

NORTH OF CENTER

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The curious case of HB 70 Incarceration and voting rights, part 2

By Christian L. Torp

Editor's note: in our last issue, Christian discussed the disproportionate incarceration of minorities, especially blacks, in the U.S.

During the Reconstruction Era, the period immediately following the Civil War (roughly 1865-1877), the national consciousness was acutely aware of the danger that the newly emancipated slaves could again be relegated to a form of slavery. The Reconstruction Amendments attempted to forestall that danger. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery (except for those incarcerated): "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States"; the Fourteenth Amendment guaranteed citizenship for all peoples born or naturalized in the U.S.; the Fifteenth Amendment declared that the right to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the U.S. or by any state on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

On one hand, the U.S. Constitution clearly shows a substantial fear that people could be re-enslaved under color of law as all three of the Reconstruction Amendments grant Congress explicit power and authority for enforcement; the Fourteenth Amendment addresses the issue by saying: "The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article."

On the other hand, more than one hundred years later, racial minorities make up a grossly disproportionate number of those incarcerated and disenfranchised in Kentucky. How could this be explained?

Reactionary history

Section 145 of the Kentucky Constitution, the provision that bars those convicted of treason, felony, bribery, or "high misdemeanor," those incarcerated, and "idiots and insane persons" from the 'right' to vote, was

ratified in 1891 and amended in 1955. I believe the times in which this occurred are telling. Though I have yet to find any specifically Kentucky references, the historical record is clear that similar restrictions on the right to vote were done in similar ways in nearby and formerly slaveholding states at about the same times—and for less than laudable (i.e. racist) reasons. Moreover, these two eras, the 1890s and 1950s are noted as times of discrimination and nativism (think: McCarthyism).

Throughout the South during the late nineteenth century, the definition of crimes resulting in disenfranchisement grew dramatically. In the 1870s and 1880s, minor property crimes were redefined as felonies in many Southern states; several states amended or revised their constitutions to define larceny or petit larceny as disenfranchising crimes. Finally, southern courts took to interpreting existing laws to include misdemeanor grade offenses as crimes of disenfranchisement. The historical record is rife with sordid examples of why so many things were criminalized; there's no doubt about why it was done.

In 1875 *The New York Times* declared that the "evident purpose" of these changes was "to prevent colored men and poor white men from exercising the right of suffrage." Green B. Raum, a lawyer, Union soldier, and U.S. Representative from Illinois, wrote in 1884: "Negroes are frequently arraigned before petty magistrates on the most trivial charges of larceny, and a conviction in these petty courts is sufficient to disfranchise them forever. This conviction is readily obtained, and the whole proceedings clearly indicate, in many cases, that the prosecution is merely a pretext to deprive the negro of his vote." Doesn't that sound like how the "War on Drugs" is used today?

It is now more than a century later, the nation has its first black president, and yet Kentucky is one of only two remaining states that permanently disenfranchise all persons upon a felony conviction without a pardon from the governor. (The other state is Robert E. Lee's own home state of Virginia,

of which Kentucky was a part at the nation's founding.) And though the Fifteenth Amendment specifically authorizes and empowers the U.S. Congress to fix this predicament—arguably demands it—Kentucky still has the second highest African-American disenfranchisement rate in the nation.

Our neighbors Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois automatically re-enfranchise all citizens upon their release from incarceration. West Virginia and Missouri automatically restore an ex-felon's right to vote upon full completion of their sentence. Tennessee allows former felons to apply to the Board of Probation and Parole for restoration of their voting rights upon completion of their sentence (except in case of certain serious felonies). All in all, the fact that so many nearby states allow former felons to vote doesn't mean that they believe ex-offenders are more or less likely to commit a crime; it just means that those states think ex-offenders are *still American citizens*. (Maine and Vermont even allow persons convicted of felonies to vote from prison.)

Tough on crime?

What if we based our judgment about re-enfranchisement on crime prevention alone, just that and nothing else—let's call it the "tough on crime" approach. We'd then ask: Does disenfranchisement have any beneficial effect on reducing recidivism, i.e. stopping future lawlessness? In a word, no—just the opposite has been shown. Reintegrating individuals into their community and empowering them has

been shown to give them a vested interest in the health, future, and well-being of their society.

The more fully a former criminal is integrated into their community, the less likely they are to return to crime or resort to it once they've run out of other options. In fact, reducing the level to which an individual can return to law-abiding society increases the likelihood of their re-incarceration. (I would even argue that the prevalence of background checks as a precondition of employment exacerbates this problem.)

In other words, don't complain about crime if that's the only job you allow former felons to have.

The fix

How can we fix this? What needs to be done to have the America we learned about in Civics class? The solution to this problem in Kentucky lies in one of two places. The simplest, though least direct or effective means is your gubernatorial vote this fall (if you've got a vote, that is). The chief executive officer of the state has the pardon power, the "executive pardon" laid out in Section 145 of the Kentucky Constitution.

Our two most recent governors illustrate how this actually works. Former Governor Ernie Fletcher required former felons to submit a poll-test like essay (poll tests are illegal), along with character references in their application for pardon. While Governor Beshear has simplified the process, his process does not specify when, or if, any reply will be received.

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If a tree falls Enforcing the Green Scare



Activist sits atop clear cut land.

By Michael Dean Benton

Curry Marshall, with a degree in Comparative Religion from Swarthmore College and experience as a senior producer at a New York multimedia design firm, got his start in filmmaking by shooting, directing and editing the 2005 documentary *Street Fight*. The documentary followed the grassroots, underdog candidate Cory Booker's attempt to unseat Sharpe James, the longtime mayor of Newark, NJ. Marshall impressed audiences and critics with his dogged determination to cover the campaign despite James' attempt to control all media coverage of his public appearances. The film, which ran as part of a series on PBS and was later recognized with both an Oscar and Emmy nomination, remains

an essential document of an actual grassroots campaign running against entrenched party machine politics.

Marshall's newest documentary, made with cinematographer and co-director Sam Cullman, *If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front* (2011) tells the complex story of environmental Earth Liberation Front activist Daniel McGowan, who faced life in prison for his participation in the burning of two timber facilities. The film has received Best Documentary awards at multiple film festivals, and a Best Documentary Editing Award at the Sundance Film Festival.

Just as *Street Fight* is essential viewing for grassroots campaigners seeking to intervene in entrenched

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Disappeared señoritas

NoC News

From October 6 to November 4, the Tuska Center for Contemporary Art at the University of Kentucky will be exhibiting *Wall of Memories: The Disappeared Señoritas of Ciudad Juárez* by Lexington artist Diane Kahlo. The show presents portraits of the more than 350 disappeared and murdered women of Juárez, Mexico.

In 1993, young women began disappearing in Ciudad Juárez, which sits across the border from El Paso, Texas. The young women, often workers at the assembly plants along the border, are often found in the desert, tortured and mutilated. Many believe that the murders are partially the result of neoliberal economic policies, drug trafficking, and governmental corruption. One can only say 'partially' because the murders have never been solved and the situation in Juárez is a confusing web of violence, drugs, conspiracies, and fear. While many news reports put the number at 350, scores more women are believed to have been killed under similar circumstances.

Wall of Memories is an important addition to the art and journalism

dedicated to ending the murders. Kahlo, who also co-curated *Crossings/Travestias* at the Lexington Art League in the spring, hopes to raise awareness in Kentucky and beyond about violence against women and the intersections of sexism, classism, exploitation, violence, poverty, and immigration.

Events related to the exhibit have been scheduled, including talks, films, and workshops. The official opening and reception will be Monday, October 10 from 5:30-8:30 P.M. A preview night and participatory installation will take place on Thursday, October 6 from 5:00-8:00 P.M. On October 13, the UK Latin American Studies Program will show the documentary *Señoritas Extraviadas* in the UK Student Center, room 230.

Additionally, there will be a workshop for writers, visual artists, and filmmakers working on projects related to violence and politics; the time and date of the workshop will be announced soon. All events are free and open to the public.

For more information, visit Facebook and search for Tuska Center for Contemporary Art.

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Knitting politics and homespun queer

The Diversity Project blankets the community

By Susan Stewart

The Diversity Project—a hand-knitted and crocheted blanket made from individual squares, celebrating the Lexington Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered (LGBT) community—is the brainchild of U.K. undergraduate and Gaines Fellow, Catherine Brereton. As eight-inch squares are knitted by contributors over the next few months, the blanket will eventually contain up to 144 pieces of original fabric art. Brereton's goals are to prominently display the blanket somewhere in Lexington and to auction the project to fund a one-time scholarship for an LGBT student.

