary year of 2012 we will print a dozen or so reflections in each issue of the GOOD NEWS PAPER. Send yours to: GNP, P.O. Box 1212, Shepherdstown WV 25443. Respondents should address the following prompts in 100 words or less:

1. Remember. I first saw Shepherdstown in _____ (year). One of my first impressions was.....

2. Celebrate. One feature or part of this town I have come to really like is....

3. Imagine. 25 years from now I would like this town to....

Anne Munro

I grew up in Shepherdstown where I was known as Anne Grissinger. I first saw this town shortly after I was born, so I have no real first impression of Shepherdstown. I do know that it was, and still is, a wonderful town to grow up and live in. What impressed me most as a child was I knew everyone in town. It was a very small community with a small town attitude. Shepherdstown has changed greatly for me over the years but one feature still remains and that is the small community spirit that continues to attract people to the area.

Twenty-five years from now I hope Shepherdstown still has that very same small town feeling that I grew up with.

Daisy Levine

11 years old

My name is Daisy Levine. I was born in 2000 and am 11 years old. My favorite feature of this town is the people. I can wander around town and know I'm safe because everywhere I go I see somebody I've known my entire life. Everybody's really great and I love it.

Peter Smith

I chair the semiquincentennial committee with the longest and most inscrutable name: the Signature Events and Legacy Committee.

My wife Vicki and I first saw Shepherdstown in the late 1990s. I don't remember the exact year. We were living in Alexandria. Some friends invited us out for dinner. I'd grown up in a small town of similar age and size and I was immediately comfortable here. I also liked the Town Run; most places would have paved that over years ago.

The aspect of the town that I've come to value most is its egalitarianism. Shepherdstown has its faults to be sure. For example, it seems unusually susceptible to oddball conspiracy theories, especially in connection with land use issues. But it's still by and large a very welcoming place. People mostly treat each other with civility and it's easy to become involved in interesting and worthwhile things.

I don't know about 25 years from now. There are signs that outlying areas like this may be in for especially hard times. But I hope that Shepherdstown retains its welcoming character.

Tara Sanders Lowe

Chair of the Marketing Committee for the Shepherdstown 250th Celebration

I first saw Shepherdstown in 1987. As a 13 year old I was NOT impressed—my teenage suburbanite life in Alexandria, Va., uprooted, transplanted to a sleepy little town in West By God Virginia.

Who would have thought, nearly 25 years later, I would love this town so very much! I am so grateful to know deeply the beauty and uniqueness of our town and community. My favorite thing about the town is that when you hug it, it hugs you back!

My wish for 25 years and beyond is that the amazing spirit and kinship will continue and that we will leave a legacy of mindfulness, care for one another, and the capacity for joyful celebration.

David Ransom Jr.

Shepherdstown Police Chief

I first saw Shepherdstown in March 2002. What a great historic town. My wife and I moved here to the Eastern Panhandle from the Northern Panhandle. I met a variety of people while walking through town.

Celebrate: The people treat you like they have known you forever. Even though I am not from here, the town and residents have welcomed me and made me feel at home. There is a magnetic quality in the town atmosphere that keeps drawing people back.

Imagine: Just the way it is now.

Hali Taylor

Director of the Shepherdstown Public Library

I came to Shepherdstown, kicking and screaming, from La Jolla, Calif., in 1977 with my fiancé, Toby Raphael.

What impressed me most about this town was the community barn-raising mentality we discovered when we bought a house that needed extensive renovation. People we had known for a very short time, and some we had never even met, showed up with hammers and shovels and good will and friendship to help us clear out the burned interior of the beautiful house I now call home.

The best feature of this town, maybe as in any small town, is the sense of belonging to a family (albeit slightly dysfunctional)—the feeling that most everyone cares about and takes care of each other.

Twenty-five years from now, this town may be physically unrecognizable to most of us here, but I would hope that the wild, artistic, irreverent and loving heart of this town would remain unchanged.

Olivia Bromley

9 years old

One of my favorite features of Shepherdstown is my mom's shop, Lullaby Lu. I love it a lot and maybe one day I will work there too.

I would like it to have a bigger park, so people can go get active and play.

