

# Bloomberg’s millions

## The NoC pitch

*FUC Mayor Jim Gray has called on area residents to offer their ideas for the Mayor’s Challenge, a competition funded by the Bull Connor billionaire mayor of Wall Street, Michael Bloomberg, to generate innovative and bold local solutions to national problems. Grand prize winning bold idea will receive \$5 million, while four less-bold runners-up will each receive \$1 million. Successful ideas will be able to be replicated in other cities. Below is the NoC pitch.*

Our Bloomberg’s Millions idea leverages our public parks as potential sites of neighborhood and regional commerce and contact. Specifically, we will utilize Bloomberg money to create infrastructure and pay 3-years of operating costs to establish a series of farm/markets upon county park grounds.

The Park Market idea is animated by two chief, mass-producible, goals. First, it prioritizes public entry into the local food market as a good that ensures county residents have needed access to affordable sustenance. Second, it helps stimulate the private local agricultural sector by increasing the number, location and types of markets that consumers might access, sets a market floor for local agricultural products, and demonstrates an unequivocal public support

necessary to spur private development.

Our local model for Park Market development is grounded in our county’s historical connections to the Kentucky River, whose waters have wetted our agricultural fields, transported our families and products hither and yon, and provided space for fellowship and congregation amongst a diverse population on the move. Drawing upon the figure of the lock-master—public servants who lived onsite at the river in simply constructed, architecturally gorgeous, government homes; operated the locks that allowed Eastern Kentucky resources passage into a regional and world market; and cared for the grounds around the locks—our winning idea is organized around the hiring of two “park-masters,” who will live on-site at two different county parks.

The park-master’s primary job will be to farm a specified amount of park land for sale as Fayette-brand products at county-organized markets. Additional seasonal duties might include organizing and doing clean-ups of the grounds, managing part-time and donated labor, providing public direction/ideas for wise use of the area they oversee, and otherwise operating as an unofficial advocate/liaison for the park. Here in Lexington, we imagine ideal candidates coming out



*Picadome and Douglass Parks could anchor a revitalized park system.*

of UK’s sustainable agriculture program, with part-time paid and volunteer labor provided by groups ranging from our newly built Locust Trace Agricultural High School students to neighborhood associations and domestic violence programs.

Park-masters will be supported by two commercial over-seers, whose job it will be to develop and work markets to hawk park products at three to four park sites. Subordinate and related duties

will include market outreach—to grow markets by attracting private producers of local goods to vend alongside them—occasional aid to the park-master, and unofficial advocate/liaison for the park system.

To flesh out these ideas, we offer a breakdown for how we would spend the \$5 million of Bloomberg money in Lexington to make Park Markets

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# Shadow economies

## Homegrown labor trafficking

**By Beth Connors-Manke**

*In part one of this series, Beth discussed sex trafficking, especially in the imagination of middle class American culture. Here, she turns her attention to forced labor.*

On May 25, Marco Antonio Flores-Benitez pleaded guilty to conspiracy to sex trafficking by force, fraud, or coercion. This is the first conviction for human trafficking in Kentucky, and not surprisingly it was for the sex side of human trafficking and related to illegal immigration. Flores-Benitez and three others orchestrated a commercial sex delivery service that shuttled women between Lexington and Louisville and then stretched further to Indiana, Ohio, and Tennessee. According to the March 2 indictment, two of the four defendants had been previously deported; the other two had entered the U.S. illegally.

While burgeoning popular understandings of human trafficking often associate it with commercial sex and illegal immigration, it may be more useful to see it through an economics and labor lens: this is a shadow economy that’s has been growing, and continues to grow, amidst the humdrum of our daily lives.

According to the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) 2012 “Global Estimate of Forced Labour,” 90 percent of forced labour takes place in the private economy (rather than imposed by a state). Of the exploitation in the private economy, 68 percent occurs in commercial enterprises such as agriculture, construction, domestic work, and manufacturing; 22 percent is forced sex work.

Human trafficking, which fits under the ILO’s definition of forced labor, is notoriously hard to quantify, as so much depends on the definition one uses and on the difficulty of measuring activity that happens in the shadows. Other measurements suggest trafficking in sex is more common—or at least

easier to count, since in some places it may receive more public attention and legal prosecution.

However, when the U.S. State Department details the variations on trafficking in persons, there are more categories for labor trafficking: forced labor, bonded labor, debt bondage among migrant laborers, involuntary domestic servitude, forced child labor, and child soldiers. In other words, there are many methods for trapping a person in a life of enslaved work. While immigrants are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, people can be—and are—trafficked in their own countries, including the U.S.

### Labor, not just sex

While the definition of human trafficking is grounded in forced work, the law distinguishes commercial sex as labor from other types of involuntary servitude. Federally, human trafficking is defined as “sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age” or “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.”

Why the federal law (and now common understanding) has taken that particular shape is an interesting question. Why is human trafficking first defined as sex trafficking and then broadened to other forced labor? Why the titillating and then the mundane?

Answer: economics.

The economics of the issue is more discernable in some state-level laws against trafficking. While Kentucky law considers any human trafficking a class C felony, with a higher degree if the victim

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**By Andrew Battista**

This week is the 67th anniversary of the first nuclear bomb attack in human history. On August 6, 1945, a U.S. Air Force pilot named Paul Tibbets flew a plane nicknamed Enola Gay over Hiroshima, Japan and dropped an atomic bomb that instantly killed about 80,000 people, almost all of them civilians. They were burned alive by a fireball estimated to be 1200 feet in diameter, with a temperature as hot as 7200 °F at its core. In the subsequent months, many more people suffered a slow death, either because of burn injuries or because of the lingering damage caused by radiation exposure. A retrospective report by the U.S. Department of Energy in the 1960s guessed that within five years, over 200,000 people had died from the Hiroshima bomb. Three days after the attack, another 70,000 people would be killed when the U.S. dropped a second nuclear weapon on Nagasaki. The casualties from that attack would also eventually surpass 200,000.

I don’t intend to add to the historical discussion about whether or not the United States should have used atomic weapons to end World War II. Instead, this article is a reflection of how little we remember the atomic bombs today, and how much they reveal about our nation’s foreign policy. The same logic that led the United States to deploy the atomic bombs—the belief that American lives are more valuable than the lives of people from other countries—undergirds our nation’s current global imperial program. Since the middle of George W. Bush’s presidency, the United States has developed a fleet of unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones as they are often called, that are designed to assassinate people without putting the lives of U.S. soldiers on the line. These drones, controlled remotely by ground command forces, are an exercise in power that parallels many of the same problems of the 1946 atomic bombs. The United States entertains the fantasy that

it can make unilateral decisions about who lives and dies, all the while waging clean wars in which American lives are preserved and “the bad guys only” are surgically removed from existence.

The fantasy of American exceptionalism notwithstanding, the very use of these weapon technologies by the United States suggests that they can in turn be deployed against us. Just as the threat of nuclear attack in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki became the basis of the Cold War, so too do drone aircrafts open new possibilities for retaliation. Yet many citizens give the President a pass, failing to question how U.S. drone attacks violate international law and create a double standard. The United States’ destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki should inform our thinking about how the United States wields military power today. I believe that making a connection between the atom bombs and drones can help us explore our responsibilities as citizens in a representative democracy.

### Thinking about the atomic bombs

On Monday morning, August 6, 2012, the Hiroshima community will pause for one minute of silence, a yearly ritual that brings the horror of Japan’s past destruction into focus. Later in the day, Kazumi Matsui, Mayor of Hiroshima, will ascend to the podium at the annual Hiroshima Memorial Peace Ceremony and read a Peace Declaration, a formal renunciation of nuclear weapons that has been the centerpiece of the ceremony since 1947 (with the exception of one year, 1950). Last August, Matsui spoke on behalf of the hibakusha, the survivors of the bombings, and declared a mutual commitment to pursue forgiveness, world peace, and the eradication of nuclear weapons. Matsui also chided the United States for its “subcritical nuclear testing and related experiments,” which continue to undermine his community’s work for world peace.

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# Don't stop believing

## Gem City tumbles ROCK 199-134

By Sunny Montgomery

An hour before the bout and already a long line of fans were assembled at the arena entrance in anticipation of the Rollergirls' of Central Kentucky's (ROCK) home bout against the Gem City Rollergirls (GCRG) of Dayton, Ohio, the same Gem City who ROCK beat in 2007 for their very first victory.

Tonight was the team's annual salute to the armed forces. Service members received door discounts and rollergirls challenging them to push-up competitions. In the far corner, the 108th Army Band from Concord, North Carolina—dressed in fatigues and equipped with keyboards, saxophones, and guitars—played a loud and soulful rendition of "My Girl."

I took a seat at the track's edge as ROCK began their warm-ups and the Army Band began its cover of the infamous "Tequila." I sipped beer and watched the rollergirls dance-skate their way around the track. The team shim-mied their shoulders and twirled in circles. One skater took her teammate by the wrists, whipped her forward, and sent her into a risky-business knee slide across the track.

My friend Vincent entered the arena, his first roller derby. I invited him to sit next to me.

### Good advice

I think it is easy for newcomers to be intimidated by the roller derby. The sport is fast-paced with lots of action and, as announcer Bill Widener always jokes, the rule book is 3,000 pages long. My advice to Vincent was simple: keep your eye on the Jammer and just surren-der yourself to the spirit of the sport.

The whistle blew, signaling the bout's start. The pack was off. At the second whistle, the jammers rocketed forward like firecrackers. They bumped and shouldered their way though pack. GCRG's jammer pushed forward, was declared lead jammer then, almost instantly, called off the jam by tapping her wrists to her hips. Vincent gave me a quizzical look and I shrugged. Later, I learned, the strategy of calling off a jam early prevents the other team from scor-ing. With ROCK's Bitty Bast'rd on her heels, GCRG had decided not to risk it.