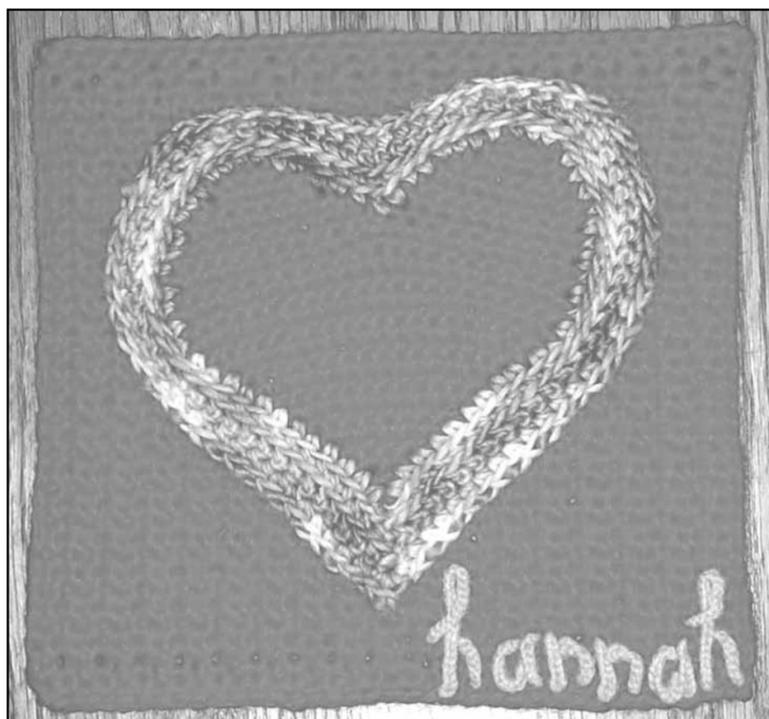
Within weeks, The Diversity Project has garnered interest nationally and internationally, as well as from the Lexingtonians for whom it was originally conceived. "My home is in Lexington, but my community extends far beyond," says Brereton, who emigrated to the U.S. from Great Britain in 2008. "Friends and family aren't limited by geography. The blanket represents the far-reaching nature of our communities."

A project like this is long overdue, and the interest it has generated far beyond its central Kentucky birthplace speaks to an unfulfilled need for a certain kind of expression in the queer community. Producing a hand-made

blanket seems hardly radical in Kentucky (where handicraft and fabric art are staples of rural and Appalachian heritage), but for a community so seemingly outside homespun norms, such an object is inherently political.

The blanket evokes a set of values we might call traditional or old-fashioned—dare we say, *family* values. It is not uncommon for LGBT people to be denied the acceptance of their family or the reassurance of their places within heritage and tradition. Undeniably, those living in places like rural Kentucky suffer greater social disenfranchisement than those in cities. Allies in these smaller communities find it hard to reach out to their LGBT family and neighbors because of the same pressures. In response, The Diversity Project claims warmth, family, belonging, and acceptance as human rights for LGBT people—rejecting heartless and tepid pleas for mere "tolerance." It offers space to extend and celebrate those values for everyone, including allies and family.

According to Brereton, contributions have included knitted and crocheted squares dedicated to a friend or family member. "But any square is welcome, whether dedicated to someone special or not," says Brereton. Non-knitters have also donated yarn, small financial gifts, and personal stories to the project's web site. There are plans



Knitted by Rebecca W. in honor of Hannah Landers.

to embroider squares with quotes from community members.

The first project "knit-in" will take place at the Gaines Center for the Humanities in the Commonwealth House on Maxwell Street on Thursday, October 6, from 6:30-9:00 P.M. Some knitting instruction will be available for

first-time or rusty knitters. Attendees need to bring only a pair of needles and yarn.

The project's web site, located at ukdiversityproject.wordpress.com, contains information about how to donate time, material, money, or a square to the blanket, as well as information about upcoming events.

Announcements

Mystical and sexual fetish: Goodlett opens at Institute 193

Institute 193 will present an exhibition of new mixed-media work by artist Mike Goodlett, entitled "Dress Socks and Other Diversions." The Institute will host an opening reception Thursday, September 29 from 6:00-9:00 PM. The reception is free and open to the public.

In his most recent body of work, Mike Goodlett revisits and reinterprets the idea of the fetish as an object of mystical and sexual significance. He has magnified and manipulated isolated views of the human body, and rendered these ambiguous forms in ballpoint pen. He then meticulously and rhythmically pierces them with needle and thread, creating a secondary covering or skin. These objects distill sexual fetishism into its simplest form by replacing the typical imagery of desire with line, color, form and texture.

Goodlett, a native of Wilmore, Kentucky, received his BFA from the

Art Academy of Cincinnati in 1982. Though he is widely known in this region for making intricate shadowbox assemblages, the stitched drawings in the Institute 193 exhibit are a departure from his previous style, and showcase a new direction in his work.

The exhibition will be on view at Institute 193 Thursday-Saturday from 10:00-5:00, September 29-November 26, 2011.

For more information go to www.institute193.org or send an email to info@institute193.org.

The Prayer Project

Land of Tomorrow (LOT) is proud to announce *The Prayer Project*, the first solo show by Paul Brown. Opening on Friday, September 30, *The Prayer Project* is a sculptural audio installation exploring the congruency of reasoning and content of prayer across religions and geographies. Brown has collected several hundred prayers through various methods, including a telephone based

recording device, written prayer submissions, and solicitation of individuals for their prayers. Prayers were organized directionally (Inward, Upward, and Outward), based on research by Dr. Kevin Ladd of the University of Indiana at South Bend, and separate tracks were recorded accordingly, and are projected through sculptures reflecting the directionality of these prayers.

In addition to audio work, the show includes drawings exploring prayer positioning that is seemingly universal among most faiths and is consistent with Dr. Ladd's concept of directional prayer. The ash and graphite drawings are also organized directionally. Additionally, word clouds exploring word repetition and similar phrasing across faiths and cultures will be analyzed by LWIC (Linguistic Word Inquiry Count) software to further examine the phenomena of prayer.

At the opening, psychology professor Dr. Kevin Ladd, who teaches at

Indiana University-South Bend, will deliver a talk at 6 PM on his research covering spirituality, prayer and ritual, and how Brown's work manipulates it for the installation. Following the talk, a reception will be held at the Gallery lasting until 11 PM. LOT is located at 527 E. Third Street.

National Avenue Art Festival

The second annual National Avenue Art Festival will be held at the junction of National Ave and North Ashland Ave from 10 AM to 5 PM on Saturday, Oct. 1.

Featured will be local artists working in the mediums of painting, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, wood, glass and photography. There will be art demonstrations, live entertainment, swing dance, and food and beverage vendors. Admission is free.

For more information, phone Debbie Hicks of Shumaker's Art

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Liberty and Dallas

Tim, Nicole, and Kayla



TIM, NICOLE, AND KAYLA / CORNER OF LIBERTY AND DALLAS 7.5.10 / 2:55 PM / 90° F

Kayla knew that the white couch had belonged to a neighbor since Kayla started 3rd grade, so she figured out that her neighbor had owned the couch for 10 years. It was just replaced by newly bought furniture.

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

The Place Where Couches Go to Die

By Jeremy Paden

We had a couch for ten years, a new couch,
our first, and our dog claimed that sofa as her bed.

The older she got, the more she chewed
her paws and her slobber,
her smell of old, decrepit dog settled into its fabric, its stuffing.

The house reeked of dying dog, but we could not smell it.

We had made love on that couch,
on that couch my wife nursed our children
in their first months,
on that couch our dog would curl around our daughter
and the two would nap.

The realtor said the couch was keeping our house from selling,
that no one wanted to walk into a house and smell old dog.

So we did the sensible thing:
drove it to the landfill, a mountain of trash and mud.
We wended our way up the curving
road between dump-trucks
and garbage trucks to the summit and
rolled the sofa over the edge.

It tumbled end over end once and was stopped by a recliner,
some tires, and a jumble of busted concrete and bricks.

Ricky G to Elkhorn Creek

An imaginative stretch

By Wesley Houp

The mid-afternoon sun finally breached the cloud-cover as we passed under the tight array of bridges linking Frankfort proper to South Frankfort and satellite communities to the west, and the roar of water over the spillway at Lock 4 rekindled in us all the dreamy exhilaration the summer squall had temporarily neutralized: we would be locking our canoes through the only functional lock on the entire 255-mile mainstream of the Kentucky River. For paddlers of the otherwise post-navigable Kentucky, such a prospect represented at once a portal to past river-experience forever dead and gone and a shimmer of hope that the future might not be so dismally fragmented for slackwater venturists such as ourselves, that the option of free and open passage the length of the Kentucky might still become a viable reality...again.

