

NORTH OF CENTER

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 2011

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VOLUME III, ISSUE 13

DREAMers for change

By Maria-Karen Lopez

As a resident of the Commonwealth and vice-president of the Kentucky Dream Coalition, I am concerned about our immigrant community's advocacy and collective action concerning anti-immigrant laws. Considering that Lexington's increase in immigrant population ranks third nationally, it is impor-

House Local Government Committee and is considered dead—for now.

Within our immigrant community exists contributing, hard-working families and students who are undocumented. Their lack of documented status is not optional, considering that our federal immigration system is broken, leaving many with a prolonged wait. Because 70 percent of immigrants



DREAMers in Georgia.

tant to remember the Commonwealth's values for all our residents, including our immigrant community: "Together we stand, divided we fall."

Last year in Kentucky, Senator John Schickel's SB 6 was passed out of the Senate in early January, following Arizona's SB 1070 anti-immigrant legislation. However, we saw that such policy was not in the best economic interest for our Commonwealth. According to the fiscal-impact statement, the law was estimated to cost the state \$89 million per year. The bill was not passed in the

come from Mexico, filing for residency by someone from Mexico can take over 16 years. These undocumented families live content making a few dollars a week for a better way of life by taking the unskilled jobs that most U.S. citizens would not do.

There is a national consensus that our immigration laws must change, and since Arizona passed SB 1070, many other states have adopted similar laws that target these hard working

continued on page 3

Hunger strike

The last weapon against prison tyranny

By Beth Connors-Manke

On July 1, a mass hunger strike began in California prisons. The 21-day hunger strike was sparked by the conditions at Pelican Bay State Prison's security housing unit (SHU), which like the now-defunct Lexington High Security Unit, subjects prisoners to prolonged isolation and psychological torture. Over the course of the strike, thousands of prisoners took part in the resistance movement.

The organizers' list of demands included the end to select administrative policies such as group punishment and "gang management" in Pelican Bay; the end to long-term solitary confinement; and the end to using food coercively. The strikers also wanted more "constructive programming and privileges for indefinite SHU status inmates."

Todd Ashker, a hunger strike organizer, asserted the value and necessity of the action, saying, "We believe our only option of ever trying to make some kind of positive change here is through this peaceful hunger strike. And there is a core group of us who are committed to taking this all the way to the death if necessary."

When the strike ended, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), released a statement that said: "They [the prisoners] stopped the strike on July 20 after they better understood CDCR's plans, developed since January, to review and change some policies regarding SHU housing and gang management. These changes, to date, include providing cold-weather caps, wall calendars and some educational opportunities for SHU inmates."

So while prisoners committed themselves to the trial of a hunger strike, the CDCR felt an appropriate response was caps and calendars—not insignificant things in prison, but clearly not real and necessary change to the unjust and inhumane conditions of the security housing unit.

Hard on the body

Whatever one may assume about the Pelican Bay SHU inmates, it's hard not to marvel (maybe in an uncomfortable way) at their dedication to their cause. Most of us can't follow a diet, let alone refuse solid food for three weeks. And there's good reason for that: a hunger strike destroys the body, sometimes very quickly. Depending on the resister's health before the hunger strike, if the striker drinks water he or she may last several weeks or months; without water, the end comes much sooner. Jean Casella and James Ridgeway of Solidarity Watch remind us that in 1981, "it took the ten Irish Republican hunger strikers (who were drinking water) from 46 to 73 days to die in Britain's Maze Prison outside Belfast."

That's right. Some hunger strikers do resist until death. And while Solidarity Watch reports that Nancy Kincaid, Director of Communications for California Correctional Health Services, has said, "They have the right to choose to die of starvation if they wish," clearly the CDCR doesn't really want dead prisoners—or at least dead prisoners who have captured media attention with their political resistance. To avoid this, many of the hunger strikers in the California

continued on page 3

Behold, the Kentucky: Drowning to Muddy Creek

The phantom map, part 2

By Gortimer T. Spotts

I awoke to the deep whir of a far-off tractor, Northrup and the General still on the edge of sleep, and wrote in my journal "But a very small window is the dawn."

We breakfasted, collected our brachiopods, crinoids, and other shoal-haul, stow-hoed, tarped up, and pushed off from the shallows at noon, the General once again leaving only his thin-sliced wake, Northrup and I girding our boat-loins for the dead-fall limbo just ahead. I'd completely forgotten about squeezing my vessel into this tight jam the night before, snagging and nearly losing the bucktail I'd been trolling on the off-chance of muskellunge. To our relief, the water—that we thought had risen and had indeed risen—had eerily not really risen, and we passed under with minimal grunting.

After a rejuvenating swim in the rock-bottomed pool just below the jam, and a quick-stuff from the Patokan-bag, Northrup and I clipped back to

continued on page 6



continued on page 7

On! On! JP State Kentucky's new state bank

By Danny Mayer

On July 1, JP Morgan Chase became the Commonwealth's bank. As the state's official depository, J.P. now receives all deposits, writes all checks and makes all wire transfers on the \$12-15 billion that flow through Kentucky state government in the course of a fiscal year. It will cut payroll checks, receive federal and other funds earmarked for the state, and disburse educational or transportation or any other funds to their appropriate monetary endpoints. For its trouble, the bank will receive \$1.3 million in state fees and the ability to re-lend idle state funds out to customers for private gain.

Yes, you should be worried. A global corporation with more than \$2 trillion in assets and operations in 60 countries, JP Morgan Chase has been a major figure in the ongoing global financial crisis. As one of the largest private banks in the U.S., the bank made incredible amounts of money by underwriting many of the

continued on page 7

Contents

2—Neighborhood

Celebrity worship and
tabloid sensation

Discarded

Divesting in education

4—Music

Music calendar

2011 Holler

It's the science

5—Film & Media

WRFL...film?

Review:

Transformers III

7—Opinion

Ganged up

8—Comics

Fierce Company

General Dallas

Coming soon

Cane Run Watershed festival

ROCK report

Return of Fierce Company

JULY 27, 2011

Starting over

By Clay Waincott

So, let me get this straight. You say Abstract Expressionism arose at a time when fascism just defeated, having soiled us in battle, returned to our shores as a rabid fear and hatred of Communism, in contradiction of the most basic tenets of free speech in a free society. It was a time when art, itself, was under siege. Actors, artists, and writers were broken and exiled for less than absolute patriotism, and music was banned from the radio. “This land is your land...” by Woody Guthrie, was never played.

It was then that a new American art form arose to compete with the classicism of Russia’s cultural catalogue—ballets and symphonies, heroic art and gilded subway stations. It seems our own state department may have helped to launch careers in big international expositions of Abstract Art, may even have helped support the foundations which purchased the art for donation to major museums, tax credits funding lavish galas, and abstract art went up in all of New York’s major banks. So, that was all in the name of cold-war competition with the Soviets, and no crippling of our culture was too high a price just to win, but there is still another level.

Before the war, Picasso had begun to combine the visual eloquence of African art with the plastic articulation of his own tradition. One result was the painting “Guernica,” a visual image so potent a reproduction of it was covered during Colin Powell’s justification of war speech to the UN. Mexican Muralists were forging a new peasant solidarity, and the simple sign-making trade of screenprinting, taught in the WPA, was evolving into a visual conversation of thought provoking posters, above and beyond whatever words were written at the bottom. These things were happening before the war.

After, we had abstraction—the total negation of communication, and it was on us in a storm. Representational painters with successful careers were exiled, ridiculed back to hometowns, finishing out as high school custodians and florist delivery drivers. Suddenly there was star treatment for a

deliriously pickled crew, waking up in the smelly early daylight of NY alleys and all the more mysterious their muse. Practically all of art since then has been derived from this culinary school of mud pie makers, this conservatory of pot bangers, this band of rude anarchists out to bring down the walls of traditional art and dance on the rubble, before staggering and passing out.