Bob Snipes

Remember. My wife Joan and I first saw Shepherdstown in 1979 and revisited in 1988. My first impressions:

- a historic, fun, welcoming, and neighborly little town
- it was fun being able to ford the Town Run and witnessing the SMA Pentecost balloon release while eating breakfast at the Mecklenburg Inn courtyard
- the Welcome Center, then run by the Shepherdstown Ministerial Association (SMA), was such a welcoming place; I felt right at home, complete with an issue of the Christian Science Monitor on the coffee table
- neighbors Lou and Marina Tiano gave a tea in our honor when we moved into the area; soon after, without my asking, neighbor Ron Kepple chain-sawed all the blowdowns in my yard after a storm

Celebrate. One feature or part of this town I have come to really like is:

- The Shepherdstown Ministerial Association, which exemplifies the spirit and cooperation of Shepherdstown that make it a very special place.
- I was referred to the SMA when I called the Visitor's Center from Maine to find out about the commuter train into D.C.
- SMA accepted our church group into membership even though we were not a mainstream faith community.

Imagine. 25 years from now I would like this town to:

- be acknowledged for its vitality, diversity, richness, openness, welcoming and openness, sense of community, and a strong, proud identity
- have retained its essential character

Arturo Gales
Leader of Asbury United Methodist Mighty Men of God

I first saw this town in 1965. What first impressed me was the pace of the people. They were busy but not rushed; a little laid back. The town was quiet and looked old and slow, but it seemed friendly and cozy.

One feature or part of this town that I have come to really like is the safety for its people, especially the children. One could walk anywhere in the near town limits without fear of harm or danger.

Twenty-five years from now I would like this town to remain friendly, cozy, and safe.

Ross Morgan
Shepherdstown Volunteer Fire Department Chief

Remember: I don't remember much of the first couple of years in Shepherdstown since I was born here and was still just an infant. But one of the first things I remember is story hour held at the public library and of course the highlight of that was riding on the fire engine.

Celebrate: I celebrate the ability to follow Dad's [Lee Morgan] footsteps and serve my community as the fire chief of not only the oldest fire department in the state, but also the best fire department.

Imagine: 25 years from now, not only would I like, but I also know that this town will receive the same outstanding fire, EMS, and public service that it has received for over the past 200 years.

Sydney Seaver

I was born in 2002 and I am 9 years old

One feature or part of this town that I have come to really like is my school. It is the best school ever. I have been there since kindergarten and now I am in the fourth grade.

Twenty-five years from now I would like Shepherdstown to stay the same little town that is…filled with nice and kind people.

Meredith Wait

I wear two hats: President of the Shepherdstown Business Association and Chairperson of Shepherdstown 250.

I first saw this town in 1972. What first impressed me was that it looked like the old mill towns in Massachusetts where I had grown up. The second thing that impressed me was that people were so friendly. Fanny Thornton from Shepherdstown Paint and Art took one look at me and enveloped me in "honeys" in her deep-throated voice.

One of my favorite things about Shepherdstown is the appreciation people have for the town. It has impacted each of us strongly, drawn us in, and encouraged us to engage and be a part of it. How many times have we heard the words "only in Shepherdstown"? As a group, do we need to examine that phrase any deeper or do we automatically understand and feel its meaning?

And finally, 25 years from now I would hope that we would have been good stewards of this wonderful community and that we've left for future generations the same special place that I've been blessed to know.

Dee-Ann Dixon
Pastor at New Street United Methodist Church and the current President of Shepherdstown Ministerial Association (SMA)

I first saw this town in 1989 as a tourist. What first impressed me was the beauty and quaintness of the town and area.

Several aspects of this town that I have really come to like are the people, the creative spirit found in the music, art, and culture, and the cooperative work of the faith communities through SMA.

Twenty-five years from now I would like this town to be vibrant, alive with families, students, people, thriving businesses, a continued creative spirit expressed through music, arts, and culture, growing faith communities, and a town that more reflects the diversity of humanity.

Holly Morgan Frye
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs at Shepherd University

I don't remember the first time I saw our town. I simply remember Shepherdstown as always being my home. What I do remember is that helping your neighbor was simply what you did.

