



Crowds gather to hear local politicians at the tenth-annual Nehemiah Action Assembly. Photo by Dustin Pugel.

BUILD presses on

Payday lending, affordable housing, and ex-offender re-entry

By Ellen Deatrick

Many people can't stand to leave things unchecked on a to-do list. Lexington's BUILD (Building a United Interfaith Lexington through Direct-Action) is not like that. Tuesday, April 16 at their tenth-annual Nehemiah Action Assembly, 1659 people showed up to address three items on the to-do list. The same three that were on there the year before. And the year before: payday lending, affordable housing, and barriers to ex-offender reentry.

BUILD keeps issues on the list until they can rightly be checked off. Such an approach has kept pressure on community officials and has made significant progress on solutions proposed for some of the community's most pervasive social justice concerns. As Reverend John List put it: "We [BUILD] will drive you crazy with our persistence."

After an invocation that acknowledged there would be "no positive change without tension," payday lending was the first problem on the docket. BUILD is advocating for legislation to end Kentucky's current payday lending practices. According to BUILD's research, payday lenders took \$112 million in fees alone from borrowers in 2011 and put it in the hands

of mostly out-of-state national payday companies.

Gail Swanson of Faith Lutheran Church, who briefed the crowd on the status of the payday problem, discussed the necessity of breaking down the rhetoric that keeps the payday lending circuit alive. Borrowers may need money for rent, groceries, or health care, but they certainly don't need an advertised 14-day loan to turn into an average of 137 days of debt. As this is a state-wide crisis, BUILD has teamed up with CLOUT, its Louisville sister organization, and congregations in Frankfort to strategize for the 2014 legislative session.

Next up were the night's specific action items. For these, BUILD had prepared key questions for LFUCG councilmembers who were invited to the event. Since 2008, BUILD has been asking councilmembers to establish an Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) for Lexington. Unarguably, BUILD's research shows a need for affordable housing: over half of Lexington renters pay unaffordable rent each month (defined as more than 30 percent of their monthly income); 26 percent of renters in the city are forced to pay more than half of their income.

Five years later—two mayors, a commission, a \$25,000 study, and a task force later—the AHTF still cannot get the council support it needs. Most recently, Mayor Jim Gray has lumped the issue with council's work to fight homelessness. He is now creating an Office for Homelessness--and somehow believes this is a great stride in making Lexington homes more affordable.

Louisville saw the need, and they created a trust fund five years ago. Yet, Rachel Hurst from the Louisville Metro Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Inc., was at the Nehemiah Action to admit that "Louisville got something wrong." Right now, the fund is struggling because the city did not establish a dedicated source of funding. Proponents of the Lexington AHTF see dedicated revenue as the key to success.

As the AHTF ordinance stands now, a .5% increase to the insurance premium tax (excluding health insurance) would generate \$1.9 million for the fund, and would generate \$21.5 million in economic activity for the city, including job creation. This would cost an average \$15 annually for Lexington households. Councilmembers Chris

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Subway digging in Lexington

By Joseph G. Anthony

"The past is a foreign country; they did things differently there," says the narrator in the 1970 movie, *The Go-Between*.

I certainly hope so.

I wonder if it's a particularly American trait that the past so quickly becomes first a rumor and then something so dead we view it with the same amazement present-day Romans must feel when they try to extend their subway only to discover yet another lost civilization. But I am not speaking of ancient cities. I'm talking of the lifetime memories of many of our fellow Kentuckians.

I say this because I've been researching and writing a novel—*Wanted: Good Family*—timed mostly in 1948 with long visits to the 1920s. It's set in Fayette, Scott, and Estill Counties. Three of my narrators are African-American, or—as was the still-respectable and self-applied appellation—colored. My other three narrators are white. My white narrators don't have an easy time of it: being poor and white in the first half of the century in Kentucky wasn't, as Bette Davis said of old age, for sissies. But being poor and colored in Kentucky...well, if they had been Hindu instead of Baptists, they might have wondered just what the hell they had done in those past lives to be faced with so many challenges: spiritual, emotional, physical.