Yes, art in post-atomic America is an epic unto itself—the visual expression of a culture reduced to celebrity worship and tabloid sensation. What a perfect time to start over. Visual artists living in your hometown, sometimes working as high school custodians and florist delivery drivers, are using their spare time to create images out of the same general experience you’ve been having, too. In their attempt to honestly depict the world, something of their own character, their own philosophy, and their own experience becomes encoded and can be seen and recognized by others without words being exchanged. Buy their art and live with it, and don’t worry that smears and squiggles go for millions in other places.



Tom Moffett of Louisville and Sonja De Vries of Louisville Jewish Voice for Peace call for divestment.

We Divest targets TIAA-CREF

Seeks divestment from Israeli occupation

NoC News

Activists with the “We Divest” campaign delivered a censored ballot to the office of TIAA-CREF in Lexington on July 19, as the company held its annual shareholder meeting in Charlotte, NC.

TIAA-CREF is the “Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association—College Retirement Equities Fund,” a multi-billion dollar investment company.

At its shareholders meeting on July 19, CREF refused to allow a vote on a resolution submitted by nearly 20 shareholders. The resolution calls upon CREF to engage in discussions with corporations in its portfolios that profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and to consider divesting from those companies if the discussions do not bear fruit.

The resolution asks TIAA-CREF to engage in discussions with corporations, including Caterpillar, Veolia, and Northrup Grumman, that profit from the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. Those companies facilitate the demolition of Palestinian homes; operate segregated “Jews-only” transportation systems; and make bombs and drone aircraft that Israel uses to kill civilians and destroy homes, schools, and hospitals.

We Divest activists said TIAA-CREF is the premier retirement fund for educators, health professionals, and others who prize open discourse and democratic institutions, but the fund is denying its investors the opportunity to voice their opinions about how their own money is being used to support the Israeli occupation.

The We Divest campaign was initiated by Jewish Voice for Peace—the largest U.S.-based grassroots organization dedicated to promoting full equality, democracy, and self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians. The campaign is endorsed by the Palestinian BDS National Committee, as well as

over 30 other organizations worldwide. The We Divest petition has been signed by over 21,000 people.

Sonja De Vries, protest participant and organizer with Jewish Voice for Peace, said: “We are calling for divestment from corporations that profit from the Israeli occupation. When we divested from apartheid South Africa, it brought peace. The Montgomery bus boycott brought civil rights. Boycotts and divestment have enormous power as a force for positive change. I view the global movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) as the most promising way to bring a just peace for Israelis and Palestinians.”

Stefanie Fox, Organizing Director at Jewish Voice for Peace, said: “[This] action in Lexington is just one of dozens of actions taking place nationwide. These actions show TIAA-CREF that the grassroots movement for full equality and human rights in Israel/Palestine exists everywhere. They might try to run, but they can’t hide.”

Aaron Levitt, TIAA-CREF investor, said: “I thought that as an investor in a company with democratic values and systems—such as shareholder resolutions—my voice would be included when I have a concern to raise about what my money is funding. I expected this even more from a financial institution that claims to offer ‘financial services for the greater good’ and has a history of divestment. I have learned that this is not so with TIAA-CREF, the retirement fund giant which divested from companies doing business in Darfur, but continues to invest money in companies such as Caterpillar, Veolia, and Elbit, that operate in the West Bank and East Jerusalem demolishing homes, confiscating land, and contributing to settlement expansion.”

For more information on the We Divest campaign contact: www.jvp.org or jewishvoiceforpeace.org. You can also contact Russ Greenleaf of the Louisville chapter of Jewish Voice for Peace at 256-525-5290 or russgreenleaf@yahoo.com.

363 N. Martin Luther King Boulevard

Elissa



This pile of discarded furniture was a couple of doors down from where we had photographed a woman and her child a month earlier. Because this woman was not willing to sit for a second portrait, she sent us, instead, to the Living Arts and Science Center, where we happened upon Elissa. She could not sit for us at that time, but promised to pose on the old couch in the morning. This was the first of only two photoshoots for DISCARDED that were arranged in advance.

Image and text by Kurt Gohde and Kremena Todorova, Discarded project.

Hunger (cont.)

continued from page 1

prisons—and there have been reportedly over 6,000 at times (while the core group was much smaller)—were watched by medical staff.

The New York Times reported that “every inmate has the right to decline both food and medical care,

Pankhurst and others resorted to heckling, rock-throwing, and window-breaking in order to gain attention for the women’s suffrage movement. They were arrested.

Suffragette banner carried in picket of the White House, 1918. Public domain.

American Alice Paul joined their



Aerial photo of Pelican Bay State Prison.

and he can issue a directive to a doctor not to force-feed him even if he later becomes delirious from starvation. If he does not issue a directive, however, doctors must make judgment calls.”

As brutal as Kincaid’s “They have the right to choose to die of starvation if they wish” may sound, at least it signals that the prison system has been forced to respect the strikers’ freedom of self-determination, if only in this one way. Self-starvation may be a horrific decimation of self, but force-feeding is no less gruesome.

A History and the Politics

“They flung me back on the bed, and held me down firmly by shoulders and wrists, hips, knees, and ankles. Then the doctors came stealing in. A man’s hands were trying to force open my mouth. A steel instrument pressed my gums, cutting into the flesh. Then something gradually forced my jaws apart as a screw was turned; the pain was like having the teeth drawn. They were trying to get the tube down my throat, I was struggling madly to stiffen my muscles and close my throat. They got it down, I suppose, though I was unconscious of anything then save a mad revolt of struggling, for they said at last: ‘That’s all!’”

That’s how Sylvia Pankhurst, a British suffragette, describes her force-feeding. In the early twentieth century in Britain and the U.S., activists found that militant action was necessary for women to win the right to vote. Prayer and patience had not been enough. In England,

ranks when she studied social work in England. While imprisoned in Britain, Paul and others went on hunger strike. When the American activist returned to the U.S. in 1910, she brought the radical tactics of the Pankhursts with her. Paul and other suffragettes staged a prolonged protest at the White House, picketing even after the U.S. entered World War I. Their signs asking “Mr. President, how long must women wait for liberty?” grew inflammatory, calling President Woodrow Wilson “Kaiser Wilson.”

In response to the picketing, Paul and other suffragettes were arrested and sent to Occoquan Workhouse, a prison in Virginia where they were subjected to degrading conditions. Paul was placed in solitary confinement and started a hunger strike. She, like Pankhurst, was force-fed. (The film *Iron Jawed Angels* about Paul gives a visceral depiction of the practice.)

The British and American suffragettes may not have been the first to refuse food in order to protest injustice, but their acts were foundational in the twentieth century, as other political prisoners took up the method. After the Easter Rising of 1916, hunger strikes became part of the national cause for Ireland. Mahatma Gandhi carried on hunger strikes against the British raj. César Chávez carried on strikes outside of prison as he fought for justice for migrant workers in the U.S. Hunger strikes at Guantánamo seem the only major recourse for prisoners held in limbo there, outside the law.

The major difference between the Pelican Bay SHU hunger strikers and most of the examples listed above is that, I’m guessing, most of the SHU inmates were not, initially, political prisoners. But they are now. And, based on the token response from the CDCR, it’s clear this is a political issue that must be taken up by those outside supermax prisons. The Lexington HSU may have been shut down, but it’s kindred high security units have popped up across the country. We can’t acquiesce to them in California, or in Illinois, or in Florida. Join the fight.

As this story went to press, rumors were circulating that the hunger strike in California had not fully come to an end.



Suffragette banner carried in picket of the White House, 1918.

Dreamers (cont.)

continued from page 1

immigrants and undocumented families. Such policies should be reviewed thoroughly since they impact Kentucky from the working sector to education. The future of our Commonwealth is the children, who want to succeed by going to college and contributing as skilled workers in Kentucky. Nationally, there are 65,000 undocumented students who graduate high school each year; as a child of an unskilled worker, they cannot afford college.

The DREAM Act

The most practical way to help change federal law is by supporting and advocating for the DREAM Act, bipartisan legislation that addresses the undocumented status of immigrant students who grew up in the United States. Under current laws, these young people inherit immigration status from their parents, who are undocumented or in the process of gaining residency. However, these young immigrants have no means to obtain legal residency, even if they have lived most of their lives in the U.S.