A feature of this town that I celebrate is this continued spirit of volunteerism. I work every day at Shepherd University where I see that same spirit in our students whether they are feeding the hungry, walking for Relay For Life, or mentoring at-risk children. I have to believe that this comes not just from what we teach, but also from a town that welcomes the opportunity for students to learn this valuable lesson.

And finally, 25 years from now I imagine Shepherd University and Shepherdstown celebrating how together they helped find the cure for cancer; I want the Little House to still be a place of wonder; and I want to see healthy, happy children continuing to happily toss rocks in our Town Run.

Catherine Irwin
Chair of the Shepherdstown 250 Committee on Finance and Fundraising

The first time I saw Shepherdstown in a new light was two years ago when my grandson Ben Yost and I were walking along German Street one afternoon. Ben was 10 years old at the time. We passed and said hello to a number of people who were familiar to us. I remarked to Ben that we are so lucky to live in a town where we know so many people. He looked at me and said, "Well, Grammie, Shepherdstown is a cozy town." Of course it is, and I celebrate that every day!

Jim Auxer
Shepherdstown Mayor

I came to Shepherdstown in 1965 to enroll as a freshman at Shepherd College to play college football. The ambiance of the town and the friendliness of its residents lured me. The historical nature of the town and surrounding areas were unfamiliar to me and I embraced their beauty with the same enthusiasm I do today.

I'm unable to choose one thing about our town. However, I can say when I cross the bridge from Maryland, I'm captivated by its beauty and I'm glad I'm home.

Twenty-five years from now I envision our town to be much like it is today. I do hope that any changes that are made or not made will have proven to enhance the quality of life for those who hold Shepherdstown dear to their hearts. I hope there is still talk about what a great 250th celebration the town had in 2011.

Dick Clark

Remember: I first saw Shepherdstown in 1945 at age 3. I saw a very large town. People were huge. Enjoyed the carnival behind the town library and Rumsey monument.

Celebrate: The features I really liked were the stone wall, town run, all the businesses, ie. Kave's, Stine, 5 & 10, Tabler's Store, and celebrations at the park. I really like the direction the Historical Commission has taken to maintain the essential care of Shepherdstown.

Imagine: I would like this town to maintain and improve structures that make our town so unique, improve the quality and range of services we offer. Expand our limited green spaces by landscaping and improving the land on the river bankand town run.

PHOTOS BY JESSIE SCHMITT

On the Wall

One Woman's Vision of Shepherdstown

Patience Wait

Shepherdstown 250 is not just a yearlong series of events to commemorate the founding of the oldest town in West Virginia; it is the opportunity for Hali Taylor's photographic portraits finally to be given the broader audience they deserve.

Taylor, who has lived in the area since 1977, is well known as the town librarian—the woman responsible for the emblematic island-like building that represents so much of Shepherdstown's character that it serves as the logo for the 250th commemoration.

To many, though, she is the town chronicler, not with words, but with her camera. For about 25 years, Taylor has been taking photographs of residents, students and visitors to Shepherdstown, using stark, black-and-white images on all-white backgrounds. If you see her work once, you will recognize it again.

The people in her photographs are "not necessarily people who live in Shepherdstown, but people who have a relationship with Shepherdstown, people who are important here or have had some kind of impact on the town," Taylor says. "I think what they'll see in the faces is just the variety, young to old, the racial mix in this town. The different lifestyles—suits and ties, tattoos, dreadlocks, sort of the varied nature of the people who live here—that's the strongest message to come across."

As part of Shepherdstown 250, *On the Wall*, a book of Taylor's photographs, was released on November 25, coinciding with her annual show at Studio 105. Only a small portion of her collection of 750 to 800 images are in the book.

How did she decide which images to include? She didn't.

"I have a committee," she says with a laugh. "It was a very hard decision. I could basically choose a tenth of the number of portraits I have taken. In my mind this is Volume One, so maybe for the 500th anniversary we'll do Volume Two."

The genesis of her art, and of the collection, started small.

"When I moved here I photographed the buildings, but I was too shy to approach people," she says. "There are a number of people I missed because of that. When I first started, I didn't understand where this project was headed. It was just decoration for my own house."