The bout remained anybody's game throughout the first half. At one point, GCRG was up by 45 points. Ten min-utes later the score was nearly tied. The



ROCK poses with members of the military and Pebbles. Photo by Jack King.

crowd was on the edge of its seat. Beside me, Vincent—suddenly a veteran of the sport—hollered instructions at the skaters. "Inside! Inside!" He screamed. The ref blew his whistle, signaling halftime.

"Good call," Vincent assured him.

The score remained close during the second half until GCRG encountered a series of power jams. A power jam occurs when one team's jammer is sent to the penalty box thus allowing the residual jammer to rack up points with slow-play. With ROCK's jammer in the box, GCRG was able to score a whopping 39 points in a single jam, but ROCK fans did not lose hope.

### The ROCK, the Wavee, the Journey

In fact, their excitement grew. I glanced around the arena. It was

easily the biggest turnout of the season. ROCK's hype-man, Darstrosity, led the audience in a rowdy cheer: Ooh R-O-C-K! ROCK! ROCK! ROCK! We did the wave. We screamed as loud as we could and when ROCK lost the bout 134 to 199, the fans remained undaunted.

After all, the final score is just one aspect of the roller derby. So what if you don't understand every foul called or every point scored? When the 108th Army Band strikes up a Journey cover and the girls of ROCK rush the center track to lead the already-boisterous crowd in an improvised sing-a-long of "Don't Stop Believing"—that is the spirit of the roller derby.

*ROCK's next home bout is August 11 at Heritage Hall. Doors open at 6. Bout begins at 7*



ROCK's Smokin' Okie shoulder-slams Gem City's Jammer. Photo by Jack King.

## Bloomberg's millions, cont.

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happen. We offer the numbers to highlight how we prioritize and integrate our park market idea with other county needs, and not necessarily as set-in-stone figures. The idea is to have both a northern and southern central market to operate year-round from a storefront, outlying smaller markets that (if there is neighborhood demand) have the potential to expand, and a revamped transportation service that uses the Park Markets to better knit the city together.

### Infrastructure (\$2 million)

Most of the infrastructure money will fund the development of two park-master/market locations, while the remaining amount will fund light-foot-print developments at parks throughout the county.

*Picadome Permaculture Park (\$725,000):* Transform the publicly funded 100+acre Picadome golf course into a permaculture park. Located where Broadway meets Waller Avenue, the Picadome plot connects much of south Lexington. The idea echoes Councilmember Jay McChord's vision to repurpose the course as a city park. As McChord notes, since water and paved carts are already in existence there, infrastructure costs will be minimal. Cart paths can easily

become walking and bike paths, and the water used to make Bermuda grass fairway-worthy can be used instead for agricultural watering of fruit and nut trees, berry bushes and annual vegetable production. While the park-master house may be nestled deep inside Picadome as an architectural feature, four commercial buildings will cluster on Broadway and feature a public bus stop that provides shade. Of the commercial buildings, our plan calls for the city to sell two in order to generate capital and stimulate local business in the area. The remaining publicly owned commercial fronts can house the commercial over-seers on the second and third floors, while at the same time provide first-floor indoor vending space to sell area products and any products produced at the park by park-masters.

*Douglass Park Market (\$675,000):* The second showcase park master/market site, Douglas Park sits along well-traveled Georgetown Street, mere blocks from the recently constructed Legacy Bike Trail. Money here will fund the construction of a park-master house/storage, and the purchase/renovation of commercial buildings located on Georgetown across the street from the park.

## BluegrassRapeCrisisCenter

The Bluegrass Rape Crisis Center offers 100% free and confidential support, information and counseling to survivors of sexual violence. The BRCC depends upon its volunteers to staff a 24 hour crisis line and to provide crisis counseling and medical advocacy services at our local hospitals.

**Visit [www.bluegrassrapecrisis.org](http://www.bluegrassrapecrisis.org) for more info and to download a volunteer application, or call 859-253-2615.**

*Other grow/market places (\$600,000):* This money is set aside for the creation of different types of growing fields and temporary stands for entry into smaller markets at other locations throughout the county.

### Transportation (\$1 million)

Investing in transportation has two key labor and commercial interests for our markets. First, providing public transportation to and from the markets provides a greater demographic of market-goers and park-goers—it potentially includes the entire city, not just car-drivers. Second, we see an as-yet-untapped market in local tourism, by which we mean the circulation of area residents throughout the city in search of unique low-cost activities they would otherwise find on vacation. Bus service can be the vehicle that spurs this sort of micro-local tourism.

Indeed, an important secondary goal of the park markets is to provide funds for the city to expand upon, and in some cases rethink, its transportation strategies. Currently in Lexington, the downtown area functions as a barrier for north/south movement through the city. Busses leave and disembark from the city's downtown station, which means that passengers are unable to pass through the city to reach their destinations. Instead, they must stop at the downtown station to locate their transfer busses, an altogether inefficient process.

Most of the transportation money will underwrite the creation of a north/south bus-line that connects Douglass and Picadome Parks. This line, a park line, will be the prime meridian for routing additional horizontal lines that will route into Douglass, Picadome and other county parks, as well as the creation of a circular New Circle route. In addition to providing residents public transport to a market and park area, these lines should also aim to better meet the needs of the growing suburban population who lack cars.

The remaining transportation money will be used to re-brand the Lexington "wagon spoke" road system as a bike-friendly "spoke-and-rim" system. The redevelopment of Picadome, whose land connects the western UK development nearby Broadway, the student-centric area around Red Mile Road and (via Addison and Pine Meadows Parks) the diverse Cardinal Valley neighborhoods surrounding Versailles Road, will provide a great hub from which to develop the (currently broken) bike spoke system. In addition, Douglass Park's proximity to the Legacy Trail, along with its position as a backdoor gateway to the Leestown corridor, make it another important spoke in the city's bike system.

### Labor (\$1.5 million)

In addition to creating infrastructure and transportation, Bloomberg's money will pay labor costs on the Park Market developments for three years. This will allow residents and leaders the time needed to analyze and tweak the Park Market idea without having to succumb to market pressures. Our projected labor costs break down as the following:

*Park-masters:* \$375,000 inclusive of carrying costs.  
*Commercial overseers:* \$375,000, inclusive of carrying costs.  
*Part-time labor:* \$750,000.

### Outreach, programming, advertising (\$500,000)

In addition to transportation funds, a small amount of Bloomberg money will underwrite park activities that will have the byproduct effect of attracting potential customers to the market stores. These might include music entertainment and mini-festivals, disc-golf or basketball tournament support, the advertising of market days, partnerships with social, agriculture, neighborhood and arts groups, etc. etc.

## Tributary diversions

### The lower Red River

By Wesley Houp

June. The early morning rain tapers off. My eggs, sunny-side-up, are runnier than I normally like. But I don't complain, masking the mucussy whites beneath a hard triangle of buttered toast. It all goes down to a good spot. Danny lords over his sausage melt and home fries ("covered and smothered"), glancing furtively out pane-glass at neutered clouds. Dad, our shuttle-master, sips his coffee and polishes off the last bite of biscuit from his modest breakfast set. Wafflehouse on the Winchester Road exit of I-75 is abuzz with grizzled truckers, rough couples trapped in leather with inexplicably demonic tattoos—in from a Friday night of god-knows-what, and harried moms with their wild-eyed, towheaded children suckling up more syrup than hotcake. People on the go, people on the edge, people on the run, all people on the fringe of town...and us: just more wide-eyed people on the fringe of what comes next.

But this morning we're aiming to plush that fringe with the green distance of the Mountain Parkway. We're Red River-bound. So we sop up yolk and thank the waitress while Dad pays the tab, a treat he erroneously predicts as our last "hot one" for a few days. At 72, with his river-ratting days mostly behind him, he's forgivably unfamiliar with our new-fangled, compact, culinary technologies. To echo Lexington crooner Chris Sullivan, we can make a three-course meal from a worn out shoe.

The car-jammed lot pulses with diesel fume. We police our canoes and gear, trundled this far with insufficient rope

yet still secured, layered, hull-side up in the bed of dad's primer-gray GMC. In minutes we're rolling down Winchester Road, and a half-hour later we're on the Mountain Parkway. To our north, the community of Indian Fields (or "Indian Old Fields") in Clark County marks the spot where, in 1752, a young Irish-born Indian trader (huckster?) named John Findley swapped goods with the natives at the village of "Eskippakithiki," located along a small creek near the old Warrior's path, the much-used north-south thoroughfare running from the mouth of the Scioto on the Ohio River (near present-day Portsmouth, OH), through the famous gap in the Cumberlands, to Cherokee settlements in Georgia. Three years later, 1755, Findley would hawk his visions of Eden to a kind-natured but restless young woodsman born of the Quaker state and tempered on the Carolina frontier. These fireside divulgences fanned the flame of wanderlust and set Daniel Boone's course for the future: unflinchingly headfirst, farther into the wild, western interior.

A few miles more down the Parkway, we cross over an unassuming tributary of the Red River where Boone, Findley, John Stewart, James Mooney, Joseph Holder, and William Cooley made camp on June 7, 1770, 242 years ago—to the day. As Boone would later write, "On the seventh day of June following, we found ourselves on Red-River, where John Finley had formerly been trading with the Indians, and, from the top of an eminence, saw with pleasure the beautiful level of Kentucke." That night, Boone entertained the men



*"The lower section of the Red, according to paddling guru Bob Sehlinger, is incomparable to the upper and middle sections, which flow through the Red River Gorge, a National Natural Landmark with Wild and Scenic River designation." Photo by Wes Houp.*

with a rousing, laughter-filled reading of a personal favorite, Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels: "Saith that in the year 1770 I encamped on the Red River with five other men and we had with us for our amusement the History of Samuel Gulever's Travels where In he gave an account of his young Mistress Glomdelclerk carrying him on market day for a show to a town called Lulbegrud." According to R. E. Banta's history of the Ohio, this little volume "must have been highly prized indeed, since its owner was willing to allow it space in his pack which might otherwise have accommodated an equal bulk of powder to stand between him and

starvation in the wilderness." Today, the creek of their enlightened encampment goes by "Lulbegrud," only a slight corruption of Swift's "Lorbrugrud."