If re-introduced and passed by both the House and Senate, the DREAM Act would provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented students who meet certain conditions. In order to be eligible under this revised version of the DREAM Act, an undocumented student must meet four basic requirements: the student must have entered the United States before the age of six-

chanted and shared stories with the legislature.

The Georgia Six

Meanwhile, in Atlanta, GA, I and three members of the Kentucky Dream Coalition attended the “Georgia Six” civil disobedience near the state capitol building. The action consisted of six undocumented students aiming to take a stand against HB 87, a recently passed law modeled after Arizona’s SB 1070 that would severely restrict and isolate the immigrant community in Georgia.

While the civil disobedience took place in Georgia, I looked at these young high school graduates, wondering about their courage in standing up to a police officer and saying: “I am not afraid, I am here for you to arrest me.” It scares me to think of what these policies do to communities; I worry about Lexington, which is about to come to a voting session, and the impact that it will have on our immigrant community.

In Georgia, I had the opportunity to talk to Leeidy Solis, 16, one of the students participating in the action. She warned that, before the bill passed in Georgia, they had a few police stops here and there; however, within weeks of the bill’s passage, police were targeting anyone that “looks different.” “We never expected things to get this bad. It is time for undocumented youth across the South to come out and fight against injustice,” Solis said.

In Kentucky, we can take Solis’s

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teen, have graduated from high school or obtained a GED, have good moral character and no criminal background, and have had at least five years of continuous presence in the U.S.

Furthermore, if the student meets all four requirements, once the DREAM Act passes, he or she would have to obtain a two-year college degree or serve in the military. At this point, qualified undocumented students would be permitted to apply for conditional non-immigrant status. Finally, if an individual meets all these requirements, after a three-year wait he or she will be eligible for citizenship.

The movement for the DREAM Act is growing. On June 28, over 200 DREAMers, including three from Kentucky, went to Washington D.C. to be part of the first ever DREAM Act hearing. These DREAMers asked our legislators to support the DREAM Act and to hold President Obama accountable for his words and actions.

The activists also prepared the “Deportation Class of 2011,” concluding it with a DREAM Act graduation, which highlighted the plight of undocumented youth in deportation proceedings. Among the speakers at the graduation were undocumented youth in deportation proceedings; Jose Antonio Vargas, a famous journalist who just came out as being a DREAMer; and Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois, champion of the DREAM Act since 2001. After the graduation ceremony, DREAMers from all over the nation walked for over 40 minutes to the White House, where they

words as a forewarning. We must figure out where our legislatures stand on immigrant issues in our upcoming November election, so that individuals like those in the Georgia Six are not the only ones taking a stand for undocumented students.

We are not alone

“We are not alone” is the message I gained from my experience in Georgia. In fact, there are millions of undocumented immigrants and allies across the nation. By collaborating with other states against anti-immigrant laws that oppress communities, our advocacy becomes greater and changes begin. In an effort to bring awareness and hope to our communities, the Kentucky Dream Coalition will begin to collaborate with the DREAMers from all over the nation.

From the trips to Washington and Georgia, the Kentucky Dream Coalition came home motivated to educate our community through “Know Your Rights” workshops. I feel hopeful and empowered to help my community, knowing that there is so much support nationwide for the DREAM Act and for our immigrant communities.

It’s time for change. With high deportation rates and anti-immigrant laws persecuting the undocumented populations in the U.S., our system of democracy and value of freedom are endangered. Join the DREAMers and create change.

For more information, visit the Kentucky Dream Coalition on Facebook.

JULY 27, 2011

Live music to stay young to: July 27 - August 6

Friday, August 5

The Butchers *with* Idiot Glee
Al's Bar; 601 N. Limestone. 10 P.M.

So I went to the Steely Dan show up in Cincinnati this past week, and on the drive up 75 I was almost frantic with excitement about it, because while I fell in love with the music years ago I'd never managed to catch them live, until now.

I'd taken along Ron, my pal who listens exclusively to prog, metal, and prog-metal, and who hadn't yet awakened to the Dan's genius: the jazz chords; the virtuosic soloing; the jaded, biting lyrics; the pristine, precise sound production. Maybe, I thought, seeing the band live would flip the switch, so to speak, and he'd come to love the band too. We all evangelize for our favorites, don't we?

The PNC Pavilion was of course unbearably hot, but we settled into our seats and dug into the opening act, the magnificent Deep Blue Organ Trio, and then stayed in our seats during the changeover, as it felt too hot to try and move about. As we sat, we noticed something that struck us as peculiar: the only members of the audience younger than Ron and myself—we're both in our thirties—were children who'd obviously been dragged along to the show by their baby-boomer parents, who'd listened to the Dan in their twenties, way back in the band's 1970s heyday.

This meant two things: first, Ron and I realized that some ninety percent of the audience was both fatter and grayer than we were, and we took comfort in that. However, we also discovered that we were a lot closer in age to all these...these...*old people*, than we were to the bored-looking kids they'd brought with them.

The sensation was unpleasant. I was suddenly gripped by the urge to jump up on my seat and holler, "I'm not like you! I'm here for the music, not the nostalgia! I don't want to hear the hits—I WANT THE DEEP CUTS!" Then, making my way up the aisle, still screaming, "I'M NOT OLD AND FAT AND GRAY LIKE YOU! I'M STILL YOUNG...ISH! I'M STILL VIABLE, POTENT, VIRILE!" On the concourse now, pointing and shouting: "YOU, MADAM. YES, YOU! I DON'T WANT TO HAVE SEX WITH YOU, BECAUSE YOU'RE OLD! NO, I WANT TO HAVE SEX WITH YOUR DAUGHTER, WHO APPEARS TO BE IN HER LATE TEENS! BECAUSE SHE'S THE APPROPRIATE CONJUGAL PARTNER FOR A MAN SUCH AS MYSELF, AT MY STAGE IN LIFE'S JOURNEY! NOT SHRIVELED OLD POST-MENOPAUSAL YOU,



Handsome and Gretyl.

MADAM! NOW COME HERE, DAUGHTER, AND I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT 'HEY 19' IS ALL ABOUT!"

Probably for the best, I did and said none of that, but instead sat and sweltered and tried to suck in my stomach. Steely Dan proceeded to play a set chock full of the greatest hits; imagine 5,000 sweaty AARP members singing and swaying along to "My Old School" and you've got a sense of the concert experience. But the show was good; it was *fine*. They played "Peg." I was content.

There's a lesson here, one that I feel I'm learning against my will: we are not young forever, and as we age, it becomes harder to keep current. Steely Dan is a band enjoyed by the previous generation...a generation to which...to which...to which I now seem to belong. I have one foot in the grave.

Which brings us to The Butchers and Idiot Glee at Al's. These bands do not sound like Steely Dan. In fact, I don't even understand what I'm hearing, when I listen to them. They belong to the young generation, a generation whose membership is closed to people my age. I suppose I could try and sneak in—maybe drop a few pounds, apply some Just For Men—but that would just be creepy. Nobody's daughter wants to have sex with me. Only the moms. Only the moms.

So I can't tell you anything useful or substantial about The Butchers or Idiot Glee. They play some kind of crazy new music, and young people seem to like them a lot. The Butchers are also celebrating the release of a new album, or whatever the kids call albums these days, and it's probably really innovative and subversive and things like that, so if you're a young, hip...uh, cool dude...or, uh, cool girl...or...young woman, then, you know, you probably want to go, right? Because that's who goes to shows like these, right? Other young people who are hip and, uh, cool. So...yeah. I guess if you're young and cool, you go to this show.

Have fun. I'll be home listening to "Deacon Blues" and crying into my Ensure.

—Buck Edwards

Staff picks:

Wednesday, July 27

Handsome and Gretyl
Natasha's; 112 Esplanade. 9 P.M.
Groovy folk-pop from Nashville.