After passing Twin Bridges just beyond the mouth of Benson Creek, the gravity of our long-awaited passage set in, and like parishioners on the Sabbath we fell into a solemn line, holding no further confab, our jubilation suddenly constrained, hearts stilled and ready for the lockmaster to deliver sacrament: we would be born again, delivered from this pool to the next without even relinquishing our riverine frames. There would be no purgatorial portage. As we neared the upper gate, a figure rose on the bank above the lock-wall and lumbered toward the pit.

"There he is," I heard Gary mutter behind me.

There he was indeed. But who would he be? Since the state legislature created the Kentucky River Authority in 1986 and took control of the lock and dam system from the Army Corps of Engineers, the number of lockmasters on the payroll dwindled with each lock closure. Currently, the KRA employs only three lockmasters, and the majority of their time is spent maintaining selected lock grounds—not the locks themselves.

Our flotilla, consisting of three kayaks, one single-man canoe, and one

two-man canoe, eased up to the wall just as the lockmaster was stooping down to greet us. As I had hoped, our master of ceremonies was none other than Ricky G., the last lockmaster to drill the capstan at my old haunt, Lock 7, High Bridge. He had survived the downsizing in the early nineties and now made the daily commute to Frankfort where he shared duties with the other two lockmasters. We tried, to no avail, to carry on a conversation over the roar of water, and after several loud and awkward exchanges, I just yelled "We're here to lock through." He gave a "no shit" nod and said he'd dropped four ropes over the wall inside the pit. We were to paddle in, secure the ropes and hang tight while he opened the valves on the lower gate.

We obliged, trying hard to swallow back our Cheshire grins. Once inside the pit, we sidled up to the ropes and awaited our descent to the lower pool. Ricky, now sporting an orange PFD, busied himself with his operation, moving back and forth along the lock, crossing to and fro on the catwalk atop the gate, and finally settling in to work on the valves. Ever so subtly, the water level in the lock chamber began to fall. We were giddy in the throes of lockage.

The watermark indicated a significant drop, and I quickly consulted the pool chart in the front of my laminated barge maps. "Looks like we've dropped thirteen feet or so to pool 3." And just then, the lower gate creaked open. Within moments, Ricky G. gave us the "all clear" wave, and we paddled through slowly, each of us wanting to stretch the experience out as long as possible.

Around the end of the lock wall, we paused to take in the view of the broad spillway, shimmering crystal-white with the aerated rush of water, the empty deck at Jim's Seafood, and the government office tower rising above the tree-lined bank of downtown Frankfort. Turning downstream, the bluffs of Leestown Terrace reached up to the east, the red-brick, industrial façade of Buffalo Trace Distillery looming overhead, with its rows of



Slackwater venturists heed Ricky G's direction while in Lock 4.

paned glass glaring down like the cataract-clouded eyes of some semi-conscious drunkard. Just around a sharp bend to the west, Danny pointed out Leestown Bar to our starboard. "I wonder if that's where Leestown Ferry was officially authorized in 1783?" The rest of us gave the "must be" shrug, and we pushed on a little harder for Stony Creek, the next significant tributary before our chosen campsite.

In an hour and a half we were floating in the mouth of Stony Creek. The unusually steep and completely mud-covered banks were prohibitive to

exploration on foot. Plus, my recollection of the topographic atlas (verified by Lyle) indicated that Stony was more densely populated than most of the tributaries we'd wumped in the past. So around 5 PM we made our final descent toward Steamboat Hollow.

Camping on Steamboat Hollow Creek

In our pre-paddle planning a week prior, we had agreed upon Steamboat Hollow Creek for our first night's

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Castlewood Neighborhood Association

Annual Potluck and Officers Election

Thursday, October 27

6:30 pm at the Loudoun House

HB 70 (cont.)

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Beshear's process is also devoid of criteria as to what constitutes a successful application.

Moreover, an executive pardon is a discretionary privilege of our governor. Even though the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 makes it clear that "[n]o voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision in a manner which results in a denial or abridgment of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color," the governor can do about whatever he or she wants, so long as the governor doesn't say that an applicant's protected class (i.e. race, color, religion, etc.) was a factor in the decision.

The second fix for this injustice is by amending the Kentucky Constitution.

Since 2005, the Restoration of Voting Rights Coalition (ROVRC) has been working to introduce and pass the Restoration of Voting Rights Act or House Bill (HB) 70. The ROVRC is a group of diverse citizens' organizations working toward a just society including the Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC), the ACLU, the NAACP, the Kentucky Council of Churches, and the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice. Because granting former felons the right to vote after completion of their sentence would be a change to the Kentucky Constitution, it needed a referendum to be put on the ballot after it passed the House and Senate. HB 70 would put a Constitutional Amendment on the ballot so that the people of Kentucky can decide whether or not we want to carry on the racist remnants of the nineteenth century.

Unfortunately, every year that HB 70 has been introduced, it gets held up in committee by one of our state's

more 'progressive' legislatures—a legislature that obviously cares about the people's wishes by blocking a referendum that would allow the people to decide themselves. In other words, it is clear that some of our elected officials, namely the chair of the Senate State and Local Government Committee Senator Damon Thayer of Georgetown, Kentucky (Senate District 17, Grant, Owen, Scott and part of Kenton counties), don't believe that we can govern ourselves.

Even though HB 70 passed out of the House on February 10, 2011 with a vote of 77-21, Thayer blocked the bill, not letting it out of committee. Thayer won't even trust us with the option of saying "yes" or "no."

And that's how it is. Even though it can be shown that re-enfranchisement statistically reduces recidivism and therefore the crime rate, and even though the linkage between felony disenfranchisement and late nineteenth-century racist politics are clear, we still haven't done away with this injustice in Kentucky. I feel really proud to be a Kentuckian right about now, don't you?

The first martyr of the American Revolutionary War was a man of African descent, Crispus Attucks, who lost his life to the Redcoats in the infamous Boston Massacre. And despite the fact that the United States now has its first African-American at the helm as commander-in-chief, there's a statistical probability that Crispus Attucks would be a disenfranchised former felon and unable to vote if he were alive today; in fact, if the first martyr of the Revolutionary War were in Kentucky now, he'd have a 1 in 4 shot of not being able to vote...but he was certainly good enough to be shot.

Christian is an attorney working in, among other areas, criminal, civil, family, and employment law.

Announcements (cont.)

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Supplies at 254-0930 or Chris Huestis at 351-9639.

Really, really free market

You've heard about the virtues of the free market in the Republican presidential debates. Interested in seeing what a Really, Really Free Market would look like? Come find out on Sunday, October 2 from noon to 4 under the big gazebo at Woodland Park. Inspired by a similar event organized in Louisville by the Louisville Anarchists Federation Federation, the Really, Really Free Market will be a space where anyone from our community can gather to give away goods under a temporary gift economy.

Got stuff you want to give away? Bring it to the Really Really Free Market, where one person's trash is another person's treasure! Got skillz? Share 'em!

To be clear, everything at this event will be free. NO MONEY. NO BARTER. NO TRADE. NO ADVERTISING. NOMARKETING. EVERYTHING IS FREE. Leave your wallet and negotiating skills at home.

Bring a blanket, sheet, or tarp to place your things on so folks know where to gander for treasures.

This will be a family-friendly event, so feel free to bring kids and grandparents to see what it's like when a community comes together to share.

Street tree initiative in Castlewood

The Castlewood Neighborhood Association is planning a fall street tree planting in the Castlewood neighborhood.

On November 12 and 19, neighbors and volunteers will be planting

30 street trees in Castlewood, with the hope of planting even more next spring for Arbor Day.

The last several years have been hard on one of the most important parts of our neighborhoods: the trees. Ice storms, blight, and old age have all taken their toll on the trees in Lexington. And when the trees go, so do their benefits. Trees are important in environmental and social ways. Of their many environmental benefits, they shade and cool our homes, clean the air, and reduce stormwater run-off.

Studies have also found that trees cut down on noise pollution by acting as sound barriers, increase property value, add beauty and character to neighborhoods, and, surprisingly, reduce the crime rate.

According to the Lexington Tree Foundation, "Many of our trees are in decline due to insects, disease, age and poor maintenance. Our new tree plantings are insufficient in number." In other words, we need to plant more trees!

You can support the November planting in several ways.

If you live in Castlewood, have a tree planted in your parkway. Trees can be purchased for a modest price or through "sweat equity"—volunteer efforts during the planting.

Volunteer! The planting will need all kinds of able bodies and enthusiastic attitudes. Even if you can't lift heavy things, you can still help with the event.

Finally, donate. You may not need a street tree, but your donation can help a neighbor who does—and you'll both benefit from the tree!

For more information, contact Beth at connorsbeth@hotmail.com.