Taylor's fascination with trying to capture a person's essence in a photograph started a long time ago. Her father taught her how to use a camera when she was in her teens, and she still remembers her senior project, taking black-and-white pictures of people to illustrate Walt Whitman's poem, "Faces."

"The most important thing for me is the face. And the hands—I love hands, too," she says.

"When I look through the lens, everything disappears except the face," she explains. "If I put [my subjects] in a field, there would be trees coming out of their heads, corn out of their ears, I just don't see those things when I look at the face."

It was not until she made a trip to Washington, D.C., to see "Portraits of the American West," an exhibit of Richard Avedon's work at the Corcoran Gallery, that she found her eye. Avedon's twice-larger-than-real-life photographs were a revelation—people presented twice-larger than life, stripped of context.

She was eager to try Avedon's approach herself. She found Larry Barkdoll at a work site, with a whitewashed barn at hand, and she posed him. "He's got a hammer, he's got his tool belt on, and he's got dirt all over his face. That was the beginning of this whole series," she says.

Taylor began by asking friends to pose for her, sometimes using the outside of the library as her white background. As she became more confident, she started to expand the universe of people she would ask to photograph. She mounted the images on her dining room wall.

Her friends began to ask if they could see her work. "They'd ask, 'Where are your pictures?' and I'd answer, 'on the wall at my house.' That was one of the origins of the name of this book." Encouraged to exhibit her photos, Taylor approached the Historic Shepherdstown Commission, which agreed to let her mount her first exhibit at the Entler Hotel. People enjoyed her work, and the next year she was invited to mount another exhibit with new images, leading to an annual presentation of her work.

"Hali's photographs somehow transcend just a photograph of a person," says Diana Suttenfield, a Shepherdstown resident and artist who's known Taylor since she first moved here. "The image starts off being an abstract shape, and she's playing with the parameters of what she's working with…she's not just taking a picture, she's dealing with a much bigger concept. You, the viewer, start to get pulled in and see things going on. Art is supposed to make you look all over it and think about it, and keep thinking about it…it's not about knowing the person."

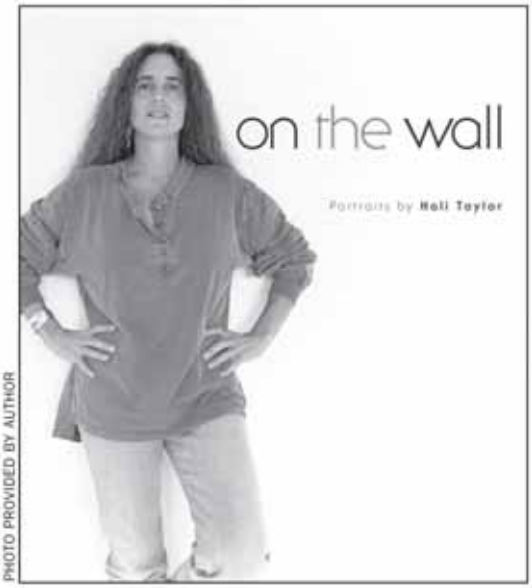

PHOTO PROVIDED BY AUTHOR

To Suttenfield, the continued growth of Taylor's portrait collection is one aspect of the artistry.

"She's creating a happening, a long-term event that started when she asked if she could take someone's picture," Suttenfield says. "And we knew that picture would be in an exhibit. We're participants in the happening. It's not the same thing as going to a photographer's studio; this is an art event.…There's no way I can ignore the strength of her work, the longevity of it, the longevity of her vision. She's had another life, a full life, I hope, yet there's still this other part of her that continues. I admire what she's done; I admire what she's doing."

The book title reflects Shepherdstown in another way, Taylor says.

"The other reference to 'On the Wall,' which is sort of interesting and apropos of what's going on around Wall Street, was the wall in front of McMurran Hall," she says. "It's gone in and out of contentious phases; the kids take over the wall, then the tourists get upset, then the store owners get upset because the tourists are upset, then the police come in and they either handle it really well or not so well, depending on the atmosphere at the time."