Thursday, July 28

Davy Jay Sparrow
Green Lantern; 497 W. Third. 9 P.M.
Old-timey county & western from Mars.

Thursday, August 4

Carbon Leaf
Natasha's; 112 Esplanade. 8 P.M.
Southern-tinged jam rock from Virginia.

Saturday, August 6

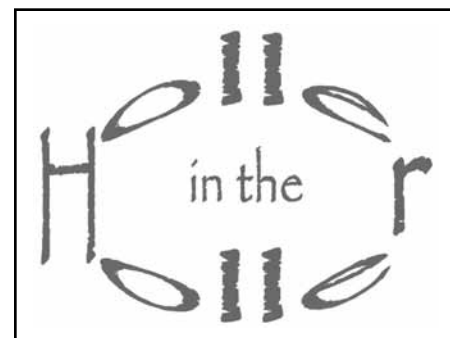
Blackout Superstar
Cosmic Charlie's; 388 Woodland. 9 P.M.
Hard rock from 1989.

Music

Tix on sale for 2011 Holler fest

NoC Music

The 2011 edition of Holler in the Park, a three-day music and arts festival, will be held between Friday, August 19 and Sunday, August 21 at Homegrown Hideaways, just outside of Berea, KY. Tickets, which start at \$12, are available in a variety of packages, including per-day and all-weekend passes.



Acts booked for this year's edition of the festival include BlueGrass Collective, The Barry Mando Project, Born Cross Eyed, Blind Corn Liquor Pickers, Holler Poets, and many other local and regional musicians.

Tickets may be purchased at the Homegrown Hideaways web site, at homegrownhideaways.org; click the event's menu link for prices, directions, and the full schedule of events. Advance ticket sales end August 17, after which patrons must purchase their passes at the festival entrance.

Al's Bar proudly sponsors Lexington Bike Polo

Wednesdays & Sundays at Coolavin Park

Post-game shenanigans at Al's

Woods, Beverlin get physical at Collexion

By Buck Edwards

We aesthetes in the NoC Music Department get a number of emails from acts local and regional, advertising upcoming gigs at area venues. And we do our best to help the cause by mentioning them in the calendar and perhaps running a picture. Never, however, do we simply reproduce in print the contents of the emails we receive.

Until now. This is the opening paragraph of the long, far-reaching email we received from Peter J Woods and Bryce Beverlin II:

"Over the course of the first two weeks in August (with one extra day from July thrown in for good measure), Milwaukee's Peter J Woods and Minneapolis' Bryce Beverlin II are hitting the road and doubling down in each city. With pedigrees in multiple fields, both artists decided it was time to spread out and occupy a little wider space. At almost each stop, the artists will be performing two nights in a row: one where both artists perform solo noise/avant-garde music pieces, and the other being a combined theatre show and physics lecture."

And that's different, isn't it? The physics bit? With the

theater? On consecutive nights, noise and physics? Yeah?

There's no punchline to this bit, sorry to say. It just is.

Woods and Beverlin play noise at Collexion (109 E. Loudon) on Sunday, August 7, and give us something like edutainment the following night, August 8.



Idiot Glee!

Better access to better bikes for everyone.

BROKE SPOKE
community bike shop

Currently accepting volunteers, bikes, or monetary donations.

Contact: [facebook.com/brokespoke](https://www.facebook.com/brokespoke)
photo by Stacy Borden

Film & Media

JULY 27, 2011

WRFL's Surreelfilm spotlights area films

By Barbara Goldman

Lexingtonians looking to raise their film IQ or perhaps tune into some fresh film chatter need not look any further than their radio dial. For shortly over a year now, WRFL has invited brave listeners everywhere to tune-in between ten and eleven A.M. to Surreelfilm, a local film show put on by local people.

The series began last summer as the brain child of two of the show's four hosts, Chris Ritter and Sam Burchett.

"We were both very cinematically curious. We found ourselves scouring movie blogs and talking about films constantly," said Ritter. "We had the notion to share the experience."

What began on a trial basis between the wee hours of 4-5 A.M. on Thursday nights quickly transformed into a hit show within three months and found its permanent slot on Monday mornings. Two additional hosts were added, and more and more reoccurring guests began to appear.

"We found four hosts is really the perfect number," said Ritter about the addition of co-hosts Robert Kahne, and former station director Ainsley Wagoner. "It allows us to really discuss the facts and bounce reactions off of each other. We all come from different backgrounds and interest with the idea that the show would be a sort of outlet. Film is something creatively

that all of us have always gravitated towards."

"We all have the radio bug from WRFL. It's a bizarre medium that has such a high propensity of possibilities and allows us to be creative," said Ritter.

Ritter said he and his co-hosts were all surprised with the number of things going on in the Lexington film community, but that they felt not nearly enough people knew about them.

"We had no established film audience when we began. It was a pretty big risk because we talk about some very random things," said Ritter, a former University of Kentucky student, who added that none of the hosts have training in film outside of interest and a few film classes. "The show came out of curiosity and wanting to talk about that experience."

The hosts have discovered the show's formula over time. Each week they review one to two films. The films selected are all chosen based on Lexington accessibility. Ritter said they prefer to pick films that listeners will be able to see in area cinemas, such as the historical downtown Kentucky Theatre. This means the show gravitates toward independent films, though it does not leave out bigger more well known blockbusters.

Surreelfilm is extending their mission even further and has recently partnered with the Lexington Film League

and the Lexington Public Library for the original series "Classics Off the Beaten Path." This re-occurring screening series takes place on Monday nights with the purpose of allowing listeners to watch forgotten or overlooked classic films.

The featured films are discussed during the 10 A.M. radio slot on 88.1 WRFL and then viewed for FREE at the downtown Lexington Public Library.

"The series may not be every week but it will be happening as much as possible. We are very excited to partner with the downtown Public Library," said Ritter.

"We came up with the idea in about 72 hours," said Ritter who credited film buff, and reoccurring Surreelfilm guest hostess, Lucy Jones, for the idea to screen the classics films. The new series premiered on Monday July 18th with the film *Fat City*, and was a hit.

"We were really pleased with the turnout," said Ritter about the 30-35 people in attendance. "It was so much fun. We were really surprised and happy with the audience."

Ritter said he was thrilled to see that many of the faces in the audience were strangers and new to film events in Lexington.

"This is the time when we really get to do what we first set out to do, and branch out to more listeners," said Ritter.

Surreelfilm is continuing to extend that branch throughout the fall with an additional project partnering with the Lexington Film League and BOOMSLANG Fest, a WRFL multi-venue music and arts festival.

Ritter was thrilled to announce that a special screening of a film will occur prior to the week of BOOMSLANG this fall. The film has not yet been selected, but the creators of the event are hoping to have the chosen film's director at the screening for a question and answer following the showing at the Kentucky Theatre.

"Our show is not just people sitting in a booth talking. We really want to give back to the film community. That was the original intention of the show. If we can bring as many films to our city as possible, well there's nothing better than that," said Ritter.

If you can't listen to the Monday morning show, have no fear, podcasts are available and easily accessible. They are also accessible through iTunes.

The next installment of the Classics Off The Beaten Path is Monday, August 1. Tune into Surreelfilm at 10 A.M. to learn the name of the film that will be shown.

For more information, check the following web sites:

- www.surreelfilm.podbeam.com
- www.boomslangfest.com
- www.lexingtonfilmleague.org

Review: Transformers: Dark of the Moon

More Tufnel troubles

By Kevin Martinez

I have to admit to being a closet fan of Transformers. I was probably too old to be into the toys when they first arrived back in the 1980s, but I do own a few of them. Most notably I have Megatron, who I bought on clearance at Hills since it had been opened and had some shelf damage. They were just so innovative as toys, and Marvel Comics had released a mini-series to tie into the toy line, much in the same way they had with G.I. Joe. I remember the comics not really grabbing me that much, although the subsequent

second film. Granted, we don't have dogs humping each other, and the parental characters take a smaller role in this one, but it's still centered around the human characters too much. In Godzilla movies, the title character has no capacity to speak, or express itself with anything more than destructive tantrums. In Transformers, they've gone to the trouble of establishing that the Autobots and Decepticons are intelligent and have personalities. Yet they are consistently secondary to Shia LaBouf's Sam Witwicky character.