SEPTEMBER 28, 2011

Music

Live music to... ..ah, who gives a damn: 10/3 - 8

Hi. Buck Edwards here. I'm your *NoC* Music Editor. Normally, as long-time readers know, I fill this space with all sorts of clever writing about upcoming shows, but frankly, I don't feel like doing that this issue. I'm pretty down on music, as it turns out. It's only temporary—don't worry!—but right now I'm just not in the mood.

What happened is that my favorite Scandinavian progressive/goth/melodic death metal band, Sweden's Opeth, just released a new album, *Heritage*, that frankly isn't very good. Not only is it not very good, it isn't even metal. Like, at all. Instead, it's seventies-style progressive rock, in the vein of King Crimson, or Camel. One song sounds just like Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow.

I didn't want Camel. I don't own any Camel, and I only own *In the Court of the Crimson King* because it's one of those albums that's forever turning up on various "greatest rock records" lists. And the only Rainbow I owned was on cassette, and I threw out all my cassettes years ago. I haven't replaced it. I don't really like progressive rock.

So the whole thing is disappointing. I'll be in Louisville the night before this issue hits the newsstands for Opeth's show at Expo Five, but I'm not excited about it, because they're playing mostly stuff off *Heritage*, and a few non-metal songs from earlier records.

My buddy Ron, a fellow metalhead, had this to say in an email exchange:

"Their primary purpose was to write an album devoid of metal, and it shows. Their primary drive was for it to be a not-metal album rather than a good one. Maybe they get better at it (there are a large number of bands—bands that I actively listen to—that became immeasurably better once they abandoned metal: Anathema (essentially founded Doom Metal in the early '90s); Ulver (Black Metal icons, even long after their black metal days); to a much lesser extent Katatonia (more Doom Metal pioneers), but I don't know. They're going to have to do a

and Warrant, but those bands were all about looking pretty and getting girls, and not so much about the heavy music they were supposed to be playing. Skid Row gets a pass because they're just awesome, but the point remains: other bands were much heavier and more real to me, bands such as Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, pre-Black Album Metallica, Megadeth and Motörhead.

So I was happy to see that on October 3, Gypsyhawk, a band from Pasadena that brings back the fire of my old favorites will be gracing the stage of the Green Lantern. They are in the middle of a national tour, bringing their brand of refreshing hard-as-steel madness to the polluted soundscape that is modern music. Gypsyhawk tears into its audience with guitar work that brings back the feeling of classic Maiden, with a sound similar to Thin Lizzy, Motörhead, and even newer bands such as Valiant Thor. Gypsyhawk's driving beats and harmonized guitars help us to remember the beginnings of metal and heavy rock.

They've just signed with well-known metal label Metal Blade after playing the California area for years. If you'd like to hear their ear-blistering craft you can check them out at gypsyhawk.bandcamp.com for a quick listen, or to download one of their records. If you're into the old-school sound of metal and hard rock, you'll kick yourself for not attending this show.

—Andrew Hibpshman

Wednesday, October 5

Bloodroots Barter
Red Barn Radio; The Performance Hall at ArtsPlace, 161 North Mill Street. 7 P.M.

Casey, Laura, Tyler, and Ishi are The Bloodroots Barter. Born out of dry county-winter doldrums in their Southeastern Kentucky home of Hyden, the foursome spent the last year concocting their unique "voodoo grass" sound. They play mostly original music (with collaboration from all members)



Bloodroots Barter.

shitload better than *Heritage* to prove to me they can fundamentally change their music and not drop anything as a result."

Look, I know you don't care about any of this, but it's something I needed to get off my chest. I'd looked forward to this new for *months*. And it comes out and it's not what I wanted at all. Not at all. So I can't muster any enthusiasm for much of anything right now. I know bands don't owe their audiences anything, and they can do what they want, but still...

Anyway, here are a few upcoming shows that are truly going to be great, but since my world right now is gray and grim, I'll let other people, including new music writer Andrew Hibpshman and the bands themselves, tell you about them.

Monday, October 3

Gypsyhawk
Green Lantern; 497 W. Third. 10 P.M.

When I was growing up, I started to listen to truly heavy music: bands that were opposed to the "metal" of the time, what was known as "hair metal." This isn't to take anything away from bands such as Motley Crüe, Poison

and Warrant, but those bands were all about looking pretty and getting girls, and not so much about the heavy music they were supposed to be playing. Skid Row gets a pass because they're just awesome, but the point remains: other bands were much heavier and more real to me, bands such as Iron Maiden, Judas Priest, pre-Black Album Metallica, Megadeth and Motörhead.

The Bloodroots Barter concentrates on visual art and dynamic performance while keeping an anti-genre attitude toward their music. Art and design needs are met through collaboration with artists met through their experience as well as doing a majority themselves. Living and traveling in a veggie-oil school bus, they promote a conscientious approach to touring as well.

—Bloodroots Barter

Saturday, October 8

Frank Rocket with The Royal Batfangs and Rebel Riot Revue
Cosmic Charlie's; 388 Woodland. 10 P.M.
Masked surf rock, burlesque girls...

—Frank Rocket

This Band was banded in outer space for not knowing the difference between a hawk & a handsaw!

—The Royal Batfangs Facebook page

We put the ASS in Bluegrass!
—Rebel Riot Revue Facebook page



Gypsyhawk. They still play metal.

Catching up with the Qs

The Spooky Qs formed in 2007 as a three-piece band. Four years later and with a real-live drummer (Chris Oaks), the Q's have put out 2 records, Winterband and the more recent Rid of You, both of which are available as vinyl record or fee download (donations welcome) on the band's website. NoC caught up with the band to ask them about their long-planned album of resistance music, rumored to be near the recording stages.

NoC: Have you released *Rid of You* yet?

Jack Cofer: We have! For free digital download on the web site. Also, we have the vinyl ready, but not their sleeves. Still seeking someone to assist in the printing of those.

NoC: Where are you all in your album of resistance music? When are you hoping to have it completed?

JC: Truthfully, we had hoped to have this completed by...a while ago, but as good prefects go, this one grew and grew and now we are in the stage of rehearsing them for recording.

NoC: You have noted how fun it has been to dig up old resistance songs, most from before World War II. What have you found?

Ondine Quinn: It's really been a learning experience. We weren't sure what we'd find. We wanted to try our best to represent struggle and resistance from all over the world and all walks of life. We did research for several months and only ended up scratching the surface. Most Kentuckians are familiar with Florence Reese's song "Which side are you on," which we knew right away had to be on the album. We found "Keep woman in her sphere" from researching the women's suffrage movement in the United States and "Follow the drinking gourd" from our research of American slave resistance. Occasionally we'd stumble upon a real gem like Bessie Jackson's "B.D (bull dagger) woman's blues." We're also including songs from other countries such as "A las barricadas," an anarchist anthem from the Spanish Civil War and "Undzer shtetl brent! (Our town is burning!)" by Mordecais Gebirtig about the Jewish pogroms in Poland.

NoC: Why did you want to take on this project? How do you see it as a part of what the Q's do as a band?

OQ: We took this project on out of a desire to make a kick ass album that also means something. The songs that we chose are all very powerful in their own right and hopefully we've made them more accessible to people. We like for our music to be unique but also fun, and we think this album definitely reflects that. Finally, as a band with two openly queer members who both actively work in the community to dismantle oppression, this album makes total sense.

Seith Miller: I think I was attracted to the idea that there isn't any real difference between something that is new and something that is new to you. I wouldn't really want to be in or listen to a band that doesn't change, taking risks is a lot more fun.

CO: When it comes down to it, we pretty much feel like we can do whatever we want. Now is sort of the time to take on interesting projects like this, as most bands are abandoning the notion of just recording a 12 song album and then touring. Its just not mandatory to do that anymore.

NoC: How do you imagine these resistance songs holding up in a live format?

Chris Oaks: Along with our usual live experience, which is pretty loud and intense, a lot of these reimagined songs sound and move differently. Some are folkier, more ethereal, and some are full on dance tracks. It definitely adds some new angles to our sound.

SM: It depends on the song. We tend to play pretty ruckus shows and there are definitely songs on this album that will kick your teeth in.

NoC: Do you have any recent gigs or anything else going on in the near future?

JC: We have two dates with Indianapolis band Hero Jr in November. One here in Lexington at the Green Lantern, and one in Indy.



The Spooky Qs.

Film & Media

SEPTEMBER 28, 2011

HB 70 (cont.)

continued from page 1

local power structures, *If a Tree Falls* is a vital film for committed environmental activists. Not only does the documentary capture embattled environmental activists in the age of the Green Scare opening up to the filmmakers, but most impressive was the filmmakers' ability to convince law enforcement officials and government lawyers to talk on-record about their perspectives. With that in mind, this is also a film that should spur all American citizens to consider the impact of our current heightened post-9/11 law enforcement policies.