Every day's research has brought new astonishments. There was John Wesley Hatch, the first black law student at U.K. Hatch was admitted in 1948 only after a fierce fight and the amendment of the notorious 1904 Day Law, which prohibited integrated education even in private schools. (The law was aimed at Berea College.) In some classes, Hatch had to sit with an empty desk between him and the other white law students. An empty desk, the noxious spirit of the law being kept alive even as the practice was being cracked. ("Yes it makes sense in practice," I recently read a Frenchman saying, "but does it make sense in theory?") As a writer I had to leave the

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Dixie spoils ROCK homeopener

DDG ride Killbox strategy to victory

By Sunny Montgomery

On April 20, the Rollergirls of Central Kentucky (ROCK) faced off against the Dixie Derby Girls (DDG) of Huntsville, AL, during the first home bout of the 2013 season. After two full seasons of coverage, I was finally in the swing of things. As I entered the arena, I delighted in its familiarity.

The arena smelled of hot dogs and beer. Beyonce blared from the speakers overhead while the Pebbles, ROCK's junior roller derby, chased each other excitedly through the crowd. I nodded hello to the photographers, the scorekeepers, even the avid fan who never misses a home bout and who brings a bean bag chair from home so that he may lounge comfortably in the suicide seating.

I took a seat close to the action, opened my notebook and peered onto the track where ROCK was warming up. I squinted and adjusted my glasses...

Wait. Something was different.

It was not just that ROCK had gained several new skaters. I also noted that ROCK veteran Rainbow Smite, distinguished by the rainbow knee-high socks she has sported every bout, was, in fact, not wearing her rainbow knee-high socks. Similarly, I noticed that Sugar Shock, who always repped the same pair of black derby shorts proudly declaring "I GET AROUND," was, indeed, not wearing her pair of black derby shorts.

Undoubtedly, the most notable changes were Kitty O' Doom and Junk Drawer. Between the two, since the end of last season, they had lost a total of over 24 pant-sizes and over 150 pounds.

"I feel faster and more agile than I ever dreamed possible," Junk Drawer told me. "Though I'm having to learn new hitting mechanics to put physics back on my side."

No doubt about it. ROCK was

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Junk Drawer makes a GRRR face at opposing pivot. Photo by Johnna McKee of Speakeasy Studios.

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Sexual entitlement: three vignettes

Misadventures in the city

By Beth Connors-Manke

Sometimes persistence is not a virtue. And this guy had it. The first time, he pulled up next to me in a way I could easily ignore as coincidence. When he then did a U-turn and honked at me, I started to get it. My ire flared, but I figured that the complicated maneuver of following me the wrong way down a one-way street would deter him. The issue would be finished.

Nope. He did a two-block loop so he could approach me again as I walked down N. Lime. “Want a ride?” I didn’t say a word, but surely the look I gave him was scathing—I couldn’t believe that he was trying to proposition me a *third* time. In street language, I’d already given him a negative twice. The only thing that saved him from pepper spray straight in his face was that he was old—like retirement home old. Like double-dose of Viagra old. Like grandpa old. His age probably didn’t warrant the break I gave him; after all, plenty of old white lechers are dangerous, partially because they’ve spent many years thinking they are entitled to what they want from women (or children). What else but entitlement could account for

the fact that he tried to pick me up *three* times in *three* blocks? He thought he deserved my attention.

(By the way, Old Lech John was driving a four-door dark sedan; license plate 869 DAC. If that’s your grandpa, tell him to stay the hell out of my neighborhood. If I see him again, trying to solicit sex from me or anyone else, his eyes are going to need more than cataract surgery.)

The same week I met Old Lech John, I accidentally saw a picture from the ridiculous State Street riot-party that occurred after UK’s victory over Louisville in the 2012 NCAA tournament. In it, a woman has pulled up her shirt and is publicly groped.