We exit south on Route 82 at Powell Valley; a mile or so down the two-lane highway we cross over the Red. After scouting the south-side of the river, we turn back and reluctantly decide to put in on the northeastern end of the 82 bridge. It's a downhill carry, 100 yards or so, through kudzu and poison ivy, but we manage in three trips to move our boats and gear to water's edge where Dad snaps a parting photograph, the

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## Equine agricultural revolutions

### A moveable beast

By Northrupp Center  
Illustrations by Christopher Epling

*Editor's note: The author claims this article as part two of his contractually obligated three-part look at the 2010 World Equestrian Games. Our lawyers and spiritual advisors have advised us to agree with him; accordingly, we advise you to take heed of a note paper-clipped to the report submitted by our on-staff Fact-Bureau: "Northrupp's account swings chaotically between being very factual but little accurate, and very accurate but little factual. After four reads, we still can't say what is what."*

"WEG 2010, a trailer in the wilds of Jessamine County. It was just the whole package, man."

Gortimer pauses, inhales a spoonful of muted crimson broth chunked with plant and animal remains. "A sashimi appetizer followed by a butternut hoof soup. For the main course, a sea briscuit sitting on a bed of fluffy Weisenburger white grits, the whole thing glistening in a colt marrow demi-glaze. It even showed in the dessert, two scoops of salted spleen ice-cream could rival any Lundy concoction."

Next to him a pile of greens bleed a mint vinaigrette, sit mounded and weighed upon by shaved pecorino and tendon strips. "The place has since become one of the more upscale of the many Jessamine County knackerias. Trailer 430. Now *they* understand how to treat the whole horse, just absolute equine artists. The WEG was sort of their, you know, grand opening, or at least as much of a grand opening an underground black market eatery trading in horse flesh is able to have."

It is late February, 2012, unseasonably warm for the bluegrass, *good early mustard weather* I will be reminded several times throughout our talks at his formica table. Forty minutes into my trip here, on assignment to cover the Creatives for Common Sense campaign to elect the county's first ever public knacker, and I am already lost,

my sole orientation an undersized window framing a barren view of a pale green Kentucky River. In front of it sits Gortimer T. Spotts, bluegrass native and modern day tinker, patiently answering my questions.

"Just exquisite timing. All those hungry new equine consumers in town for two weeks—and I don't have to tell you how much the rich love horses. I mean, the Euros and the Japanese were naturally already cultured, but the new blood, the Sheikhs and the corn-fed American set, they really began to get a taste for it. I don't think anyone disputes that we were the horse-flesh eating capital of the world that fall. It was just..."

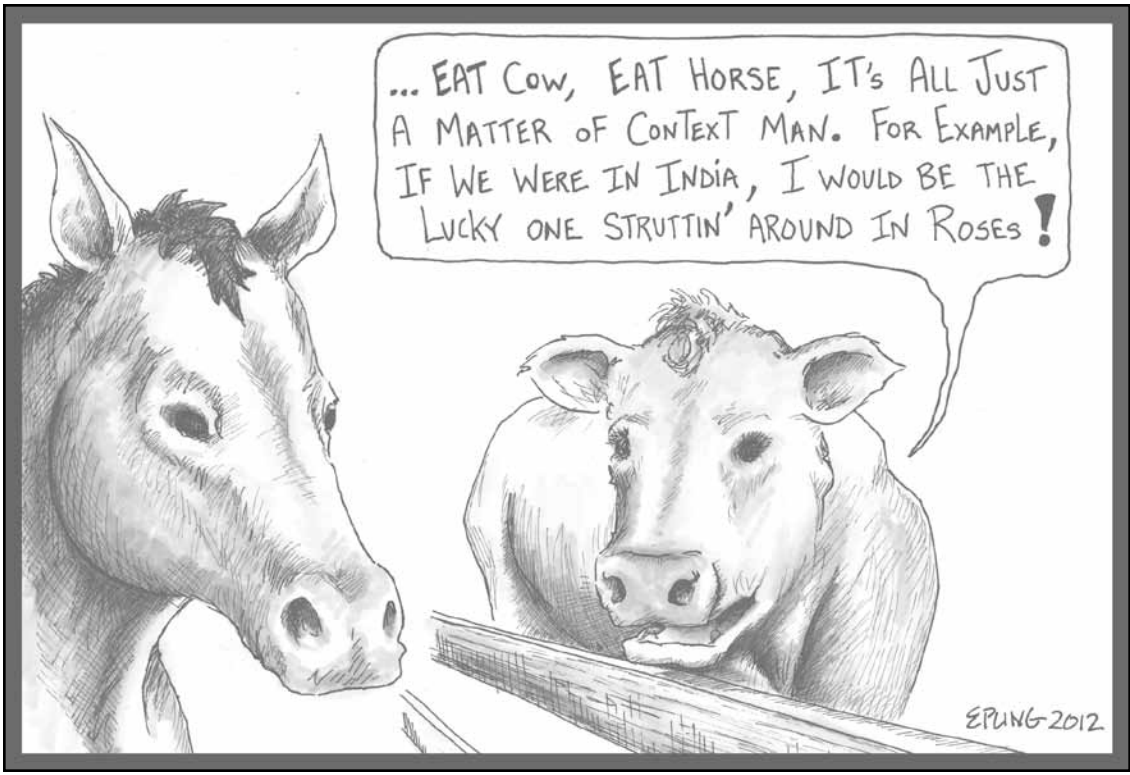
My bastard friend from Garrard County pauses momentarily. His eyes rise to the drop-down ceiling. His body relaxes. His spoon falls toward the soup, rests momentarily on a thick brothly bubble and, its glinty weight soon winning, submerges slowly into the thick gruel. Between us, the formica dulls the warming noonday light poking in from outside.

"Fucking beautiful."

#### Slaughtering Ferdinand

Ferdinand, sire of Nijinski (1967), grandsire to Northern Dancer (Nearctic, 1961), was produced in 1983 by Howard (breeder) and Elizabeth (owner) Keck for renowned Irish trainer Charlie Whittingham.

The six foot thoroughbred stallion was carved from valuable international stock. With 147 winners from 645 foals, Canadian grandfather Northern Dancer is widely regarded as last century's most profitable stud. Dead since 1990, the Canadian's influence nevertheless bled into equine history as late as the 2008



and 2009 Kentucky Derbies, whose inbred winning horses Big Brown and Mine that Bird claimed kinship on both sides. Father Nijinski, voted "Horse of the Millennium" by one British tabloid, won the 1970 English Triple Crown. Not to be outdone by his sire, Nijinski fathered 155 graded stakes winners, one son, Seattle Dancer, selling in 1985 for \$13.1 million--\$27.5 million in today's economy.

On the track, Ferdinand lived up to his pedigree. As a three-year-old, the male chestnut won the 1986 Kentucky Derby, toting Bill Shoemaker around for the popular jockey's final Derby win. A year later the Nijinski sire garnered Horse of the Year honors after a photo-finish victory over Alysheba (Alydar, 1984) to win the '87 Breeder's Cup. Though the following racing season brought disappointment, a losing series of rematches against Alysheba, Ferdinand left the track in 1988 as the fifth-leading money earner of all time, earning over \$3.7 million in under five years of racing life.

Off the track and into stud, however, Ferdinand was not so money. In 1988 he arrived for work at Claiborne

Farm, a 78-year old horse plantation located outside Paris, Kentucky, whose products, virile winning blood lines, were beginning to dominate the thoroughbred equine stock market.

Ferdi initially fetched \$30,000 for each live foal he could deliver. However, results from his "first few crops of runners," one retrospective would later observe, were disappointing. Stud fees fell, dames came calling less. The stallion was leaking value fast.

Five years after his arrival, 1994, Ferdinand was sold across the ocean to JS Company, which placed the 11-year old at the Japanese breeding farm Arrow Stud. The transaction was mutually beneficial. In Kentucky, the Derby winner's profitability was sunk. In Japan where American and European equine stocks were riding a bubble, Ferdinand, son of Nijinski, grandson to Northern Dancer, was no penny-stock. His first year in, the stud took 77 mares.

But image and blood only go so far. The champion runner was no breeder, in Hokkaido same as in Paris. By 2000, his last breeding for Arrow Stud, just 10

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# Health care's heavy numbers

## From Hillary-care to Obama-care

**By Cannon-Marie Green Milby**

On October 4, 1957, the U.S.S.R. sent Sputnik, the first rocket-powered satellite, into orbit. The U.S. had been beaten to the punch and now feared that it was no longer number one in technological advances. In the weeks that followed, Newsweek warned that, unless the West stepped up its scientific development, Russia would be ahead in almost all fields in a few years. The U.S. Office of Education also published a study showing that Russia outranked the U.S. in every aspect of scientific and technological education. American education underwent a makeover, and the 22 million children born in the U.S. between 1946 and 1951 found themselves with the weight of the free world on their shoulders.

Fifty-five years after Sputnik, the children from 1957 have grown up and now represent the largest aging population the American health care system has ever faced. The United States leads the world in health care spending, which takes place within a system that excludes people from basic health insurance coverage on the basis of pre-existing conditions. Though the reasons may be different from the early days of the Cold War, the need for advancing science—and strong science education—is as urgent today: we will not solve the health crisis in the U.S. without it. However, in 2009 American students ranked twenty-fifth in the world in science and math.

Innovative science won't fully address the looming health care crisis, though. We also need better public policy about health care.