At one point when the students were being harassed for hanging out at the wall, Taylor brought her white background screen and camera and took a series of pictures of the whole wall with them on it.

"I was making a statement," Taylor says. "These are just kids, this is not enemy territory, they're our kids. Isn't it better that they're here than down by the river, here where we can keep an eye on them? They want to be here.… There's a wonderful image of Ben Ford standing in front of the wall with a sign that says, 'Occupy wall.' So the centerfold of the book is going to be the kids on the wall—a break from the mold of the individual portraits. The wall is very emblematic of Shepherdstown."

On the Wall will be available for purchase exclusively through Four Seasons Books in Shepherdstown: www.fourseasonsbooks.com, (304) 876-3486, or 4seasons@citlink.net.

Book launch reception and book signing:
The Bridge Gallery, Shepherdstown.

1–3 p.m. • December 11, 2011

Patience Wait *is a freelance writer and former award-winning journalist. Her family moved to Shepherdstown in 1973, and she and her husband returned to the area in 1997.*

Religious Worship and Education Schedules

Asbury Church
4257 Kearneysville Pike
Rev. Rudolph Monsio Bropleh, Pastor
Telephone: 876-3112
Sunday Worship: 8 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Family Fun Nite: Wednesday, 6:45–8:00 p.m.
E-mail: info@4pillarchurch.org
www.4pillarchurch.org

Christ Reformed, United Church of Christ
304 East German Street
Br. Ronald C. Grubb, OCC, Minister
Telephone: (304) 876-3354
Bronson Staley, Minister Emeritus
Telephone: (301) 241-3972
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m.
www.christreformedshepherdstown.org

Christian Science Society
Entler Hotel—German & Princess Streets
Sunday Worship & Sunday School 10 a.m.
Testimony meetings at 3 p.m. 1st & 3rd
Wednesdays in the Reading Room at
203 S. Princess Street;
open Sat.,10 a.m. to 1 p.m.,
Wed., noon to 3 p.m.
All welcome; phone: (304) 876-1332

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Shepherdstown Preparative Meeting
Worship in silent expectant waiting
Sundays at 10:30 a.m.
Four Seasons Books (thru the side gate)
Contacts: Neal Peterson (304) 582-0852
or Marie Tyler-McGraw (304) 876-3540
http://shepherdstown.bym-rsf.net/about-2-2/

New Street United Methodist
Church & New Streets
Dee-Ann Dixon, Pastor
Telephone: (304) 876-2362
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Children's Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.
Adult Sunday School: 11:15 a.m.
www.newstreetumc.com

St. Agnes Roman Catholic
South Duke Street
Father Mathew Rowgh
Telephone: (304) 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: (304) 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 A. Soltow Jr., Pastor
Telephone: (304) 876-6771
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m.
Children/Adult Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
(located in grey house adjacent church)
www.Shepherdstownlutheranparish.org

Shepherdstown Presbyterian
100 W. Washington Street
Randall W. Tremba, Pastor
Telephone: (304) 876-6466
Sunday Worship: 8:15 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.
Nursery year-round
www.spcworks.org

Trinity Episcopal
Corner of Church & German Streets
The Rev. G. T. Schramm, Rector
The Rev. Frank Coe, Priest Associate
The Rev. Susan McDonald, Priest Associate
Telephone: (304) 876-6990
Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.
www.trinityshepherdstown.org

St. James' Lutheran Church, Uvilla
Rt. 230 Uvilla
Fred A. Soltow Jr., Pastor
Telephone: (304) 876-6771
Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.
Children's Sunday School 1st Sunday of month

Comments

Dear Editors & Staff of the GOOD NEWS PAPER,

I want to thank you for the wonderful remembrance of my dad, Bill Piercy, in your Fall 2011 edition. He loved Shepherdstown and often said how blessed he was to live and work here. Your article helped to remind me how blessed we were to have him here as well. Your kind words will not be forgotten.

Thank you again,
Elizabeth Church

Dear Editor,

I look forward to reading every issue. This is a quality publication all around. The editing is first rate, the stories are great, the poetry is exceptional, and it has a broad-gauged humanity about it that you can't find in very many publications of any kind. Long may the GOOD NEWS PAPER live.

Ray Smock

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