Much has been made about Megan Fox not returning to this series after

Frances McDormand and John Malkovich, who I really respect, are phoning it in for that big paycheck and it's obvious.

I've been told that this Patrick Dempsey guy is someone of note, too. But he's on some TV show about doctors, which means I couldn't tell you anything about him.

I can tell you that I'm a fan of Alan Tudyk of *Firefly/Serenity* fame. He has a small but amusing part as John Turturro's sidekick, so I was glad to see him in this film.

If they make a Part 4, which they will, it needs to take place on

U.F.O. that has crashed on the moon.

You see the Apollo landing and, when the news is blacked out from the moon, Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong explore the wreckage. The real Buzz Aldrin makes a cameo to verify that these events actually happened. Also, Chernobyl was an accident caused by the Soviet Union tampering with an Autobot power source. Yeah, this is revisionist history. But, in fairness, it's no worse than the ending of *Inglourious Basterds*.

The Autobots recover the body of the leader of this doomed ship, Sentinel Prime. Sentinel Prime ends up being the focal point of the plot, in which the Decepticons have been working with human traitors. These traitors are helping the Decepticons bring the remaining Transformers to Earth through a teleportation device created by Sentinel Prime. If this were to happen, the Decepticons would take over Earth, make the humans their slaves, and steal all of our resources.

In all fairness, this plot sounds interesting when I describe it, but it's not executed very well. For a movie based on a line of toys, there seems to be a very large amount of vulgar language. If I had a kid, I wouldn't take them to these movies. I'm no prude (obvious if you know me) but, dammit, tone down the bad language. Kids need to learn these words from their friends on the school bus, not from dopey Michael Bay movies based on Hasbro toys!

The special effects in this one are top notch and do seem to be better realized than in the previous films. The 3-D is actually the best thing it.

In these movies, there are too many scenes of people running through stuff being blown up while they try to reach some sort of goal. Yeah, it's amazing visually. But, after about 10 minutes, it's just dull. If you are a fan of the first two films, you will probably enjoy this movie. If you hated the first two, well, stay away. It's nothing new. In comparison to the other summer blockbusters, it's better than *Green Lantern*. But it's not as good as any of the other films I've seen. As always with my reviews, I give the obligatory, "save your money and spend it on the next R.O.C.K. bout" which, by the way, is on July 30th at the Lexington Convention Center.

On the Nigel Tufnel scale of 1 to 11, this one gets a 4, but mostly for the special effects.



Some big robot, with other big robots around somewhere else, and things blow up.

animated TV show was entertaining enough to where I had a familiarity with the concepts behind the line.

When the first movie debuted, I was excited about the prospect of seeing this made into a big summer blockbuster. I had no pretense of it being an Oscar winning film with great performances. I just wanted to see giant robots turn into cars and beat the crap outta each other. In other words: a 21st century Godzilla film with a big budget and actors whose mouths sync up to the dialogue.

But three films into this series, it's getting old. Although *Transformers: Dark of the Moon* is an improvement over part 2, it's still suffering from the things that bugged me about the

she publicly criticized director Michael Bay and called him a Nazi. According to speculation, this caused executive producer Steven Spielberg to have her let go. Honestly, she's not missed. Sure she makes great eye candy, but so does Rose Huntington-Whitely. This is the problem with these movies: the people really aren't that interesting. When your lead "actress" is interchangeable with a Victoria's Secret model with no acting experience, then you aren't really convincing anyone that they should care about the characters.

Leonard Nimoy doing the voice of Sentinel Prime is probably the most standout performance in this movie. It's really odd, though, because there are some quality actors in this film.

the Transformer's homeworld of Cybertron and not have any people in it. Explore the title characters and their personalities. Give us a reason to care about these machines. And give us a plot that requires some thought behind it. Just because they cause more destruction to Chicago in this film than the Blues Brothers did, it doesn't make it a better movie.

The plot in this film revolves around the hidden fact that there had been a group of Autobots who had escaped the tyranny of the Decepticons and crash landed on the moon back in the 1960s. The space race is sparked by this, as explained in a pre-title sequence where John F. Kennedy is informed of a massive

JULY 27, 2011

Behold (cont.)

continued from page 1

the mouth, where the General waited, staring through his laminated, flip-chart, genuine, revised 1975 edition of Navigation Charts, Kentucky River, Louisville District, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army. “Hundred yards down river and we’ll flip charts, 30 to 29. Drowning Creek’s been a real good host, but lock eleven isn’t going to open up and just let us pass. No two ways around it. We’ve got a good paddle and even better portage ahead.” He paused, the sarcasm hanging in the willow shade. “No sense prolonging the hardest hump to the hottest part of the day. Let’s push.”

Epic portage

We pushed but our pushing lacked any real sense of urgency. Northrupp was now wisely rationing the leaf, and we followed the shade as best we could, tacking inside to outside each bend, passing very little of cultural or historical note outside the ordinary riverscape—except for Richmond’s municipal intake, a somewhat impressive brick and concrete structure on the eastern shore, whose low electric hum briefly distorted the heavy roll of water over the spillway at lock 11 a quarter mile ahead.

The General sped toward the upper gate at the lock pit. We had, despite his warning, arrived at the hottest part of the day, just past three. The upside of lock-portage is segmented movement, though. You can’t do it all at once. You tackle one step at a time. For the record, our take-out wasn’t prohibitive. We carefully emptied each boat via rope, the General atop the wall and Northrupp and I tying on the gear below. Then we pulled each boat up the mud-caked crevice where the naturally steep bank met the sheer concrete edge of the wall.

Once all the gear and boats were up, the true nature of the job before us deflated any optimism and hope for an uneventful portage. It would be full of events, epic. General took off in long strides toward the north corner of the apron to gauge prospects of a straight-up haul the length of the lock and down the lower bank. As fate would have it, the neighboring farmer had corralled his horses on the lock grounds with four strands of barbed wire, blocking easy access to the rocky approach below the lock and subsequently allowing a jungle of briars, nettles, and scrubby trees to obscure any descent to water. “Fucked again, lads, by the fickle finger of fate. No passage here. We’d have better chances during the spillway,” the General motioned with a disgusted sweep as his foot slid into a fresh mound of horseshit. “Damned beasts” he muttered. “Isn’t this state-owned property?”

After 15 or 20 minutes of heated deliberation, we agreed it best to lower one canoe into the lock pit, 25 feet below us, to be used as a ferry for all the gear. The General would guide the ferry back and forth and stow the gear on the lower skirt-wall, which presented some dry concrete, and the nearest place to regroup. Once the gear was completely ferried, we’d lower the other two boats, paddle down to the skirt, and reload. The only way to negotiate the 25 foot drop was a rusted, bent, and water-worn iron ladder, inset in the crumbly, century-old concrete.

But despite the poor conditions, we executed our plan to the letter, a feat that inspired a sort of quiet pride in the General, a man accustomed to such organized and promethean efforts, and by 4:15 we stood, boats loaded, on the skirt taking in the hydraulic shock and awe of the spillway from our supplicant vantage 15 to 20 feet below. We glistened in the mist as the Kentucky crushed down on itself, we humbled acolytes, the river our disinterested and almighty deity.

The phantom map

In the next mile we started to separate, a natural paddling order based on each man’s craft, haulage, and relative desire to keep up, rounding what was supposed to be Noland Creek Bar. The General pointed out the diminutive mouth of Noland Creek, or what he thought was Noland Creek on the eastern bank (still in Estill County, one of the few counties the river actually transects). Northrupp and I nodded in agreement. “Must be.”

“That means the bar must be submerged under, oh, a couple feet of water on the south side of the bend.” And with this last prediction, the General, Northrupp and I lost all sense of distance and place on “the map.” Had we indeed crossed from page 29 to...28? Or were we on another chart uncharted, an addendum, the lost map of poor Richard Calloway perhaps?