The Green Scare

First introduced into the lexicon in 2003, the Green Scare is a term used by environmental activists to describe the orchestrated campaign to paint their movement as a form of domestic terrorism. With a self-conscious nod to the political repressions of the last century's numerous "Red Scares" that swept the nation, the Green Scare describes the U.S. government's use of legal and police tactics to suppress the radical environmental movement. The term seeks to explain why so many environmental activists appear on the FBI's Most Wanted List, why the jail sentences of environmental activists seem disproportionately long, and how some activists end up in maximum security prisons.

Though *If a Tree Falls* does not mention the term Green Scare by name, the film dramatically documents the process in action. A key tactic involves using corporate media to influence public perception of environmental and animal rights activist groups as "domestic terrorists." This designation may seem like a stretch of the imagination. After all, in the past two decades, the United States has experienced multiple assaults on the twin towers in NYC, the horrific bombing of government offices in Oklahoma by Timothy McVeigh, and an incredible increase in violent armed militias and hate groups as Barack Obama became president--none of which have been perpetrated by environmental activists. Nevertheless, starting in the 1990s both local and national news stations amazingly started to apply the loaded term "terrorists" to environmental activists who never harmed or killed a human being in their actions.

When it comes to groups advocating direct environmental actions, law enforcement tactics have likewise focused directly (and often violently) upon environmental activists, intimidating those activists peacefully protesting in the streets while discouraging any citizen attempts to confront the corporations that are destroying the environment. *If a Tree Falls* provides vivid, difficult-to-watch scenes of police assaulting peaceful, albeit resistant, environmental protesters with strong-arm tactics and chemical weapons. Most memorable is the scene where police officers hold the heads of young female activists who sit with their arms linked together, while other officers apply liquid pepper spray directly to their eyes with Q-Tips. Another scene captures a law enforcement officer who reports that when activists do something that he doesn't like, it becomes personal for him. Later we hear another officer relate that, with the institution of Post-9/11 Homeland Security policies, the easiest way for law enforcement officers to rise up through the ranks and increase their pay scale is through terrorism enhancement cases. (Jules Boykoff, in *Beyond Bullets: The Suppression of Dissent in the United States* (AK Press, 2007), details how this intimidation of activists extended to police infiltration of groups that never committed a crime, and the unleashing of paid informants who acted as agent provocateurs--facilitating and encouraging the acceleration of activist actions while reporting back to their home agencies.)

FBI Top Ten List

The top ten list of most wanted domestic "terrorists" by the FBI remains focused on targeting contemporary environmental and animal rights activists, in addition to leftist activists from the 1960s/1970s. Currently three people on the list are environmental and animal right activists possibly involved in a series of ELF arsons in the Pacific Northwest. In a 2009 FBI listing of a new "domestic terrorist," the FBI stated that "*animal rights and environmental extremism pose a significant domestic terror threat*. To date, extremists have been responsible for more than 1,800 criminal acts and more than \$110 million in damages. Currently, we are investigating approximately 170 such extremist incidents across the country" (emphasis in original).

There is no doubt that there has been significant property damage, as is made clear in the documentary. However, the environmental and animal rights activists have diligently made sure that no physical harm would come to people. Looking at the FBI list one is struck by the political nature of the focus. These are people who object to corporate policies and critique capitalism. There is not one person on the FBI's top-ten list that reflects a right-to-centrist-political perspective, despite the fact that the worst domestic mass attacks of violence against people has generally come from right-wing extremists.

In recent history, this is even more the case. Most of the dramatic acts of violent domestic terrorism have been from right-wing or fundamentalist extremists: the Jewish Defense League's bombing attacks during the 1980s, Timothy McVeigh in 1995, Olympic Park Bomber Eric Robert Rudolph from 1996-1998, James W. von Brunn's attack at the Holocaust Museum in 2009, and Scott Roeder's murder of George Tiller during a Sunday morning service in a church in 2009.

Commenting in the aftermath of Andrew Joseph Stack III's airplane attack on the IRS building in Austin, TX in 2010, in which one person was killed and many more injured, constitutional lawyer and author Glenn Greenwald noted how "terrorism" is the "single most meaningless word and the most manipulated." As the various news networks struggled to keep Stack's act of violence from being labeled "terrorism," Greenwald reflected on the absurdity of newscasters' evasions. Stack wasn't labeled a terrorist because his written statements reflected current Tea Party concerns and complaints against the government. Greenwald goes on, stating that the "term now has virtually nothing to do with the act itself and everything to do with the identity of the actor."

Greenwald's specific comments referred to the discriminatory practices that target Muslims in America, but his point also applies to the way in which the term "terrorist" has been used as a political weapon against groups that may challenge and/or resist the policies and practices of corporations that devastate the environment.

Terrorism enhancement convictions

A central tenet of the Green Scare has been the pursuit of terrorism enhancement sentences against environmental and animal rights activists who commit property crimes. As documented in *If a Tree Falls*, Daniel McGowan participated as a lookout for one arson, and as a fully engaged participant in a second attack. For these crimes in which no person was

physically harmed, he faced a sentence of 300+ years in a maximum security prison. In these cases prosecutors seek what is called a terrorism enhancement conviction. If convicted, defendants are locked in maximum security Communications Management Units. In these prisons there is no sunlight, no fresh air, no activities and extremely limited communication with the outside world.

McGowan, and other Earth Liberation Front members, were brought down by former member-turned-informer Jacob Ferguson, the main instigator in the arsons and (as evidence in the film points out) most likely the first perpetrator of an ELF arson attack. At the time of his work as a snitch gathering information for the FBI, Jules Boykoff reports in *Beyond Bullets*, he was a full-fledged heroin addict and "receiving between \$50,000 and \$100,00 for his role as a cooperative witness." Although confessing to planning and committing numerous arsons across the Pacific Northwest, Ferguson was never charged for any crime. Later, after his role as an informer was over, he was eventually picked up in April on drug dealing charges.

These tactics of harassment, intimidation, infiltration and surveillance have increased in the supposedly heightened security of a post-9/11 America. Most of the targets are social justice, environmental, animal rights, civil liberties, religious anti-war, and anti-corporate activists. As American citizens we should be allowed to freely gather to organize, criticize and protest what we see as harmful practices and policies. These civil liberties are under assault by law enforcement practices that harken back to the Red Scare paranoia of the McCarthy era and the legal abuses of the FBI's COINTELPRO. All of us need to consider what this means for our democratic nation, and what the implications are when law enforcement is used as a political tool.



ELF fire at Superior Lumber.

Help wanted: protest coverage

"The problem is not civil disobedience. The problem is civil obedience."

—Howard Zinn

North of Center is seeking motivated journalist-writer-activists to cover growing stories of the American rebellion against non-responsive leaders.

There is much to cover. Nationally, as the paper goes to press between 500 and 3000 activists have been encamped for over a week at a public park nearby New York City's financial district. Modeled on the nonviolent democratic uprisings that took hold in the Middle East, the Wall Street occupation continues to grow despite draconian police tactics (arrests for using sidewalk chalk, pepper-spraying of peaceful demonstrators, and the use of giant orange nets to make mass, indiscriminate arrests) and a nearly complete media blackout by large media outlets. (This city's local paper, the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, has devoted a single 200-word article to the growing demonstrations.)

Local film happenings

Foreign Film at the Kentucky Theatre

Sqecial Media's relaunch of the Rosa Goddard International Film Festival continues with two final screenings. On Wednesday, September 28, the Kentucky Theatre will host a screening of Wim Wenders' *Wings of Desire*. This 1987 classic starring Bruno Ganz and Peter Falk was beautifully shot by Henri Alekan, the same cinematographer who photographed Jean Cocteau's *Beauty and the Beast*. The festival will close on Wednesday, October 5 with *Fantastic Planet*, a psychedelic animated classic which took home a special jury prize at Cannes in 1973. All films in the series are shown in 35 mm in their original language with English subtitles. Screenings start at 7:15 PM, are \$4, and are preceded by prize drawings for DVDs and posters. For more information on the Rosa Goddard International Film Festival, please visit sqecial.com.

Horror Classics at the Kentucky Theatre

In preparation for Halloween, the Kentucky Theatre will screen horror classics on Thursdays and Fridays throughout the month of October. Week one will host John Carpenter's *The Thing* (1982), week two will screen *Jaws* (1975), week three will show *An American Werewolf in London* (1981), and week four will close with *Night of the Living Dead* (1968). Thursday night screenings will be shown at 9:40 PM and repeated at midnight on the following Friday. For more information on this series, as well as all films at the historic theater, please visit kentuckytheater.com.