In 2010, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) into law. The PPACA is federal health care reform legislation that increases health insurance coverage to all Americans, incentivizes preventive health care, and is expected to reduce the projected federal deficit over the next 11 years. The law is polarizing, though, and lawmakers on the state and federal levels are using partisan politics to intentionally derail health care reform. Outside the media attention on these fights, fundamental changes are occurring as a result of the PPACA and actions taken in the private sector. This tug of war creates massive uncertainty about what health care reform will look like and how we can make it happen. It also makes

## Trafficking, Cont.

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suffers physical injury, New York is a different case. The 2007 New York state law makes sex trafficking a class B felony with a maximum of 25 years imprisonment; labor trafficking comes in lower at a class D felony with a maximum sentence of seven years. As Stephanie Hepburn and Rita Simon note, “when examining the New York State Anti-Trafficking Law, it is initially difficult to comprehend how this law came to be as it illustrates an obvious disparity in both definition and penalties of sex versus labor traffickers.” At issue is the fact that the New York law makes it more difficult to prosecute labor traffickers than sex traffickers. In their research, Hepburn and Simon found that there was a rift in the anti-trafficking coalition along the sex-labor divide, with agricultural interests pushing for weaker penalties for labor trafficking.

One way to look at this is to see that labor trafficking is deemed less offensive because it benefits more people—middlemen who traffic in labor, the businesses that contract (knowingly or not) that indentured servitude, and clients who purchase goods and services from that business. What might this scenario look like?

# Welcome to New Orleans

After Hurricane Katrina, Million Express Manpower, Inc. from North

it easy to forget that American families and employers absolutely need access to more affordable health care.

The push for health care reform is not new. In 1993, the Clinton Administration proposed a health care reform plan that would achieve near universal coverage for Americans. Not unlike today, health care reform was a polarizing issue, despite the threat of rising health costs for American businesses in world markets, coverage systems that penalized and discriminated against people who needed health care, and the heavy burden on hospitals giving free medical care to the uninsured. The backlash against the plan was so severe that health care reform was swept under the rug, and as this happened, Congress repealed the Glass-Steagall Act, which deregulated banks and heavily contributed to the 2007–2012 global financial crisis. Millions of Americans lost their jobs and health insurance, and in 2007, 62 percent of all personal bankruptcies were medical.

## Numbers, not rhetoric

If one looks to the numbers, not the rhetoric, about health care needs and costs, it's clear that the formula of "fee-for-service" is flawed; this approach costs more and more as acute episodes and chronic diseases increase. In the big picture right now, paying more is actually getting the nation less. Less money in governmental coffers, less in individuals' and family's pockets. We are treating emergencies rather than solving problems, and creating more disparity in health care and insurance coverage, which exacerbates pre-existing social and economic disparities rooted in health.

The national numbers are almost too big to grasp. From the year of the Clinton health care reform proposal, 1993, to 2010, the annual national health expenditures increased from \$921.5 billion to \$2,593.6 billion. According to Statehealthfacts.org, a project of The Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF), in 2010 the U.S. spent \$389,084,333,952 on Medicaid and \$11,653,301,427 on Federal Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Allotments, which help hospitals that serve a disproportionate number of low-income patients. In 2010, 29 percent of Americans had coverage through programs like Medicaid, Medicare, and other publicly funded programs.

Carolina recruited workers through a locally based Thai agent. The workers were promised visas, several years of employment, and a set hourly rate. This offer, though, cost them huge fees, effectively putting them in debt peonage. Once the workers arrived, their documents were confiscated by the traffickers, and Million Express Manpower soon began pedaling their services in New Orleans. The Thai nationals were imprisoned by armed guards and forced to live in the Katrina-damaged buildings they were demolishing.

Here's how the New Orleans-based Gambit described the hotel where the Thai workers were living when they were discovered: "The Capri Hotel on Tulane Avenue was no place for human inhabitants in November 2005. Floodwaters from the levee breaches had inundated the building and sat festering for two weeks, leaving mold-covered walls. The rank odor of death permeated the air, mingled with the smell of decay and the fetid stench of wet, moldy carpet."

The irony here is at least two-fold. First, Thailand was one of the countries pummeled by the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean. While statistics for the disaster are varied, it is estimated that almost 8,000 Thai were killed and 7,000 displaced in the natural disaster. In comparison, approximately 1,800 people were killed in Hurricane Katrina less than a year later, close to 1,000 in

The cost to insurees and employers isn't any less serious, pushing the numbers of privately insured individuals down. Statehealthfacts.org also reports that only five percent of Americans elect, or can afford, coverage through the individual market, which had an average cost of \$2,580 in 2010. Premiums for employer-sponsored health insurance coverage, depending on whether coverage is single, family, or plus-one, ranged between \$1,090 and \$3,692 per year for employees. Employers paid between \$4,132 and \$11,060.

And then there are those who fall outside coverage. They end up with empty wallets, and the government and providers with a huge bill. According to KFF, 16 percent of Americans were uninsured in 2010. The cost of being uninsured to individuals, families, and employers is a significant part of national health expenditures. According to a KFF report in October 2011, uninsured individuals and families pay for about one-third of their care out-of-pocket, totaling \$30 billion in 2008. Federal, state, and local funds paid 75 percent of the remaining balance of \$57 billion for uncompensated care.

While we are spending staggering amounts on health care, as individuals and as a nation, we are still losing the fight against chronic disease and the damage it does to families and the economy. And because costs are increasingly pushing health care coverage out of reach, being uninsured has become the status quo for too many Americans. The end result is even more damage to the economy as the poorer health and shorter lifespan of the uninsured result in losses to the economy up to \$207 billion. Each year, chronic illness accounts for about 75 percent of health care expenditures and results in lost productivity in the workplace totaling more than \$1 trillion.

## The weight of the issue


In addition to increases in annual national health expenditures and the

## KENTUCKIANS AGAINST THE WAR ON WOMEN

As women across the country celebrate the 92nd anniversary of the 19th amendment, our own Mitch McConnell and Rand Paul have voted AGAINST the Senate version of the Violence Against Women Act.

### RALLY

August 26, 4 pm  
Corner of N. Limestone  
and E. Main  
March for women's rights



[www.facebook.com/kyagainsthewaronwomen](http://www.facebook.com/kyagainsthewaronwomen)

Louisiana itself. These Thai workers were swept from a tsunami-decimated country to a hurricane-ravaged state—and made to work there as slaves.

Second, the major critique of the Katrina disaster in New Orleans was that the poorest neighborhoods had been the most vulnerable to the levee failure. The Katrina disaster, the argument went, turned out to be about an American history of dispossession based on race and class. Who better then to gut storm-damaged hotels and restaurants? Even poorer, and now enslaved, workers from Thailand.

Eventually freed, the Thai workers have brought a lawsuit against their employer and the recruiters. Crucially, they have also received “trafficking” visas that allow them to remain in the U.S. The Thai nationals were originally brought in under legal H2A visas, which have very specific conditions and would have sent them back to Thailand. Traffickers often use restrictive H2 visas, which tie the immigrant worker’s stay in the U.S. to that employer.

## Who's running the show?

As Rutgers law professor James Gray Pope points out, “In place of the proud slave masters of yore, we now have layers of small-time labor procurers and

number of uninsured Americans, failing to reform health care twenty years ago has another legacy: one of the most pressing health issues the U.S. faces today—obesity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that since 1993, when the Clinton health care plan was introduced, there has been a dramatic increase in obesity. In 1993, we had the highest obesity rates we've ever seen—at 15 to 19 percent, but that was only in 12 states. By 2010, every state had obesity rates that exceeded 20 percent. In fact, 12 states had rates greater than 30 percent.

Statehealthfacts.org reports that nearly one-third of American children are overweight or obese; in 2009, 10 percent were uninsured and 34 percent were enrolled in Medicaid. This increased prevalence of obesity is responsible for almost \$40 billion in increased medical spending between 1998 and 2006, including \$7 billion in Medicare prescription drugs. Haomiao Jia, PhD, and Erica I. Lubetkin, MD, MPH have found that “[t]he overall health burden of obesity among U.S. adults has increased consistently since 1993.” We cannot afford the social or financial cost of refusing to reform health care.

The U.S. needs a health care system that reduces the burden, social and financial, of health status. This is particularly important as it relates to children and the future of the American economy. To make reform tangible to stakeholders, the country needs a location that can be the national model of health care restructuring and development (from the payment for and delivery of health care, to educating a new generation of health care professionals). This location is Lexington, Kentucky.

*In part two of this series, Cannon-Marie details the ACA and argues Lexington is especially well positioned to utilize the ACA to benefit Kentuckians.*



“In truth, Americans kill more people with guns because we have easy access to high powered weapons and huge amounts of ammo.”

AUGUST 2012

# Easy ammo and evil acts

Comments on the aftermath of the Aurora shooting

By Michael Dean Benton

On July 20, James Holmes, dressed in protective armor, unleashed a violent attack with assault weapons on a capacity audience during the opening night screening of the *Dark Knight Rises* in Aurora, Colorado. 71 people were shot, 12 dead. The worst shooting attack in American history.

In his assault, Holmes utilized smoke grenades, a 12 gauge Remington 870 Express Tactical shotgun, a Smith & Wesson M & P 15 semi-automatic rifle with a 100 round magazine, and a 40 caliber Glock 22 handgun. In the theater parking lot, his car held more guns. At his apartment, Aurora police found a home wired with over 30 home-made grenades.

While many prominent politicians felt compelled to respond to the tragedy, few offered any meaningful suggestions, and even worse, some sought to cynically capitalize on the event. Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Texas) headed this list when he attempted to link the shooting to ongoing attacks on Judeo-Christian beliefs. Gohmert believes, or claims, that this shooting could have been avoided if we, as a country, placed a higher value on God.