Truthfully, I wish I hadn’t seen the photo. Blondie Coed is up on some guy’s shoulders; around her is a sea of mostly male faces and a smattering of raised male hands. Some are pointing at her, or signaling “we’re number 1,” or both. Two men are taking her picture with their phones; another has ahold of her thong. Two more are reaching toward her, and one male reveler has grabbed her breast

from the side. That actual moment—in real time—is a nightmare for someone like me who needs the streets to be a safe place for women. That photo—the pressing of the image onto public memory—pushed me toward anger, aggravation, and some despair.

Clearly, there’s a big problem with Blondie Coed thinking it whimsical to bare herself to a drunken mob of UK basketball fans. But the real gravitational pull of the photo for me was the young black hand groping her breast. That glimpse of entitlement kept tugging my thoughts back to the image. What made him think that, just because he could see her breast, it was his prerogative to touch it? I tried to imagine the situation reversed. If some dude dropped his drawers to celebrate, it wouldn’t occur to me to yank on his private parts. Sure, he’s mixed up drunkenness, rejoicing, and sex (just as Blondie did), but that doesn’t mean his body is public property.

In this case, sexual entitlement seemed to be about a direct line from seeing to taking. See something that arouses you? Grab it. Never thinking twice that it’s not yours to grab. Never taking the time to consider that the arousal is yours and the body is hers (or

his)—and there’s a whole lot of personal, social, and legal distance between the two.

To top off a bad week, I received my third warning about the car flasher. In this case, the indecent exposure was on the male side of things. Evidently, a curly haired guy, supposedly Middle Eastern, is driving around near the UK campus, asking gals for directions in order to show off his pride. While his persistence resembles that of Old Geezer, his entitlement seems to be of a different ilk. It’s more along the lines of “Here’s what I’ve got, and it’s your duty, because you’re a lady, to affirm that I’ve got it.” No doubt his psychology differs from Old Lech John and Young Basketball Groper, but here’s what all three (white, black, brown; young and old) have in common: they believe the public space of the street is the place to assert their masculinity—and women are made to be part of that rite.



Announcements

Family fun bike ride

On Saturday, May 18, a morning of children-focused bike activities will take place downtown. The morning will commence at 8:00 am with a “Bike Safety Rodeo” and the “Sprout Sprint,” a free youth bike race coordinated by the YMCA that is open to all kids up to age 12.

This year’s Sprout Sprint course will be a short closed circuit on which participants will ride laps; kids will compete for prizes in several age brackets: 5 and under, 6 – 9, and 10 – 12. Heat races will take place every 10 minutes beginning at 8:00 am.

At 10:00 am, the Family Fun Bike Ride will leave downtwon. The route will take riders along Fourth Street, down Newtown Pike, across Maxwell and High Streets, up South Ashland and around Richmond Road along the July 4 10K race route. Organizers demand that all riders must register in order to participate in any of the biking activities.

The morning promises raffles, music, booths, and more.

Design Your Own Revolution

“Design Your Own Revolution,” the third component of a larger work in progress called “discomfort,” will take place on May 24.

Announced earlier this year, the revolution design project offered community members a limited amount of resources with which to design a revolution. Resources offered to the winning participant included one pop-up office space, one design consultant, one table, two chairs, two pencils and a pencil sharpener, one copy machine, 500 sheets of copy paper, and 100 \$1.00 bills.

After reviewing entries, Dakota Smith was selected to define the role of the revolutionary. On Friday, May 24, from 9 am-3 pm, Dakota will be designing his own revolution at Land of Tomorrow (LOT) Gallery (527 East Third Street). He will be aided by Paul Michael Brown, an up-and-coming designer of revolutions.

Revolution curator Bruce Burris of ElandF West attributes no preconceived hopes for the project. “There is no particular method here and absolutely no expectation. I may or not be present. Dakota is welcome to buy \$100 worth of cigarettes and beer, design a revolution or anything at all. Paul is welcome to assist or hinder or leave. 9am-3pm is meant to mimic a typical business day. Anyone may attend/observe during this time.”