Locally, Eastern Kentucky activists have led the way in resisting the destruction of their homes and communities for cheap profits by out-of-state coal companies. River-keepers have resisted the plundering and destruction of the Kentucky River watershed. Kentuckians for the Commonwealth have been campaigning for re-enfranchisement of felons.

As the current conditions deteriorate and our public leaders--global, national, regional and local--are uncovered as frauds whose interests lie with the already-rich and well-off, we here at *NoC* are guessing that dissent will increase. We would like somebody to immerse themselves in movements. Coverage should reflect the Howard Zinn truism that one can't be neutral on a moving train. *NoC* sees this reporting as vital in both informing and demonstrating to Lexington citizens that alternatives and outlets for engagement do exist.

Interested? Contact Danny Mayer at Mayer.Danny@gmail.com.

SEPTEMBER 28, 2011

Unscathed in the suicide seats

But ROCK falls to Hard Knox

By Sunny Montgomery

Over Labor Day weekend, I attended the Rollergirls of Central Kentucky's (ROCK) second to last bout of the season where they faced off against Knoxville's Hard Knox Rollergirls (HKRG.) I arrived early, ordered a beer and wandered through the arena. I stopped and chatted with Jack King, devout follower and official photographer of ROCK. "I'm trying to find the perfect seat," I told him. Jack raised his eyebrows. "Well that's suicide seating, of course," he said.

Suicide seating is the area around the edge of the track. Attendees are allowed to sit cross-legged there as long as they're 18 years or older since skaters could easily skid off the track and into their lap. The straightaway is the safest place to sit on the track. The turn is more dangerous, Jack explained. That's where the rollergirls would likely try to knock one another out of bounds. I was apprehensive. Nonetheless, I carried my notebook and beer to the track's edge where I settled myself in the center of the turn. It was intimidating sitting so close to the action. I could have reached out and touched the referees' legs. I asked Jack if he'd ever seen a fan actually injured in suicide seating.

"No," he said, but once he'd witnessed two fans get into a fist fight after a rollergirl lost control and crashed into them. I glanced around the arena. It was an hour before the bout was to begin, but already the crowd was raucous. I wasn't used to seeing so many away fans at ROCK's home bouts. They waved banners on the sidelines and shouted over ROCK's hype-man, Darstrosity, when he attempted to lead the crowd in cheers.

HKRG's spirited fans were a true reflection of the team they supported. I watched the girls, dressed in green and black, as they lined up around



ROCK and Hard Knox roll past author in suicide seating.

the track and awaited introductions. They pumped their fists in the air and did pelvic thrusts on the sideline. One girl threw herself onto one knee and emphatically played air guitar. Another had her face ghoulishly decorated with black, white and green paint. She wore tight ripped jeans tucked into her tall striped socks. Her name was Gobllynn. I'd been warned to keep my eye on her.

HKRG may be a slightly more experienced team. However, their vigorous athleticism is similar to ROCK's. Bouts between teams that share similar styles of play, I've learned, is a sure-fire recipe for intense, exciting combat. Considering this, I glanced around the arena once more, hoping a familiar face in the stands might wave me over.

The bout began minutes past seven. ROCK's Ragdoll Ruby became the first lead jammer, followed by Elle Slay who took the first lead: 17 to 13. And then, HKRG sent Gobllynn in to jam.

Now, I make no secret of my bias. I always root for ROCK to win. But I have to admit that Knoxville's rollergirls were thrilling to watch. The show-boating! The fancy footwork! Gobllynn truly was a terror. She was so nimble and so fast that she appeared to be wearing tennis shoes instead of roller-skates as she sprinted around the track.

Midway through the first half, HKRG stepped up their game with scary precision and began to rack up the points.

Their strategy was to dismantle ROCK's pack each time their jammer

made a lap. For example, ROCK would set up a wall of four skaters to prevent HKRG's jammer from passing through. In turn, Hard Knox's blockers would split that wall into two two-girl walls. Then they would successfully split those pairs, allowing their jammer to easily maneuver through the pack. It was a graceful, well-choreographed performance.

At halftime the HKRG were up by 70 points. And ultimately, they won the bout: 250 to 46.

I wanted to be upset but I couldn't. I had survived my first suicide seat unscathed.

ROCK's final bout is Saturday, October 1 at Heritage Hall. Doors open at 6 PM. Bout begins at 7.

Ricky G (cont.)

continued from page 3

bivouac, and we were not disappointed. A number of factors bolstered our decision: 1) according to our outdated but cherished barge maps, the mouth of Steamboat Hollow Creek was the site of an early 19th century steamboat construction yard; 2) the hollow represented the midway point in our journey, and while we endeavored on a two-night paddle, we'd agreed to save the second night for womping around our take-out point at Elkhorn Creek; and 3) our cheat-sheet (read Google Earth) revealed a long, remote, and uninhabited river bottom stretching downstream for about one nautical mile. Uninhabited and remote are two important earmarks for intrepid camping. Hemmed between the river and high bluffs, the open bottomland, which we discovered to be thick with knee-high soybeans, allowed us to dial back our usual stealth, build a fire should we so desire, and speak in voices indicative of our still lock-jubilant condition.

The approach to the soybean field was something less than ideal. High water the preceding week had caked the small mouth with several inches of fine silt (most likely the tragic and criminal residue of Eastern Kentucky mountaintop removal), and once the boats were unloaded and the mud bested, a steep bank followed by a 60 or 70 yard gauntlet of waist-high nettles and three strands of barbed wire stood between us and our desired resting place on the edge of the field.

Per usual, we made short work of it, though, with minimal bitching, everyone of the mind that nettled legs was an acceptable price to pay for unfettered access to someone else's slice of paradise. And so, by 7:30, a camp appeared where hitherto there had been none. As expected, no evidence remained of any antebellum boat-building

operation, this earlier industriousness superseded by the toiling of plow, harrow, and planter. At the far end of the field, a low-slung barn hugged the cliff, the only visible sign (other than the mechanically spaced rows of soybeans) of human intervention.

Dinner, womp, and visitation

For dinner that evening, Troy had prepared a special entrée: four-squash red sauce with penne seasoned with a pound of buffalo sausage I'd procured from Caldwell Farms back at my surrogate home in Murfreesboro, TN. Lyle sliced in three or four large red carmens and a handful of button mushrooms for good measure. A long, uninterrupted silence befell us as we heaped our tins, nestled down in camp chairs, and laid our shoulders into the labor of nourishment.

After several helpings and several rounds of Hendricks gin-shots, courtesy Gary "The Family" Stone, we turned naturally to night-womping. The new-moon darkness was complete; only the twilight illuminated the gathering mist. The barn, visible on our arrival, now lay hidden somewhere beyond the thickening wall of night, and amid the tight rows of soybeans, a deer path cut the only discernible avenue through the beckoning obscurity. We advanced on the mist, the mist retreating in step, and crossed the length of field as if moving inside a small bubble surrounded at arm's length by a swirling, vaporish opacity.

Twenty minutes into our amble, I noticed my soft footfalls in the sandy soil were unaccompanied. I was suddenly and eerily alone in the endless fog-bank. Or at least momentarily alone. In the distance, what I judged to be no more than twenty feet (the extent of my nearsighted squinting through heavy condensation), a figure rose and stood dark against the backdrop of graying white. My first

thought was that Troy or Danny or Josh had flanked me, double-time, and now doubled back either to give me the shit-scaries or scrounge one of the Stella pounders stuffed in my pajama pockets. I stopped and called out. "Hey, how'd you round me so fast?" No response. I took a few steps forward, keening my eyes. To my surging unease, the figure, now fully relieved in black, was not one of our company I recognized.

"Hullo...?" I more hesitantly asked than genuinely offered.

"Come with me, young man." The voice was seasoned with directive. The little voice in my head said "turn and bolt," but for some inexplicable reason, my feet and legs fell deaf. A tremble scoured my backbone.

Continued next issue. Visit the online version of this article to watch the slack-water paddlers enter Lock 4.



Buffalo Trace Distillery from Lock 4.

Help wanted: sports writers and photographers

North of Center is looking for interested sports writers and photographers to provide regular coverage and reports on the town's diverse sports scenes. We are actively interested in writers to cover bike polo and disc golf.

Other sports coverage options include Lexington Bocce League, Woodland Park skateboarding, Latino baseball at Coolavin, Croquet on Clay, Creacy kickball games, Castlewood ping pong matches, alley cat races, soapbox derbies, or any other sports event

you can convince us needs coverage.

We are interested in any ideas potential writers may have and are always on the lookout for celebrating the public sporting use of our public parks and lands. We are not seeking coverage of UK sports or anything to do with cornhole.