President Barack Obama and likely Republican challenger Mitt Romney, who both responded immediately to the incident, recalled a different deity. Romney’s comments included a statement of condolence for the victims and their families and a vague, simplistic conclusion that several minutes of gunfire represented “a few moments of evil.” Obama agreed, describing violent attacks like these as “senseless” and simply “evil.” Both avoided any direct statement about daily gun violence in America or the efficacy of stronger gun control laws, though one week after the shooting, President Obama did boldly decide to take on the reality of gun violence in America. He claimed that we should make sure guns are never sold to the mentally ill or to children.

Neither of which qualities apply to James Holmes, who like many

perpetrators of massive acts of gun violence in America, was by all accounts a very smart, very nice, very quiet young man. He was pursuing a PhD in neuroscience at a major university. As a law enforcement official claimed, he is an enigma because he had no record and never made any claims of intent to act violently.

And yet, almost always we can carefully investigate and map out the root causes of these violent events. Dismissing them as enigmas, as “monsters,” or simply as incomprehensible “evil” diverts us from thinking about the broader social forces and structures that lead to gun violence.

Why do 80 percent of gun deaths in the 23 wealthiest industrial societies take place in the USA? There are many theories. Some cite the violent nature of our entertainments, our frontier legacy of gun violence, and our broken homes. No doubt these could play a factor, sometimes, but this reasoning falls apart when we compare them to other industrial countries that have the same problems, say Japan, Germany and the United Kingdom.

In truth, Americans kill more people with guns because we have easy access to high powered weapons and huge amounts of ammo. We are a nation that is home to the leading manufacturers and sellers of weapons worldwide. The powerful weapons lobby has shifted the debate around gun control laws to the point where, even after a mass shooting captivates the nation, both candidates for

the Presidency are too terrified to even consider the impact of gun violence in America, much less whether any gun control laws are necessary to address the problem. And so, in a culture of fear that looks to violence as an answer—collectively and individually—we are encouraged to believe that the constitution gives us the right to buy assault rifles and thousands of rounds of high powered ammo at a moment’s notice.

Holmes acquired the weapons and ammo for his attack with relative ease, in a short period of time, and with next-to-no governmental oversight. The guns used in the attack were all purchased from local gun shops and after authorized background checks. Just weeks before the incident, the college graduate purchased 7,000 rounds of ammunition off the internet: 3020 .223 rounds, 3550 40 caliber rounds, and 350 12 gage rounds.

When we allow ourselves to be manipulated into believing that these explosive acts of violence, as well as the daily carnage of gun violence in America, is simply the actions of “evil” people, we are ignoring important questions and

answers. This is not a gun issue, as it has been framed by the powerful weapons lobby; this is a crime issue and we should approach it as such. Since when have Americans been resistant to dealing with issues of crime? Should it not give us pause that are conservative politicians do not want to deal with crimes?

I do not believe we should ban guns in the USA. I do however believe that they should be regulated just like any dangerous, ubiquitous technology, say, the automobile. We have age restrictions for the use of the automobile. We have extensive training and state testing for the right to use an automobile. We have laws involving the use of an automobile that if broken can lead to a person losing their right to operate it. If you move from one state to another, we have laws that require you get a new license to operate an automobile within thirty days.

If we have these requirements for citizens if they desire to operate automobiles, why would it be so unreasonable to require the same licensing and testing of gun owners?



## Drones, cont.

*Continued from page 1*

In the United States, the anniversaries of the atomic bombs draw relatively little fanfare. Some churches and municipalities will hold vigils, and several network newscasts will mention the Peace Ceremony briefly. But by and large, the consequences of the United States’ nuclear attacks are underappreciated by its citizens today.

Why don’t we want to think about the atomic bombs? I suspect it’s mostly because Americans don’t want to acknowledge the consequences of military violence. I gathered a sense of this willed indifference when I started looking through the archives of Barack Obama’s administration. I wanted to see how he has responded in public to the question of what the nuclear attacks mean for citizens of the world today.

Indeed, in Obama’s first visit to Japan as President in 2009, a reporter from Fuji Television asked him this very question. The reporter also wanted to know if Obama is a proponent of a nuclear-free world, and if he thinks the decision to drop nuclear bombs on Japan in World War II was morally justifiable. Obama laughed, remarking that Japanese and American journalists are alike in that they lump weighty questions together. But after the laughter died down, Obama confessed that while he shares a vision of a world without nuclear weapons, he doesn’t see disarmament as a likely scenario in our lifetime. When the reporter reminded the President that he had neglected to answer the second part of the question, about whether or not the bombs were morally justifiable, Obama stepped

sideways again and moved on to talk of other entanglements in North Korea and Afghanistan.

The question Obama avoided, whether or not it was justifiable to use nuclear weapons, has framed American thinking about the atomic bomb ever since Hiroshima. Rationales for dropping the atomic bomb are predicated on the notion of the value of human life. The idea is that by dropping the atomic bombs, the United States would be able to end the war without having to invade mainland Japan and sacrifice even more American lives.

At the time, President Harry S. Truman asked the outgoing secretary of war Henry Stimson to construct an intellectual defense of the bombs to shape public opinion about their deployment. In a 1947 article in *Harper’s Magazine*, Stimson wrote, “The decision to use the atomic bomb was a decision that brought death to over a hundred thousand Japanese. No explanation can change that fact and I do not wish to gloss it over.” Still, Stimson insisted that the atomic bomb was “our least abhorrent choice [because] it ended the ghastly specter of a clash of great land armies.”

Though Stimson did not want to gloss over the human destruction, his essay does little to suggest that the United States ever seriously considered the intrinsic worth of Japanese people. During the war, the United States orchestrated a massive internment of Japanese-Americans into grueling prison camps. Even before the bombs were dropped, a concerted public relations campaign planted seeds in the minds of U.S. citizens that the conquest of Japan

was a zero-sum game of revenge. One war poster I found appeals to the resolve of the American people, reminding them that even though the European conflict had ended, we must “stay on the job until every murdering Jap is wiped out.” The logic in Stimson’s essay has influenced discussions about the atomic bombs ever since, yet it is fundamentally misguided. There were many other ways to resolve the conflict aside from atomic warfare.

### Democracy and the power of drones

Today, the corollary to the atomic bomb is our ongoing drone warfare campaign. Drones, or Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems, allow the United States to target suspected terrorists. Trained operations forces control aircraft remotely from the United States, gathering intelligence and zeroing in on targets for up to 17 hours at a single flight. A drone system can cost as much as \$53 million, a price that has often been justified in light of their benefits.

Drones facilitate a kind of furtive military aggression that is not possible in any other way. Without escalating major wars or deploying significant numbers of troops, the United States can dislodge enemy leadership and police the world in the name of fighting terrorism.

Yet like the atomic bombs, drone warfare tactics pose some implicit perils, which U.S. counterterrorism chief John Brennan acknowledged recently. According to NPR, Brennan said that “President Obama and those of us on his national security team are very mindful that as our nation uses this technology, we are establishing precedents that other nations may follow.”

Brennan continued by championing “responsible use” of drones. But what is responsible use? Even though drones are touted to be efficient, they still have resulted in civilian deaths. More importantly, the use of drones suggests a doctrine of invincibility that just isn’t realistic or moral.

Because we live in a democracy, we have—at least in theory—an obligation to shape the direction of our state by choosing who represents us. This means that even by proxy we are to be held accountable for the things our nation does. Even though the political process of democracy is impossible, we should not let this impossibility exonerate us from our responsibility as citizens.

Eric Beerbohm’s recent book *In Our Name: The Ethics of Democracy* suggests that complicity is a professional hazard of democratic citizenship. In other words, each person in the United States bears some responsibility for the things our leaders do to other people in the name of one’s country. Beerbohm writes that “when citizens fail to remove lawmakers from office out of willful ignorance or support their reelection on the basis of curated beliefs, they provide accessorial support for injustice.”

Drone warfare, like torture, and like the deployment of the atomic bomb, force United States citizens to examine the suppositions that guide our leadership and our military tactics. All human beings have inherent worth, and the power gained through violence is only fleeting. These are lessons that citizens should thrust into the public sphere as we mark one more anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



# The lower Red, cont.

*Continued from page 3*

two paddlers sweaty and grinning, just before we dip in beneath the bridge’s massive concrete pier. The water’s rising, swirling greenish-brown but trending toward a milky chocolate, and while it might be 10am topside, both hands of our clock reset to zero, the first second of day one on river-time.

### The lower Red

The lower section of the Red, according to paddling guru Bob Sehlinger, is incomparable to the upper and middle sections, which flow through the Red River Gorge, a National Natural Landmark with Wild and Scenic River designation. The Gorge, with the help of environmental groups like the Sierra Club and Kentucky’s most renowned writer and activist, Wendell Berry, survived several concerted attempts at impoundment. When President Clinton signed the National Wild and Scenic River declaration into law in 1993, he ended a decades-long struggle to protect and preserve this geological and biological wonder.

In his 1978 guide to Kentucky’s waterways, Sehlinger warns that the lower Red is “almost always clogged with deadfalls that force portaging or swinging continually back and forth across the river to navigate around them.” In addition, it courses through private property, unsuitable for camping. Undeterred, we float quickly past the open pasture on the south side and enter a green wall, the river’s channel forming a small tunnel, like the adit of some overgrown, abandoned mineshaft on an overgrown and abandoned mountainside.

We encounter several significant deadfalls but manage to find passage without much technical maneuvering, and after a half mile the channel widens, and the banks steepen to 45°, sloping up 50 feet or so to intermittent limestone bluffs, the entire riverscape blanketed in the tender green light of young maples. The current pushes us along, and our paddle-strokes are light, more for righting our canoes than increasing forward momentum. In no time we pass Plum Branch, where the Red River becomes the boundary between Powell County to the north and Estill County to the south, and within an hour we steer by the mouth of Mill Seat Creek.