Saturday, April 20. Skaters, bikers, and bladers line up at Woodland Park for Friends for Skateparks First Annual Greenskate one-mile fun ride. Greenskate supports action sports as a healthy and environmentally friendly alternative mode of transportation, while also supporting the development of action sports facilities within the Lexington Parks & Recreation system. To learn more, find us on Facebook by searching “Friends for Skateparks.” Photo by Jeanna Justice: You, Me Studio

ROCK, cont.

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evolving—and with sleek new jerseys to boot.

Inspection, demonstration, injury

At quarter till seven, the referees began their routine inspection of the skaters’ gear: knee pads, elbow pads, mouth guards, and helmets. Meanwhile, the Pebbles took the track to demonstrate the rules. Then, the first jam began.

My advice to newcomers is to keep an eye on the jammer. It is both dizzying and exhilarating as a jammer’s success depends on speed, intuition, and grace. They must maneuver through the pack as quickly as possible, predict the path of least resistance, and remain upright while their opponents attempt to knock them down using brute force. The physical contact is very real. Likewise is the potential for serious injury.

Less than 30 minutes into the first half, ROCK’s Ragdoll Ruby took a hit that sent her skidding off track. When she did not get up immediately, the EMTs on standby came to her aid. She was helped into a wheelchair, wheeled off track and, eventually, to the emergency room with a knee injury. But roller girls are quite accustomed to this risk. The bout resumed just minutes later.

ROCK gets aggressive, then optimistic

The score remained incredibly close throughout the night. Where the Dixie Derby Girls had the advantage in physical stature, ROCK made up for it in aggression. Unfortunately, this resulted in excessive penalties for

ROCK.

“If you’re in the box, chances are good you made some kind of contact,” Rainbow explained.

DDG used this to their advantage. Jammers score points for every opponent they pass. With ROCK’s jammer frequently in the penalty box, DDG effectively executed the Killbox strategy, which occurs when the offense attempts to slow down the pack to make it easier for their jammer to circle the track, get back to the pack, and collect more points.

Ultimately, the Dixie Derby Girls won the bout 159 to 144.

In spite of the loss, ROCK remained optimistic.

“(ROCK) has really started to focus on helping each of the members train to be elite athletes. I’m very proud of what we are accomplishing together and really feel like this is the best version of ROCK that has ever been,” says Kitty O’Doom.

Indeed, I am certain there is much to look forward to with regards to ROCK’s future. As I left the arena, I couldn’t help but notice Pebbles’ Leen Machine, on center track with the other skaters, sporting a pair of rainbow knee-high socks.

ROCK’s next home bout is June 1 at Heritage Hall. Doors open at 6 pm. Bout begins at 7 pm.



ROCK’s Kitty O’Doom helps secure a wall against DDG. Photo by Johnna Mckee of Speakeasy Studios.

“Today, jails, prisons, and homeless shelters have become the defacto asylums.”

MAY 2013

Remembering Eastern State’s remains

NoC interviews Phil Tkacz

North of Center *sat down with Eastern State Hospital Cemetery Preservation Project president Phil Tkacz to get an update on the mass graves that have been found over the years around the grounds of Eastern State Hospital (soon to become the Bluegrass Community and Technical College Newtown Pike campus). On May 14, Tkacz and others will gather to both remember and properly re-bury the remains of a number of the hospital’s former patients.*

North of Center: In December 2010, Bruce Burris published an article in *North of Center* on your attempts to draw public awareness and recognition to a mass grave discovered on the back side of the Eastern State Hospital lot. Bruce described the site as a “tiny spot, not much larger than a typical middle class backyard, [that] contains the remains of between 4,000 and 7,000 people — mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, politicians, shopkeepers, farmers...humans.” He also noted that “these numbers do not include the remains of the many thousands more we believe to be scattered throughout the original ESH property.” Can you update us on what new things you have found since then?

Phil Tkacz: We have not been able to ascertain a better number. The most recent graves found total 178. There are more in an area north of that, but the state’s budget prevents them from removing those remains at this time. As of this month, we have the names of 1,912 people buried on the property. These we have obtained mostly through death certificates and relatives that have shared information.