“Where the hell are we? Haven’t we passed that high ridge before?” I pointed incredulously to our northeast. We later discovered the Corps squeezed chart 28A in between 29 and 28, the “A” obviously representing “Apparition,” as what we thought was a five mile paddle

be Devil’s Backbone up ahead.” The General consulted the map without assurance. “No. No, we haven’t passed Thronburg Bend. It’s a real sharp bend to the east-southeast...or...is this Thronburg Bend?” We seemed to be bending hard to starboard. “Must be,” Northrupp snorted through naval pulp. He stood upright in his canoe. “Alright, men, time to leaf-up. If we’re lost on the river, we need to buckle down, hit the long-stroke and hump Upper Howard by twilight or we’re fucked. I’m not sleeping in my canoe tonight.”

Defiant, Northrupp hurled the spiral peel of his orange and dipped his paddle. The General and I followed suit, and before long we were breaking the viewshed of another bend. “Ah... Thronberg bend.” I heard the General coming up on my left. “This should be Thronberg... or... is that Rocky Face?” Again, the General flipped back and forth between his charts. “I don’t get this damn thing. I must have early onset dementia.”

Northrupp raced ahead, breaking a dogleg to the left. We pushed on harder, keeping him in pace. “This

“Can we leaf-up again?” I called over to Northrupp. “Temperance, Gorty, temperance. Let’s wait until we make landfall and need the extra boost for night-womping.” He was right. Should we find a suitable camp on Upper Howard, we’d need every ounce of energy the Patokan bag could offer and then some. My biceps were flush with delirium as we passed the mud-slicked mouth of Noname Creek. The General, who had officially given up pace-setting responsibilities to Northrupp, whistled a lonesome tune somewhere in the growing shadows behind me. Northrupp glided to my right nearest the Clark County shore and at last bugled, “Upper Howard, men.”

Camp on Upper Howard

We angled starboard, entered the mouth, and eased our way up through snags and twilight. Bullfrogs gagged on their preambles to either side. On the north shore, a wide floodplain with newly sown soybeans angled up toward a lone hillock, and nestled at the crown, the silhouette of an old barn suggested only minimal human intrusion on the scene. “This field might be our best bet,” I heard the General suggest.

And indeed he was correct. After a quick paddle up the snag-filled stream, we turned back and found the small, mud-covered ramp cut through the high bank in the far corner of the field we’d passed on our way in. “Let’s pitch the tents above this ramp, boys.” So in the 10 o’clock twilight, we set about unloading, unfurling, and unwinding all the essentials. Within a half-hour, camp was up and running and we’d all changed into dry clothes. We decided to forgo a hot meal, delving headlong into core-warming spirit shots instead.

After an hour-long jaunt up the old farm road to the barn, we ambled back to the tents, said goodnight to the cosmic voyeurs, and retired to our sleeping bags. A pack of coyotes yipped somewhere over a distant hill. A great-horned owl wailed in the deep woods to our south, a chilly harbinger of sleep.

The night was racked with fitful dreams. I was set upon while boiling salt by a band of skulking savages, one hundred Shawanese led by chiefs Black Fish and Munseka. After a forced march across the Ohio, I was adopted by Black Fish, given the name “Little Big Head” and promised

the hand of Black Fish’s oldest sister, Dirty Feathers, now a widowed matriarch approaching 50 years of age. She wore a necklace of human teeth, apparently her own. I awoke in cold sweats, mortified. “Northrupp, you awake?” I nudged his shoulder. He didn’t stir.

At daylight, we emerged from our tents. Only Northrupp looked rested. “Whoa, rough night in the sack?” he asked, noticing my exhausted expression. “Yeah, bad dreams. Nightmares even.” The General, with equally exhausted eyes, turned and muttered “you, too? I had awful dreams. A zombie had tied me to yon tree, uncapped my brainbox, and set in to licking the top of my thinker. With each lick my thoughts turned to static and my body writhed with uncontrollable twitching. Just fucking horrendous.”

“Wow. Sounds...bad. Sorry. I didn’t have any dreams. Slept like a friggin’ log. Want some bacon?” Despite his lack of concern for our sleep-travails, Northrupp treated us to a modest but delicious breakfast: thick slabs of bacon, fried eggs over easy, home-made torts with avocado slices and hot coffee. We ate gratefully in silence as the sun gradually worked over the tree line at our backs.

Dust-off at Muddy Creek

As we eased out to the mouth of Upper Howard, the General summoned us to the map. “I know we



to the mouth of the Red River turned out to be a ten mile slog, well off any map we could decipher, shushing any cheerful banter that might elevate our spirits. We entered the uncharted, serpentine channel, cuds churning and eyes scanning either wooded bank like white-knuckled surveyors of old, anticipating imminent ambush.

“That must be the high ridge separating the Red from the mainstream,” I called ahead to Northrupp and the General. “I believe so,” Northrupp called back. “So, the Red must be around the corner.” The General paused to consult the map. His eyes tennis-balled from map to viewshed for several seconds until he seemed to tire of ciphering, and he set back to chasing shade. “Well, I’m not going to kill myself in the process. It’s getting late, we have no good clue where we are, other than that we are heading downstream, and Upper Howard may or may not be the best place to camp anyway. I’m not counting on it. Let’s take it easy, find a place to eat, and then paddle late. All night if need be.”

Neither Northrupp nor I responded immediately. The new idea needed digestion, but my lumbar blurted out, “sounds good to me. No sense killing ourselves!” Northrupp said nothing, knocking his paddle across the gunnels and producing a glowing naval from his rucksack. “Want an orange?” He called back.

We pushed a little harder. I thought I recognized our position. “This must

must be Thronberg,” Northrupp called back. “And to the east up there, that’s Strawberry Bend?” the General asked with a wave of his paddle. “At this point, I don’t recognize a thing. It’s all familiar for a moment then unrecognizable. Like that ridge. I’ve seen it four times in the last two hours, but then again I’ve never seen it before.” I was exasperated.

The Mouth of Red River

We pulled into rank. “Relax, gentlemen. To our right, Devil’s Backbone. To our left the Lord’s Hurt Locker.” Immediately to our left, half sunk and packed with silt, a vintage General Electric icebox. “Just like the one grandma Darla used to have.”

It was 8:00. We approached the mouth of the Red, each one of us desperately wanting to paddle in and explore the historic tributary, but none of us mustering the strength to interrupt our downstream momentum. On the Madison county shore, two boys and three men stood in waist-high fescue and peered down on us. Their voices were muffled by our paddle-strokes. We’d come 27 miles in a day and a half and hadn’t seen a soul, but we uttered no greeting. After our six-mile detour into uncharted bends, none of us felt like fraternizing. I caught the last snippet of the men’s conversation as we passed and entered Maupin Bend. “There’s no telling where they came from...” And then all was quiet again but for our weary strokes.

continued on page 8

Opinion

Vermont's socialist senator on how the Gang of Six is about to screw you

By Bernie Sanders

If there was ever a time in the modern history of America that the American people should become engaged in what's going on here in Washington, now is that time. Decisions are being made that will impact not only our generation but the lives of our children and our grandchildren for decades to come, and I fear very much that the decisions being contemplated are not good decisions, are not fair decisions.

There is increased understanding that that defaulting for the first time in our history on our debts would be a disaster for the American economy and for the world's economy. We should not do that. There also is increased discussion about long-term deficit reduction and how we address the crisis which we face today of a record-breaking deficit of \$1.4 trillion and a \$14 trillion-plus national debt.

One of the long-term deficit reduction plans came from the so-called Gang of Six [a bi-partisan group of U.S. senators]. We do not know all of the details of that proposal. In fact, we never will know because a lot of the decisions are booted to committees to work out the details. It is fair to say, however, that Senators Coburn, Crapo and Chambliss deserve congratulations. Clearly, they have won this debate in a very significant way. My guess is that they will probably get 80 percent or 90 percent of what they wanted. In this town, that is quite an achievement, but they have stood firm in their desire to represent the wealthy and the powerful and multinational corporations. They have threatened. They have been smart. They have been determined. And at the end of the day, they will get almost all of what they want. That is their victory, and I congratulate them.