The Red plains out, due west for a short stretch, and softly bends southwest, taking in the waters of Lulbegrud which enters from the northwest at a 45° angle and forms a rocky point at its confluence. We stop for a cold beer and to ponder the likelihood of Boone and Co. standing on this bar 242 years earlier. Our pondering involves more silence and surveillance of the surroundings than oral deliberation on the topic. After twenty or thirty minutes of idleness, Danny stands, brushes the sand and pebbles from his shorts, and gesticulates with his Bitburger pounder. “This place is rife with ghosts. You never know. Boone might have clanged the noontime grog-bell on this very spot and summonsed his wilderness-weary, woolly, calloused, and stinking comrades to frontier fellowship.” I raise my head from the book I’ve rummaged from a dry bag, John Graves’ Goodbye to a River, and counter: “Some days load themselves with questions whose answers have died, and maybe never mattered hugely.”

Grog-bells aside, the place shimmers with ghost-potential. Just upstream at Eskippaki-thiki, Findley had been welcomed into the thriving and surprisingly cosmopolitan town, what Banta calls an “open city” as its inhabitants were a mix of Cherokees, Shawnees, Delawares, and Miamis, among other tribes. He erected his own “shop” amid the many permanent structures already in place, and for the next year lived among and did business with the natives, passing travelers, and fellow traders attracted to the relative peace and prosperity that seemed to shelter the community. But this charmed, sylvan and, as Banta calls it, “complacent” episode came to an abrupt

“Paddling in pairs is like a game of leapfrog: without stakes, without much regulation, and without a real sporting rationale.”

and violent end when, in 1753, the renegade Dutchman Phillip Phillips set upon the town with a band of French-attached Indians from the north, and burned Eskippaki-thiki to the ground, killing and disbanding the natives, and capturing a passel of colonial traders. Findley escaped to settlements in the southeast, having witnessed the life and death of perhaps the last permanent Indian town in Kentucky.

After a quick dunk, we’re back in the boats. Not too far down the river, though, Danny turns with serious expression. “You know what Graves had to say about places like this: ‘Sometimes you take the country for itself, for what shows merely, and sometimes it forces its ghosts too upon you, the smell of people who have lived and died there. They do not have to be individual ghosts...often they’re only the feel that a time past has for you, the odor of an era... And they don’t have to smell good.’” We pick up the silence where we left it, content that Graves should have the last word.

### Leapfrog

The cool, shadowy Red is pleasant reprieve from the heat and from our usual paddling milieu on the broad Kentucky, where the dearth of shade forces one to hug bank for narrow relief, navigating the continuous gauntlet of sunken deadfall and stumps, ducking under spidery limbs, and tangling paddle-strokes in the muddy mess of the riverside. Plus, the Red, at least on this trip, provides current, current provides leisure, leisure provides, well, everything that hard paddling doesn’t. A mile or so downstream from Lulbegrud, the Red circles back on itself, an open bow



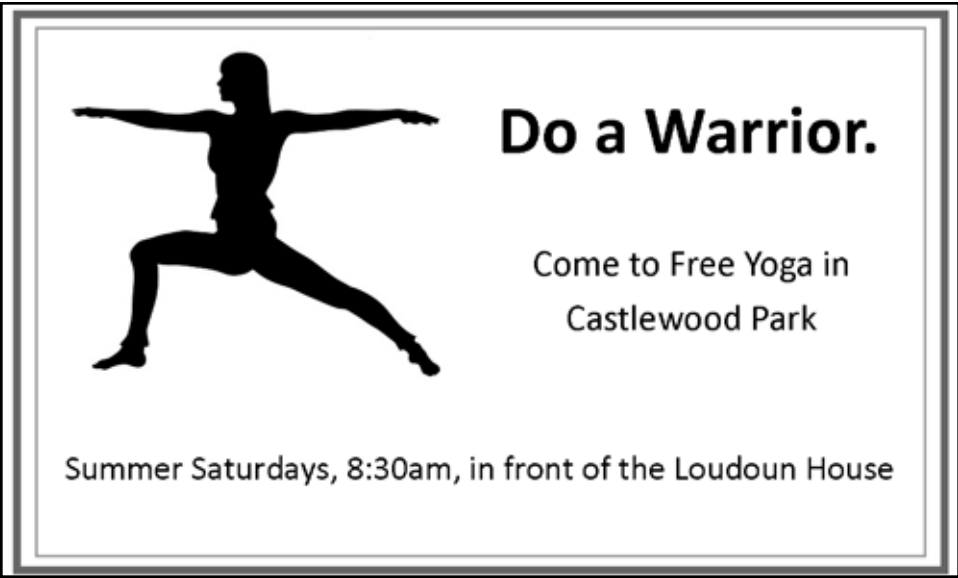
*Iron works on the banks of the Red River. Photo by Wes Houp.*

bending back to the northeast, and just when it reaches due easterly course the channel cuts back to the northwest for a few hundred yards, turns sharply west by southwest, and holds a steady course for several miles.

Paddling in pairs is like a game of leapfrog: without stakes, without much regulation, and without a real sporting rationale—at least for Danny and I. We have no pecking order, no strong leader, no deferential follower. We tend to leapfrog one another in pace: Danny at once stopping to scrawl something in his shirt-pocket-sized notebook while I pass downstream only to stop near a deadfall or shoal, cast a spinner-bait or sling a worm and cork into shallow water. Shortly, Danny passes by with a nod and disappears around the bend. I might overtake him an hour or a mile later where he’s stopped for a swim or just to poke his head bankside to take in unfamiliar terrain.

### Small pleasures

The river jerks north at a right angle, and the community of Vianna hides somewhere beyond the northern shore. Traveling by river, particularly



in the Kentucky River watershed, where the Kentucky’s deep abrasion has forced its will upon tributaries, we are plucked from the plenum of existence. The world is the river, the coterminous stretch of sky, bounded on each side by terminal banks. Occasionally, sounds from beyond filter down to us, but for the most part this narrow world carries us along its surface, and things unseen beyond the edges are there only because experience or memory says they are there, or, as in our current situation, because the map says they are there. So we nod in the direction of Vianna as the river pushes us northward.

We round a sharp bend, the current constricting and gaining speed, and the river double-backs, due south for a few hundred yards. Just around the next bend, we hear falling water; our spirits rise. The majority of our river-womps have involved placid, flat water. The rapids, riffles and shoals of the Kentucky have been submerged for well over a century, drowned out by the Corps’

the roughest waves like thrill-junkies experiencing profound withdrawal. “I could take another mile or two of that,” Danny exclaims over the rush of water, turning his canoe and eddying back toward the run. I let the increased current spin me around into the eddy and cast a spinner-bait into the riffles. No sooner does my lure hit the water than a bass strikes, leaps in the air, and dives down, swirling and driving out into the current, fighting hard to counteract the shrinking distance between us and the arc of my rod. A largemouth, just keeper-sized. I thumb him up to eye-level as Danny takes notice. “Dinner?” As we turn and pull away the yellow stringer trails like a leash, and the bass follows along against every once of instinct.

### The Iron Age

In less than a mile, we round a sharp, shoehorned bend and immediately spin back to the south. The CSX railroad crosses the river at a bias, its impossibly spindly trestle spanning the valley high overhead, throwing down two equally spindly legs, their stone feet planted squarely in the river’s flow. We float between them, such colossal foundations for such scrawny stanchions, straining to scan the length of tracks zippering the sky above. On our left, a series of three dilapidated brick structures, stacked at 50-foot intervals, stretches up the slope, 200 feet or more. Danny breaks stride and paddles over for a closer look. “What do you think?” I call as he scampers up the bank.

“Don’t know. Some sort of forge or furnace perhaps? An ironworks? The proximity to the railroad suggests some sort of extractive industry.” Overturned on the slope above, what appear to be two large, rusted boilers lie on their sides, half-buried in the talus of limestone and leaves. I rummage through my small bag, remove my camera, and snap a few quick shots of Danny standing in the gaping window of the second structure.

“I bet this is an old ironworks,” Danny proclaims while dangling out the window to examine the outer wall above. “According to Mary Verhoeff, the first ironworks may have been in operation in Red River country as early as 1793 in the vicinity of Clay City, Powell County, and near the mouth of Harkwick’s Creek.”

We climb to the highest structure, resting for a moment in the shade among proliferation of ant lion dens, and gaze down at our toy-sized boats through a large opening. A remarkably cold flask of Svetka appears from Danny’s pocket. “What? Do you have ice in your pockets?” I ask before two stiff glugs. Behind us, an overgrown roadbed switchbacks up the remaining slope in the direction of the railroad. The lime-dusty floor of the structure and the immediate slope are littered with oddly shaped bits of pig iron, grotesque icons of a disbanded religion and relics of the patron saint of rust. Abandoned industry on such a large scale in such remote geography shadows thought with tragic possibility: Who toiled here in the forgotten forge? And what did their toil earn them? What was the name of the last man to pass up the switchback when work was done, and where did he fall at last into the earth? We pass a pipe and wait for the third-shift to rise from the sleep of the grave.

# Morally right = legally wrong?

By Marcus Flores

Tomas Lopez, a lifeguard of Hallandale Beach, is a rule breaker. The young Floridian was fired because, try as he might, he simply could not suffer the rule that would have condemned a man to drown who was swimming in the “At Your Own Risk” area a few hundred feet away. Lopez was “out of his protected area,” said Susan Ellis, his former supervisor, “we have liability issues.”

So I guess like that wretched and impotent narrator of a relevant William Cowper poem, Ms. Ellis would have presumably watched the watery death. Worse, she failed to admit even a modicum of regretful praise for Lopez’s damned-if-I-do-damned-if-I-don’t dilemma. It may be fun to chide her stoic response, though not exactly fair to dump the brunt of the blame on the woman in charge. Given today’s stifling legal climate, where a cup of coffee—a hot beverage, it’s worth remembering—is just one of many short cuts to

a million dollars, it seems rather odd that some neglected swimmer has not already tried to sue for the few fleeting moments Lopez was administering first aid to the victim.