The paper has a rich tradition of solid local sports coverage from a variety of voices. Past coverage can be found archived on our web page's sports section.

Opinion

Human Rights?

By Billie Mallory

“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing and medical care, necessary social services and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Though these human rights laws were drafted and adopted by many world leaders of the United Nations, they are not only applicable to Third World and war-ravaged countries. They apply as well to our citizens of Lexington who may be experiencing homelessness or abject poverty, suffering from mental illness or chronic substance abuse, or cannot afford the basic necessities of life. Some—through no fault of their own except unemployment, divorce, domestic violence or other unexpected tragedy—may inadvertently lose their means of support and stable housing. Thus they become trapped in a downward spiral and are forced to living in a shelter, from their car or eventually to the streets.

Maybe you think you know the picture of homelessness from Phoenix Park, the Hope Center or the panhandling bum on the street, but the new

“face of homelessness” includes the elderly, runaway teens, returning war veterans and families with children. Shall we put them all away or lock them up? Our shelters are overflowing, our social service programs cut to the bare minimum and we have even more strain on our limited resources by “dumping” from other counties/cities. Are we going to criminalize poverty by making it a public nuisance?

Writing in September of this year, longtime homeless advocate Paul Boden has noted the regressive tactics taken by many communities. “Many cities, large and small,” he observed, “have reacted to the upsurge of those living on the streets with restrictions and public nuisance ordinances to criminalize public activities, such as panhandling, eating or sleeping in public parks or other public spaces. Whether intentional or not, these laws are disenfranchising tens of thousands homeless people.”

Boden, who at the age of 16 also experienced what it was like to be homeless after the death of his mother left him with nowhere to sleep, paints a stark picture of how cities have chosen to engage these communities. “Instead of increasing treatment, social services and affordable housing options, we are shutting down

such programs and building costly jails and prisons to house our mentally ill, addicted and poverty stricken people to get them out of sight. We deal with this public shame by trying to hide it rather than deal with it with effective treatment and programming, affordable housing options and social service support networks.”

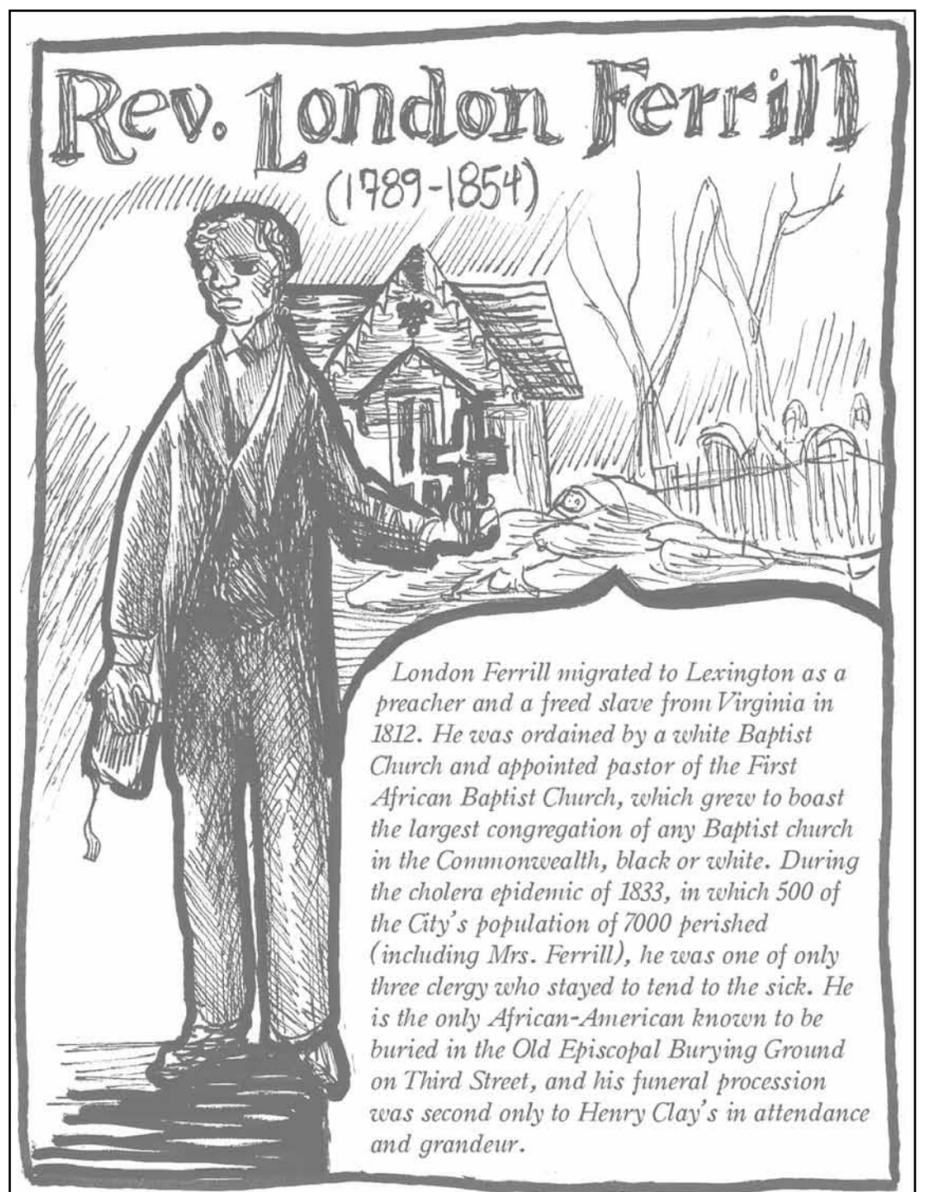
Many of the issues Boden address are dramatically and bravely shared through personal stories of individuals that have experienced homelessness in the newly revised, multimedia play, “Please Don’t Call Me Homeless, I Don’t Call You Homed,” written and performed by the Street

Voice Players and Catholic Action Center on October 11, 7:30 PM at the Kentucky Theatre (free to the public). This inspiring play has traveled throughout the state to Richmond, Georgetown, Frankfort and many other places. It is again being offered in Lexington to raise awareness of the many issues that accompany homelessness and to promote the upcoming Stand Down—Homeless Connection Resource Fair on October 20. The fair runs from 9-2 PM at Central Christian Church.

Contact Billie Mallory at 859-285-5211 for information on either event.

Lexington Public

Stacey Earley



Letters to the editor

Shit floats

Anglophone university presidents are a curious lot—if you get one who is not a financial or sexual criminal, you are beating the odds.

Allan Gilbert, the late, unlamented “President” of the University of Manchester and the sort of market fundamentalist you are talking about (“Lee Todd was an idiot,” August 24), managed to screw up two large universities on different continents one after the other. His creature, the completely market-driven Melbourne University Private, nearly bankrupted the University of Melbourne, and prompted a parliamentary enquiry (from the state of Victoria). Moving to the new University of Manchester as “President” he screwed that thoroughly too, to the point that a supposed elite university has a student satisfaction rating in the bottom half of UK universities. He at least had the decency to drop dead a month after retiring, though, thereby saving the British academic pension fund (USS), which is heavily skewed towards rewarding fat cats who clawed preposterous salaries in their last few years, very large sums.

The new University of Manchester had been formed when the old one swallowed a technical university (UMIST) whose administration had absolutely no sense of honesty or decency, and would say and do anything to get commercial sponsorship even when the sponsor was very dodgy indeed. At one point there were even jokes about “The Curse of UMIST,” when a string of honorary grads were shortly thereafter investigated by the Serious Fraud Squad, and went to gaol. Gilbert was an appropriate choice for such an institution.

Gilbert’s predecessor at the old University of Manchester, who is alas still with us as the head of USS, was “Sir” Martin Harris, known for some years after his appointment as “the man who put the ‘vice’ into Vice-Chancellor.” He had been picked up by the police for kerb-crawling soon after his appointment, but managed to wriggle out of charges, thanks to

a well-remunerated doctor testifying he was a suicide risk, and friends in high places who forced the Crown Prosecution Service to claim his prosecution would not be in the public interest. The cops were not happy: a decade later, when the authorities at UMIST tried to get the police to stop soliciting whores and kerb-crawling johns in the 200 yards between UMIST and the main train station, they were told “the last time we tried to do anything about this sort of thing, we caught a vice-chancellor.”

Eurohypersceptic,
Smirking Chimp blog

Where’s Charles Young Center?

So that’s all about the Charles Young Center (“Gray’s Mean Hyzer,” July 13)?

A lot of nice info and well-worded regarding Frisbee golf. However not much difference between “other capital projects.” And the amount of space the writer gave to Charles Young Center, “the likewise de-funded handicap entrance for senior citizens,” gets only a little mention...hmmm.