Unfortunately, their victory will be a disaster for working families in this country, for the elderly, for the sick, for the children and for low-income people.

JP Morgan (cont.)

continued from page 1

questionable loans (sub-prime, zero down, adjustable rate) that fueled the American housing bubble. It then made even more money by packaging hundreds of these shitty loans into a single "product," a mortgage backed security, which it sold like Twinkies to pious religious non-profits, filthy-rich hedge fund managers, municipal firefighters, retired auto-workers, and the like, each security effectively putting these groups on the hook—and not J.P.—for the shitty loans that it had helped create.

When, inevitably, individual homeowners began to default on their loans, thereby triggering the stock market collapse of 2008, J.P. Morgan found a way to make money on that, too, by buying insurance (known as credit default swaps) on the shitty securities of shitty mortgages that it had sold to unwitting investors. For good measure, the U.S. government handed the corporation \$25 billion in TARP funds, \$30 billion in U.S. treasury backing to purchase bankrupt Bear Stearns (previously a global leader in mortgage backed securities), and the biggest chunk of the \$129 billion of taxpayer-provided money earmarked for creditors of bankrupt credit default swaps provider AIG.

Since 2002, the bank has turned its attention to another easy revenue source: city, state and national government debt. Along with other large banks like Goldman Sachs, it began selling a new type of complicated loan to countries like Greece, states like Connecticut and Mississippi, and cities as far-flung as Birmingham, Alabama, and Milan, Italy. Even the Delaware

Port Authority and the Pennsylvania school system have gotten caught in the J.P. trap.

Based on the limited information that we have, I think it is important to highlight some of what is in this so-called Gang of Six proposal that the corporate media, among others, are enthralled about. Some may remember that for a number of years, leading Democrats said that we will do everything that we can to protect Social Security, that Social Security has been an extraordinary success in our country, that for 75 years, with such volatility in the economy, Social Security has paid out every nickel owed to every eligible American. I heard Democrats say that Social Security has nothing to do with the deficit. That is right because Social Security is funded by the payroll tax, not by the US Treasury. Social Security has a \$2.6 trillion surplus today. It can pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 25 years. It is an enormously popular program. Poll after poll from the American people says doesn't cut Social Security. Two and a half years ago when Barack Obama, then a senator from Illinois, ran for president of the United States, he made it very clear if you voted for him there would be no cuts in Social Security.

What Senators Coburn, Crapo and Chambliss have managed to do in the Gang of Six is reach an agreement where there will be major cuts in Social Security. Don't let anybody kid you about this being some minor thing. It is not. What we are talking about is that Social Security cuts would go into effect virtually immediately. Ten years from now, the typical 75-year-old person will see their Social Security benefits cut by \$560 a year. The average 85-year-old will see a cut of \$1,000 a year. Now, for some people here in Washington, maybe the big lobbyists who make hundreds of thousands a year, \$560 a year or \$1,000 a year may not seem like a lot of money, but if you are a senior trying to get by on \$14,000, \$15,000, \$18,000 a year and you're 85 years old, the end of your life,

you're totally vulnerable, you're sick - a \$1,000 per year cut in what you otherwise would have received is a major, major blow.

So I congratulate Senator Coburn, Senator Crapo, Senator Chambliss for doing what president Obama said would not happen under his watch, what the Democrats have said would not happen under their watch.

But it's not just Social Security. We have 50 million Americans today who have no health insurance at all. Under the Gang of Six proposals, there will be cuts in Medicare over a 10-year period of almost \$300 billion. There will be massive cuts in Medicaid and other health care programs. There will be caps on spending, which mean that there will be major cuts in education. If you are a working-class family, hoping that you're going to be able to send your kid to college and thinking that you will be eligible for a Pell grant, think twice about that. Pell grants may not be there. If you're a senior who relies on a nutrition program, that nutrition program may not be there. If you think it's a good idea that we enforce clean air and clean water provisions so that our kids can be healthy, those provisions may not be there because there will be major cuts in environmental protection.

Definite cuts, vague revenue promises

Some people think that's not so good, but at least our Republican friends are saying we need revenue and we're going to get \$1 trillion in revenue. But wait a minute. If you read the proposal, there are very, very clear provisions making sure that we are going to make massive cuts in programs for working families, for the elderly, for the children. Those cuts are written in black and white. What about the revenue? Well, it's kind of vague. The projection is that we would raise over a 10-year period \$100 billion in revenue. Where is that going to come? Is it necessarily going to come from the

wealthiest people in this economy? Is it going to come from large corporations who are enjoying huge tax breaks? That is not clear at all.

I want middle-class families to understand that when we talk about increased revenues, do you know where that comes from? It may come from cutbacks in the home mortgage interest deduction program, which is so very important to millions and millions of families. It may mean that if you have a health care program today, that health care program may be taxed. That's a way to raise revenue. It may be that there will be increased taxes on your retirement programs, your IRA's, your 401(k)'s. But we don't have the details for that. All we have is some kind of vague promise that we're going to raise \$1 trillion over the next 10 years, no enforcement mechanism and no clarity as to where that revenue will come from.

That is why it is so terribly important that the American people become engaged in this debate which will have a huge impact on them, on their parents and on their children. The American people must fight for a fair deal. At a time when the wealthiest people in this country are doing phenomenally well and their effective tax rate is the lowest on record, at a time when the top 400 individuals in this country own more wealth than 150 million Americans, at a time when corporate profits are soaring and in many instances corporations, these same corporations pay nothing in taxes, at a time when we have tripled military spending since 1997, there are fair ways to move toward deficit reduction which do not slash programs that working families and children and the elderly desperately depend upon.

This Senator is going to fight back. I was not elected to the United States Senate to make devastating cuts in Social Security, in Medicare, in Medicaid, in children's programs, while lowering tax rates for the wealthiest people in this country.

here, in Kentucky we seem hellbent on giving them the keys to our kingdom, too.

North of Center is a periodical, a place, and a perspective. Read on to find out what that means.

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standard in these cases, the money the bank was forced to pay back reflected only a percentage of what they made off the deals, quarters on the dollar. What's more, because the settlement did not require the bank to admit guilt, it has been effectively insulated from any future litigation on behalf of the specific localities that were defrauded.

One of these states, it should be known, is Kentucky. A small blurb appearing in the July 13 *Herald-Leader*, less than 2 weeks after state leaders made JP Morgan Chase our Commonwealth bank, cited two separate bid-rigging schemes that had made their way onto the 31-state lawsuit: Western Kentucky's Henderson County received \$224,000 from the lawsuit, while the University of Kentucky stood to recoup \$66,000 as part of the settlement. "The issue with UK," the *Herald-Leader* blurb reported, "involved a series of bonds totaling \$18.695 million dating to May 2001" for the Peter H. Bosomworth Health Sciences Research Building (described by UK as "the Medical Center's marquee research facility") and its utility infrastructure.