Except that Lopez responsibly radioed his fellow lifeguards (in response, his manager suggested he call 911) to alert them of the situation before dashing to the scene. In other words, his patch of beach did not go unsupervised. And, anyway, no lifeguard can ever be ubiquitous since the ocean is as big as it is dangerous. (I imagine there to be some unavoidable risk associated with occupying the domain of sharks and stingrays.)

For those not aware, the majority of quotidian activities entail varying degrees of risk. We seem to have been numbed by the notion that dimwitted decisions are somehow someone else’s fault. Mt. Laurel Pool in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, no longer exists because a man allegedly defied the very pronounced “No Running” signs, ran,

and cut his heel. An on-duty lifeguard patched the superficial wound, which was anything but superficial in the eyes of several attorneys. A \$100,000 suit, which ended in a settlement, forced the pool’s closing.

This cancer of frivolous lawsuits infects everything from the coast to the computer, such that simple procedures, like installing software, require verbose and unreadable contracts. When I began work on my blog, I discovered a host of terminology and documentation pertaining to acceptable picture usage. Licensing categories include Attribution, Creative Commons, Commercial, Attribution-ShareAlike, and other derivatives. Even with dutiful research, I still cannot be sure I haven’t tripped some legal landmine in what should be a comparatively safe endeavor.

For Lopez’s victim, the presently unanswerable question is why he risked the ocean at all if he were unable to swim. He chose his own fate; to save him disserves those beach goers that

opted for the presence of a lifeguard, right? Should legal thinking butcher the idea of compassion? Whether the man could swim like a dolphin or a doornail is a non-issue because it undermines the most basic instincts of a lifeguard. Even the best swimmer can suffer a debilitating cramp that necessitates intervention, and, since none of Lopez’s swimmers were imperiled, foregoing the rescue would have amounted to moral—though not legal—dereliction. This is a very unsettling contradiction.

When Mt. Laurel Pool closed, the community lost an important recreational center—a healthy antidote for boredom (the parent of much mischief among youth). Staff and lifeguards lost their jobs. Greed tends to reward few and punish many, like Lopez whose sense of responsibility was considered a liability. I fully empathize with his decision not to return to work in spite of the company offering his job back. There are plenty of other things he could be doing for \$8.25 an hour.

# Letters to the editor

## Harlan and Bell radicals

Thanks so much for enlightening me of the strife felt in the early twentieth century and the radicalism shown by those in Harlan and Bell counties (“Mine strikes and commie songs,” Feb 2012). I spent, all told, about two years working on reclamation sites (this was the mid-80 s when there was money available for reclamation) and was run off by one landowner after the other. I was mistaken many times as a coal operator “goon” sent there to destroy even more of the land and water. When the opposite was true.

Today it’s Blair mountain, tomorrow the whole eastern part of our state (Kentucky) and the southwestern portion of West Virginia will be flattened.

I once did a site in Pike county that had only one point of reference, that being a survey control point saved by the coal company for future work. The rest of the land was flattened and had taken on the look of a moonscape. The maps I had showed no resemblance to the devastation created by the surface mining. I

spent many days around Evarts, and the forks of the Upper Cumberland river, including Poor fork.

Man, I love reading this stuff. Keep it coming. You have my e-mail address.  
*Norman E. Goldie, Jr.*  
*Mount sterling, KY*

## The Transit Center

A couple of points about the Transit Center (“Relocations, roundabouts and right-of-ways,” July 2012). The relocation was a small part Mayor Jim Newberry’s attempt to grab stimulus money; there were many things on the list that were not thought through. I imagine transit was something the Feds wanted to see on the application. For all we know they might have been thinking about adding a second level to the building and moving it up (which in my view is a good idea, as it puts the pedestrians on the MLK bridge instead of darting across Vine). Also, of the towers over the Transit Center, are you speaking of the 1985 plan that like Center Pointe lost funding? The foundations of the Transit

Center are made to support a 22 story building and still could be built, though unlikely any time soon.

*Eliot*

## Taxes and public ed

A couple generations ago, the “public” in public school, public park, or public swimming pool was a mark of pride. A public institution or edifice was created by and for a community in a deliberate effort to build a materially secure, culturally rich, and generally decent common life. Now “public” in public school means “second rate,” “the best you can do if you can’t afford ‘private,’” “the leavings.”

Public institutions support public virtue, and their breakdown leads to... well, just take a look around. It is only July, but we are already hearing the tried-and-true trump card of the political challenger: “Are you better off now than you were four years ago?” I appreciate this kind inquiry after the health of my bank account, but am more concerned about the health of my neighborhood, city, country, and on up. And, like

Beth (“Raise my taxes for public education,” July 2012), I have my education to thank for this perspective on the world.

It was nice to hear the shout out for two teachers whose good work is passed on in Dr. Beth’s classroom. Thanks, Dr. Barbour and Ms. Alhand.

*Steven Mangine*

## Fabled canelands

I suggest Warren Byrom be drafted into the slack water paddle venturist legion just so he can perform nightly tributes to the KY river watershed. This (“Those fabled canelands,” Oct 26, 2011) is just fantastic.

*W. Houp*

## Correction

The company “Stantec” was mis-identified in last month’s article, “Relocations, roundabouts and right-of ways.” Additionally, the article mis-identified the downtown Board of Adjustment as denying a permit for CVS to build. As the Lexington Streetseeper pointed out, the Board approved CVS designs in July 2010, but the cost of moving underground junction boxes scuttled the project. We regret the confusion.

# U.S. health care system jumps to sixth place among developing countries

## The leek: a satirical take

By Horace Heller Hedley, IV

The U.S. health care system, long criticized for poor accessibility, lackluster overall outcomes, and low health benefits per dollar spent, now ranks sixth among the world’s developing countries. These results from a recent World Health Organization (WHO) survey covering nearly all national health care systems place the U.S. among the top four percent of developing nations—trailing only Columbia, Morocco, Chile, Dominica, and Costa Rica. These findings from the WHO’s paper “Measuring Overall Health System Performance for 191 Countries” are expected to vindicate defenders of the U.S. health care system.

“The 96th percentile among two-thirds of the world’s nations,” said Richard Johansen, Deputy Director of the conservative Heritage Foundation, a staunch opponent of the Affordable Care Act. “Does that sound like a system desperate for a costly overhaul?”

Despite the encouraging world ranking, some advocates of U.S. health care feel that the WHO rating system shortchanges their program. The WHO rating calculates a weighted average of data in five key areas: health outcomes, health inequality, responsiveness-level, responsiveness-distribution, and fair financing. The WHO focuses on equity in health care delivery, while

de-emphasizing technologically-sophisticated treatment—an approach that irks some U.S. health policy experts.

“Fair according to who—some one-world-government bureaucrat with a calculator?” asked Justin Withers, former health policy advisor for the Bush administration. “How we finance our system is our business. The stem cell organ replacements and targeted chemotherapies and artery-repair nanobots? Don’t expect them to come out of Morocco.”

Some expressed doubts that the U.S. could hold its sixth place ranking amid growing competition from several up-and-coming Third World programs. “The U.S. is a big fish—everybody is gunning for you,” said Dr. Roger Klineman of Emory University’s School of Public Health. “Senegal has strong fundamentals in their program, and they could move up the ranks. Paraguay had an excellent recruiting year, and they play outstanding defense with strong prevention programs. The Albanians can’t match our big men on the inside—no NIH there—but they really hustle in public health initiatives, and they play as a team.”

In fact, some U.S. experts are calling for scrapping the rating system in favor of an international tournament to determine the final rankings. Proponents of the proposed national health care system playoff, informally dubbed “Med Match

Madness,” claim it is the only method that can determine an indisputable champion among national systems. The playoff system proposed by U.S officials would allow 15 medical experts from each participating nation to face off in a variety of medical specialties, plus general diagnostics, prescription selection and dosing, bedside manner, and creative insurance coding.

Some medical professionals in the U.S. are thrilled about the prospect of the new international competition, and break-rooms in clinics across the country are abuzz with speculation. “We’re probably jumping the gun, but we’re already getting our brackets together!” said Katherine Myers, a physician’s assistant in Butlerville, IN. “Of course the U.S. team is everybody’s top pick—wishful thinking, maybe, but we’ll probably have home court. And who doesn’t have a soft spot for a scrappy little Cinderella program like Dominica?”

U.S. officials have offered to host the event, and proponents have brushed off concerns about the anticipated price tag. “A trivial health expenditure, really,” said William Eberhart, public health analyst with Health Care Finance Consultants. “I’m confident we can bring off a first-rate tournament for less than the cost of a comprehensive prenatal outreach program in a medium-sized city. Besides, several pharmaceutical companies are already inquiring about sponsorships.”