NAM Oshun, online

Author responds:

Hey—I can’t cover everything. The article focused on the disc golf courses for a number of reasons:

(1) That’s what Jim Gray used as a whipping-boy project to muscle through his budget. The press statements issued in his name made big play out of the disc golf courses and make no mention of the Charles Young Center. The article responded to the rhetoric put out by the Mayor’s office and parroted by most media outlets, including the *Lexington Herald-Leader* and *Barefoot and Progressive*.

(2) This paper has a history of actively supporting those sports played by

people in the community, and it actively supports activities that make use of public space. This does apply to disc golf but does not apply to the Charles Young Center.

(3) It seems clear that Jim Gray’s austerity budget is intended to free up money for the sport known as UK college basketball—a sport, it should be pointed out, to which very few in the community have access. (When’s the last time you played a pick-up game in Rupp?) The article pointed out the difference in funding priorities when it comes to sports that the community must pay to watch and those the community can freely access and play ourselves.

(4) The East End, where the Charles Young Center sits, has a number of advocates calling for its “revival,” which includes a bank-sponsored East End Farmer’s Market. I would think that, since *North of Center* is the only free paper distributed in the area, those advocates would be aware of us and make the case for Charles Young themselves. As it is, all I have experienced are a group of advocates who seem unwilling to put pressure on the very mechanisms and people who are selling them down the river with big city “world-class” projects. That might not be true. Maybe the advocates are thinking beyond their East End projects. Maybe you or somebody else could write an article on Charles Young that might prove me wrong. I know I’d love to see it.

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

Editor & Publisher
Danny Mayer

Features
Beth Connors-Manke

Film & Media
Lucy Jones

Sports
Troy Lyle

Music
Buck Edwards

Design
Ghostnote Editorial

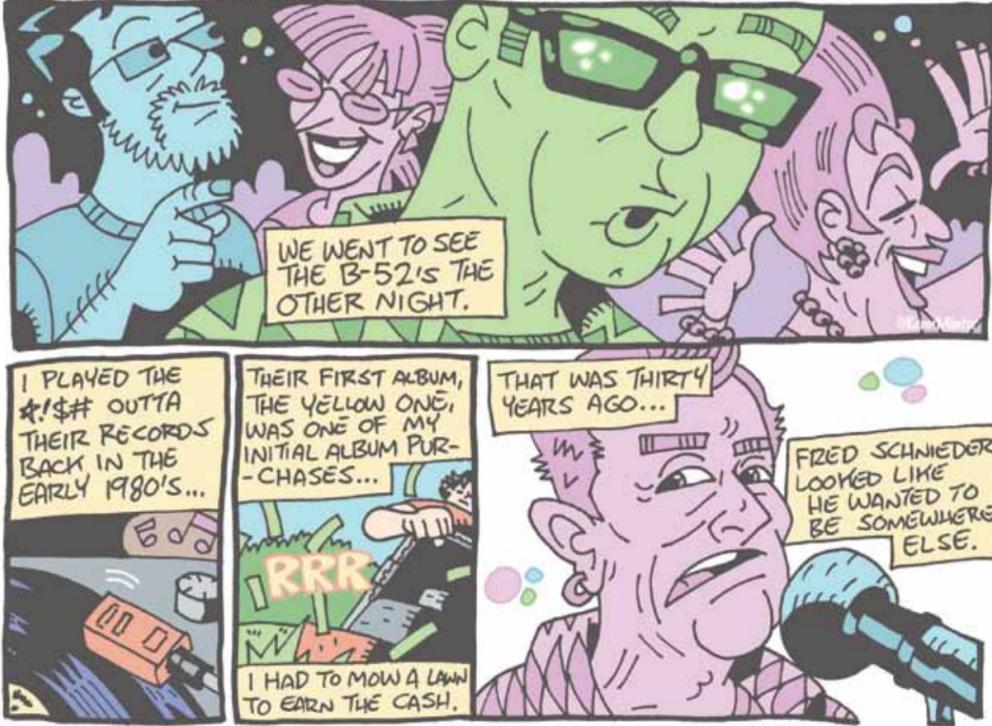
Illustrations
Noah Adler

Contributors
Michael Benton
Andrew Battista
Dylan Blount
Wes Houpp
Kenn Minter
Captain Commanokers
Sunny Montgomery

Address correspondence, including advertising inquiries and letters to the editor, to noceditors@yahoo.com.

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I'm not from here by Kenn Minter



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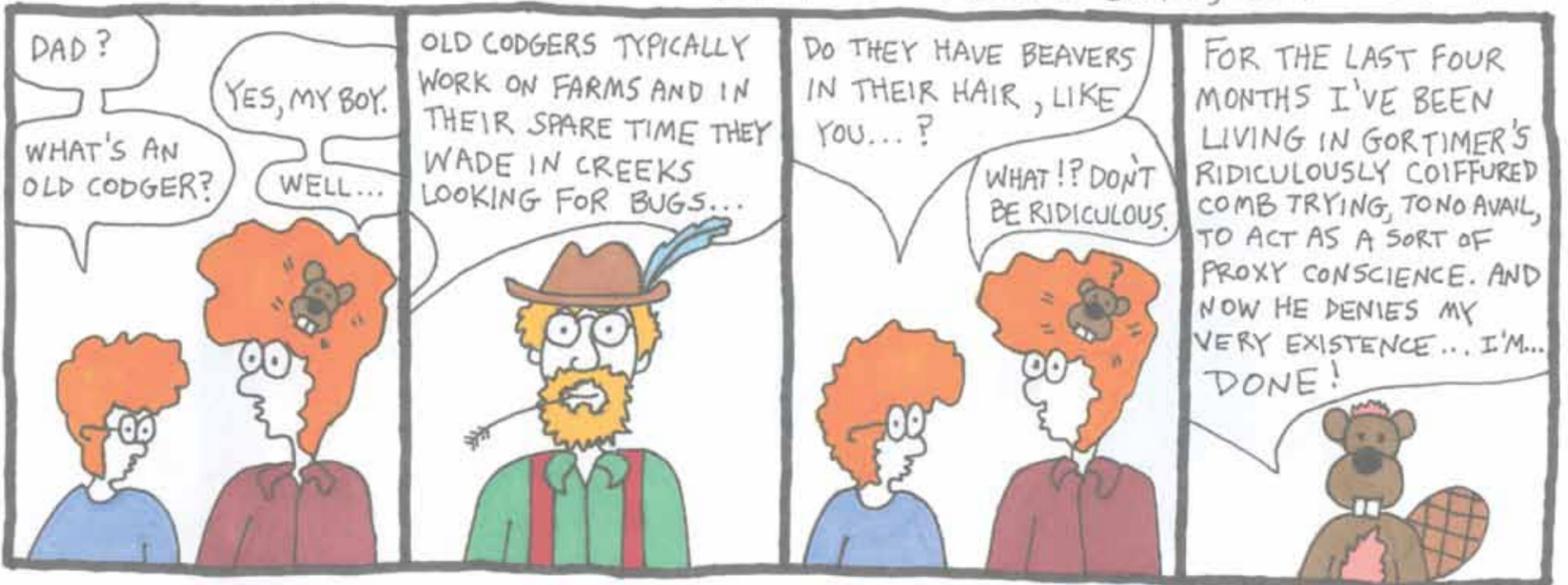
Save the Date
 Tuesday, November 1
 North of Center
 fundraiser

A celebration of

- public radio
- public watersheds
- public music-making
- Bums, fat-cats and

YOU are invited.

GENERAL DALLAS: THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG GORT, JR. BY: WESTERN



RE:PLAY

Oct. 1- Free Gallery Talk, 1p: An open discussion on appropriation, context, meaning, and technique with local video artists showing in *Re:Play*. Curated by Lexington Film League, *Re:Play* explores the conceptual and technical breadth of contemporary video artists working with found media as source material.

Oct. 13- Free Film Screening, 7:30p: A radical hybrid of spy, sci-fi, Western, and even horror genres, Craig Baldwin's *Mock Up On Mu* cobblestones together a feature-length "collage-narrative" based on (mostly) true stories of California's post-War sub-cultures of rocket pioneers, alternative religions, and Beat lifestyles.



LAL @ Loudoun House: 209 Castlewood Drive, Lexington, KY 40505
 lexingtonartleague.org | 859.254.7024 | Exhibition now - Oct. 16, 2011

Image above: *Mock Up on Mu* by Craig Baldwin | All Lexington Art League programs are made possible through the generous support of LexArts. LexArts allocation of \$62,000 represents the largest single donation to the operations of the Lexington Art League. The Kentucky Arts Council, a state arts agency, supports the Lexington Art League with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