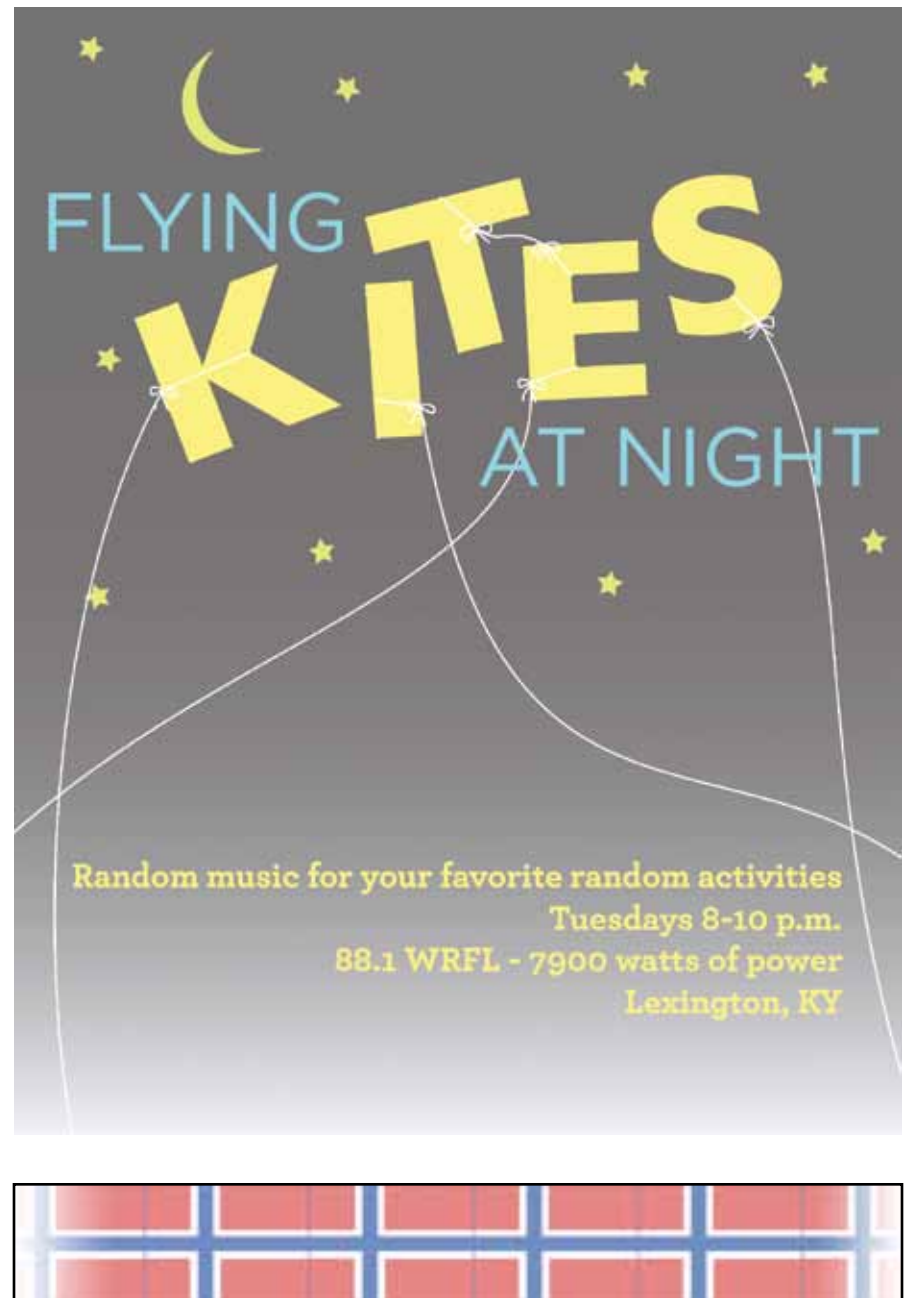
Writing in response to the J.P. lawsuit on his *Rolling Stone* blog, Taibbi lamented that big banks were getting away with crimes that, when pulled off by blue-collar muscle outfits like the mob (and they are), result in lengthy jail sentences. Fraud on the part of JP Morgan and other corporate banks, he concluded, is "not going to stop until people start doing hard time for these crimes."

Local first

Unfolding events here in this state attest to how far we still have to come. Not only is JP Morgan not prosecuted

JULY 27, 2011

Comics



Behold (cont.)

continued from page 6

had our sights set on a Boonesborough take-out, but our little misadventure off the map yesterday chewed up a lot of energy and determination. I've been studying the map, and it looks like Muddy Creek might be worth checking out as an alternative terminus." Northrup and I were already familiar with Muddy, having washed up on the old Jackson Ferry ramp just opposite the mouth a year before at the end of two-nights' journey down the Red River, a large bag of psychedelic mushrooms, and a four hour soak in the Kentucky where we were mistaken for flotsam by a family of overfed albino gorillas on a party barge, their oversized wake swamping both our canoes. "Ah, yes," injected Northrup. "Doyleville. A quaint little crossroads. If memory serves me, Doyleville Road crosses the creek not far from where we made camp, Gortimer." I nodded in approval. A Muddy Creek take-out meant far less paddling today and more time to explore the environs by daylight. "So it's settled," said the General. "Muddy Creek it is."

Doyleville appears prominently throughout the accumulated annals of Kentucky River history, mostly to underscore the Wordsworthian lament, "it is not now as it hath been of yore." The once vibrant river community is today nothing more than a white, wood-framed Methodist Church backing up to Muddy Creek, a mile or so

up from the mouth, and a spattering of farmhouses lining the serpentine road from Richmond. With each major flood of the twentieth century (most notably '37, '72, and '78), Doyleville, like so many other communities along the river's corridor, lost residents to higher ground.

But floods were the last thing on our minds as we entered the mouth. The temperature hovered somewhere in the mid-90s, and we were hell-bent on finding a cool clear pool for a midday soak. We beached on the first shoal; I went ahead and called in the dust-off. Since we'd changed plans, our designated shuttler would need extra time to navigate Madison County backcountry to our coordinates astride lonely Doyleville Road.

We continued up the Muddy, in some places pulling our boats through inches of riffle-water, in other places returning to our paddles and skimming through the narrow, sometimes braided stream. With each slight bend, the water temperature dropped. We came to a deep pool directly behind the church. "I'm out." Northrup flopped over the side of his canoe, releasing the sigh that had been stewing in his overheated craw. "Well, no sense letting Northrup have all the fun," I said as I heaved-ho. The two of us soaked in the pool, staring up through a crack in the canopy. Not a cloud in the sky. The General, who'd fallen into a pensive and vacant silence, pulled his yak up to the riffle ahead our pool. He gazed up

toward the church, then downstream for a long pause, seemingly indifferent to our sudden foolishness and banter.

"Something about this place reminds me of uncle Ranck's closing remarks about Boonesborough." The General took in the sky then grabbed a handful of creek sand. "The whole place, upland and hollow, has all the sadness of a deserted village, the melancholy charm of lonely nature, and the eloquence of an historic past."

"It's definitely deserted," Northrup harrumphed. "What's eating you, General? You seem surprisingly glum for a man who's successfully guided another expedition. Uncle Ranck was just romanticizing an early national moment in the hopes of stirring in legislators some sense of urgency for purchasing and preserving the grounds at Boonesborough for posterity. No need for glumness. We know he succeeded."

The General sat in silence atop a layered limestone outcropping just above the pool. "You're right, Northrup, but it's not loss or preservation of some distant past that bothers me." He wanted to continue but broke off, standing to gain a better view into the indeterminate and encompassing void bothering his thoughts. We all swallowed back words for a few long minutes.

I broke the silence. "Remember the reflections of Felix Walker, accounting in old age his experiences with Col. Boone and Co. as they made way for 'Chenoca', the fabled Kentucky":

We then, by general consent, put ourselves under the management and control of Col. Boon, who was to be our pilot and conductor through the wilderness, to the promised land; perhaps no adventurers since the days of Don Quixote, or before, ever felt so cheerful and elated in prospect; every heart abounded with joy and excitement in anticipating the new things we would see, and the romantic scenes through which we must pass... Under the influence of these impressions we went our way rejoicing with transporting views of our success, taking our leave of the civilized world for a season.

Upstream a car whooshed across the bridge. "I have 'transporting views of our success,'" I added as if to lighten the mood. The General nodded but maintained his stare into the void. "Yes...yes... But the river goes on without us." Northrup turned in his watery repose. "The dust-off... Time to haul it up, boys." Within the hour we were whizzing across the rolling savannah at 70 miles per hour, four lanes of interstate traffic stretching out in front and behind. No one spoke, our last words on Muddy Creek binding each tongue, until we crossed Clay's Ferry Bridge and the General glanced down: "Behold, the Kentucky."

Check out the North of Center web site at noclexington.com to listen to two Spotts-penned camp songs, sung on "the phantom map" voyage.