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

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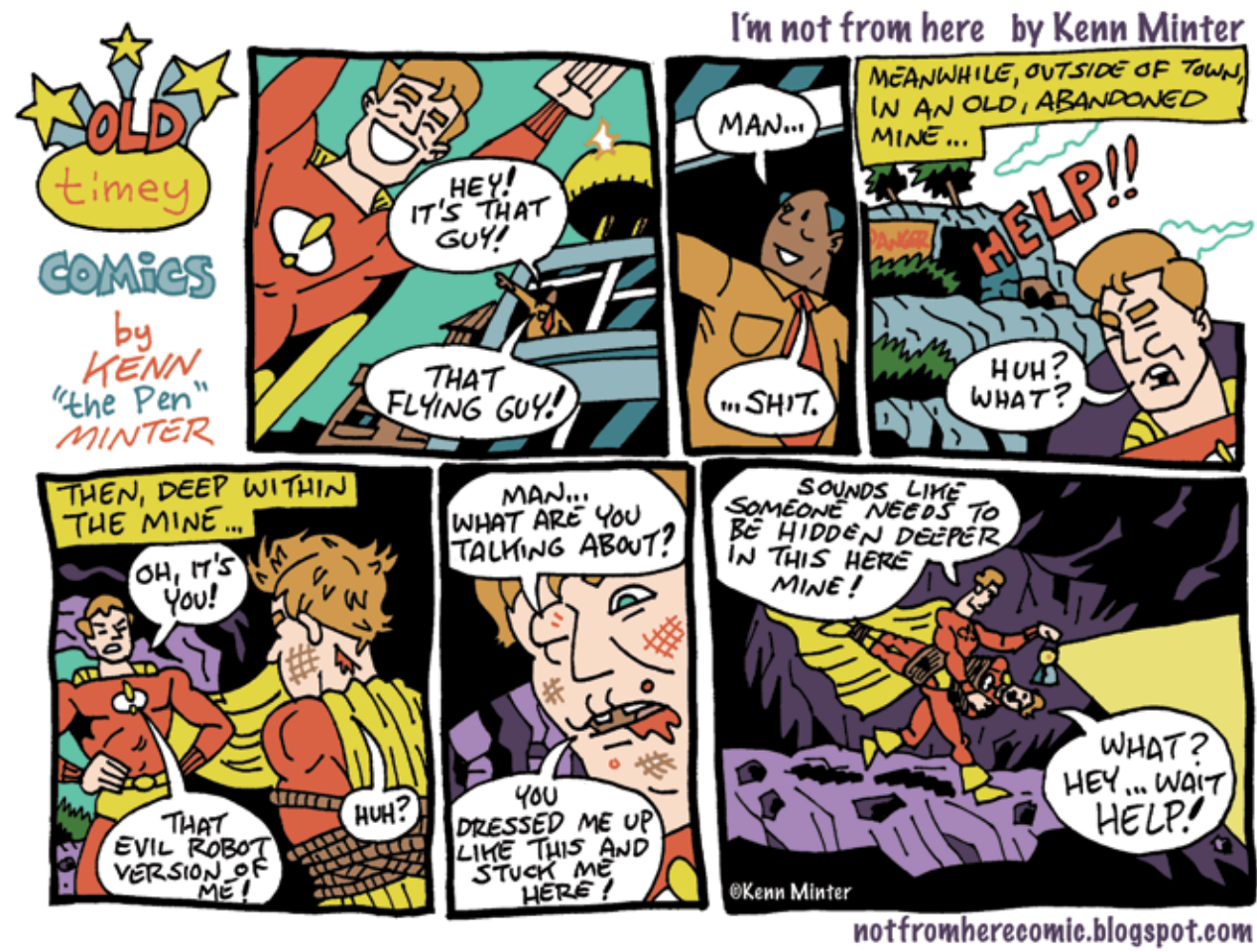
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I'm not from here

Kenn Minter

Lexington Public Stacey Earley



Equine, Cont.

Continued from page 3

women called. The next year, early 2001, Ferdinand was sold for salvage value to an operation that most likely—nobody can be sure, this Kentucky Derby horse like all the other steeds—had him slaughtered for pet food sometime before Christmastime, 2002.

Not until the following summer, after an inquiry by Ferdinand’s breeder owners the Kecks, did a journalist for *Blood-Horse* discover that the Derby-winning grand-sire of Northern Dancer, this poor stud, was no more.

L-FUCK GBTSQ (OMFG)

To the unhip, a Creatives for Common Sense (CfCS) meeting can seem quite disorienting and not a little bit offensive. College-somethings of all ages stand in clusters of three to five and buzz between several tables nearby the stage and the short corner of Al’s Bar, their anarchic migrations, singly and in pairs but never in threes, loosely patterned by the rolling tempo of poured draft beer.

And then there is the name calling. Mostly in passing, often exuberant, and always with a smile. Goat fuck. High fucker. North fuck. Cocks fucker, swap fucker, *mother* fucker. For someone not attuned, the effect is not unlike walking half-baked into a local chapter of ADD-afflicted Tourette syndrome activists out for a celebratory night on the town. I myself have been called—repeatedly, and by people I believed myself to hold good acquaintance with—a “non-fucker” and “non-fuck.”

Luckily I arrive to this Tuesday night CfCS meeting already hip to the situation. Since this is one of the few moments wherein the written page is certifiably more informative than actual scene immersion, let me lay things down in bare text:

The names are part of a CfCS project to re-brand the city of Lexington as a whole county. Fuckers are not really fuckers. In reality, fuckers are FUCers, or Fayette Urban County-goers. Hence, I am not a non-fuck, but a person not from here. That cocks fucker presumably lives on Cox. SWAP FUCers simply like to paddle. She is not a mother fucker, but a mom of Fayette Urban County.

Safely in and past the first gauntlet of salutations, I order a corn dog and a couple happy hour High Lifes, then draw my attention to the stage, where *NoC* editor Danny Mayer (PhD, Am Studies) stands, clipboard in hand.

“Clucker FUCers? Any Clucker FUCers here? No? OK. FUCs for FUC’s sake? Anyone here from there? No? Non-FUCs?” Pause. “Yeah, where you from? A Paris FUC? That’s fine, you were once a FUCer back in 1782. I’m Danny, by the way, a proud CROCK FUCer.”

Tonight’s meeting is devoted to the question of expanding or eliminating the

official CfCS endorsement for a Fayette Urban County Knacker. In March, the group released a position paper that urged county leaders to take over management of the slaughter of the region’s horses. The knacker, the group contends, will help ameliorate the problem of abandoned, sick, and/or dying horses, while at the same time energize the area’s burgeoning local craft meat industry. The group even has branding ideas, a complete FUCK line of burgers, brats, backstraps, glue, canned hooper broth and the like.

As I find out tonight, despite the public position paper, the knacker idea remains a tenuous CfCS proposition. While the carnivores, omnivores, and capitalists were nearly unanimously in favor of craft horse butchery, other CfCSers felt Mayer bullied the proposal through. Weird fractures were ensuing. Of the relevant swing groups, vegetarians and pescetarians generally stood in solidarity with the knacker position, though not in agreement with the idea the position embodied. Meanwhile, vegans, deep agriculturists and several old-school Lexingtonians wavered between passive and passionate opposition.

The three positions, tonight at least, go something like this:

**For:** Horse is good, lean meat that has untapped artisanal potential. Regional food is what’s in right now. Since the Bluegrass is already branded “horse,” it’s a market waiting to be taken. Japanese and Mexican migrants represent, respectively, this county’s most important creative and cheap labor demographics—and they also represent the two largest consumers of horse meat per capita. Fetlock burgers would be a wonderful local addition to Al’s menu.

**Vegetarian position:** Personally against eating horse flesh, but society and laws allow other meat eating to continue. Good oversight and emphasis on craft butchery might help ensure humane treatment of horse. Public revulsion to horse meat consumption might spread to cow, chicken, goat, buffalo, alligator, quails and other fleshy beings. If CfCS is OK as an organization housing Clucker FUCers and Goat FUCers, there should be room at the table for FUCK FUCers.

**Against:** Eating meat is barbaric and destroying the planet. Saying FUCK is vulgar. We love Lexington.

The debate is pitched. I observe four near-miss fights owing to the real or perceived mis-labeling of FUCers as FUCKers, the closest occurring when Francis (PhD, UMass), a vegetarian CROCK FUCer, felt that some Creatives near the bar were labeling him a smelly CROCK FUCKer, a slight mountain twang and the subtle breath of difference between a hard and soft “c” making all the difference this steamy



night between a smiling leaf-eater and a foul devourer of equine flesh. No fewer than eight CfCSers crossed their arms and threatened to leave the movement.

But after two hours and 17 craft pitchers, Aaron (PhD, UK) successfully brokered a deal, which brought together a broad coalition ranging from meaty CLUCKer FUCKers on down the food chain to leafy GleanFUCs.

In place of the narrowly conceived job title of knacker, Aaron’s plan emphasizes the inherent diversity of the knacker idea. The new position, rebranded L-FUCK GBTSQ (OMFG), keeps the focus on the Lexington-Fayette Urban County knacker, but expands the agricultural reach to include grocers, brewers, tanners, steers, quails and any other manufactured farm goods that might spring from Fayette soils.

When the vote comes in, Al’s goes past bonkers. Near the stage, a group led by Mayer begins chanting, “FUCK, the whole horse and nothing but the horse!” At the bar a vocal splinter group returns fire. “L-FUCK GBTSQ (OMFG)! We do it all!” In between, Creatives dart to and fro, singly and in pairs.

**Here is where we’ll stay**  
Crisis averted and solidarity restored

this night, Mayer concludes the meeting with a variation on a speech I’ve heard several times. Tonight, ten minutes after starting, he ends it like this:

“It’s about time we city-dwellers joined the state. We are city, sure, but like the rest of the Commonwealth we are also county. No better, no worse. We are Fayette Urban County.”

It’s hard not to feel Mayer’s intense passion for ol’ Fayette. His final statement, delivered in iambic staccato bursts, **WE-ARE Fayette URBAN County**, manages to fill both wings of the bar and whip the remaining FUCers into a frenzy.

As I pay my tab, Wes (PhD, IUP), sensing a moment, tempts the mob with a spontaneous rendition of the old folk standard “Fayette County.” My debt settled, I head out the door, a chorus of drunken off-key voices following me onto Limestone like a fire siren receding into the night. “Well, we were come to Fayette County, and here is where we’ll stay.....”

*To be continued. Northrup Center holds the Hunter S. Thompson/Charles Kuralt endowed chair of journalism at the Open University of Rio de Janeiro (OURdJ). He splits his time between there and Lexington, KY.*