NoC: The 2010 article produced a massive amount of comments on our website. We had so much response we felt compelled to run a follow-up piece that collected some of the comments. To this day, it remains our most-commented-upon piece; as recently as this past March, you have had to respond to new queries. What have your actions tapped into?

PT: Unfortunately we haven’t been able to help most of those relatives with specific information other than whether or not they’re buried on the hospital property. It does show, despite the many years that have passed for some of the patients that have died, there are still relatives living looking for information about them and where their remains are.

NoC: Your story is partially about how,



Monument at Eastern State Hospital Cemetery. Photo by Danny Mayer.

historically, we have treated the sick and damaged and poor amongst us. Do you see these issues continuing into our present public commitment to serve our entire community?

PT: The closure of many state hospitals in the U.S. didn’t really fix any problems. Today, jails, prisons, and homeless shelters have become the defacto asylums.

NoC: How have you been received by the state? The 2010 article noted that it has made access difficult to burial and death certificates—things that family members have also had difficulty accessing. Does that still remain the case?

PT: The state has not changed their stance on any old records unfortunately. There is a process to obtain records requests by family, but it is slow and many say they never get an answer. Federal laws concerning patient privacy and old records have changed. The state now says it is state law that keeps them from releasing any records. However, to date I have not been shown the law to support that. An iron coffin found in 2011 has a person’s name on it. Unfortunately the state claims the name is protected by law and will never be given to anyone.

NoC: With the transfer of ownership from Eastern State Hospital to Bluegrass Community and Technical College, have you noted any difference in working relationship?

PT: I can’t say there has been much of a difference yet. BCTC has told me they are interested in the cemetery, and we hope to be able to do more with the space, including a memorial, once they are moved in.

NoC: What is taking place on May 14?

PT: A short presentation at the cemetery will be given to explain the process that went on when the University of Kentucky did their research of the remains. There will then be a ceremony in which the remains will be re-interred in small boxes with the iron coffin that is intact.

The presentation will take place on May 14 at 11 am at the ESH gym (Megowant Building) and then move to the cemetery at 11:30 am for the reburial ceremony. The cemetery is located on the back end of the BCTC Newtown Pike campus, directly behind the Hope Center on Loudon Avenue. For more information, visit <http://easternstatehospital.wordpress.com/>



Subway digging, cont.

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empty desk metaphor alone: nothing left for me to say.

There was a pleasant surprise in finding out that Lexington’s police force had at least three black policemen even way back when. The rub, though, was that they patrolled only “colored” areas and could not arrest whites. They had to call it in and wait for white cops to collar a white man, even if they caught him in the act. *Surely the practice had to be different than the theory*, I’ve asked a few older African-Americans. Even the French would agree with such common sense modification. No, they assured me: that’s the way it was.

Some things I already knew about—but only generally. I knew, for example, that housing for blacks was restricted to certain areas, though the variety and richness of the many different neighborhoods surprised me. Many of the names have a certain poetry: Cadentown, Uttingertown, Fort Springs, Speigle Heights, Smithown, Taylortown, Pralltown, Kinkeadtown, Brucetown. But if the names had poetry, the reality was more like bad prose. Many of these neighborhoods had no sewage; many houses had no indoor plumbing. Some shotguns depended only on luck and grace to keep them standing.

Of course, there were many finely maintained houses in these neighborhoods. Not all the “colored” were poor. But poor or not, you lived in the “colored” section. I knew this, but didn’t understand, until I listened to the people talk about what it meant to live within these borders.

In 1948, housing was very tight for everyone--Lexington still had rent control. Returning World War II veterans were having babies and all those houses

that didn’t get built in the Depression or the War still hadn’t been built.

But hard as it was on whites, blacks had it tougher. Here’s Amanda Cooper Elliot in one of UK’s oral history tapes, talking about Ohio Street:

“Ohio Street opened up—300 block, then the 400 block. The powers-that-be would select certain streets or certain areas where we could live.”

Ms. Elliot then talks of one man who didn’t follow the rules:

“First black man on Breckenridge Street moved right on the corner and he had a rough time... Bombs in cans and throw them on his porch... Garbage in yard... But he didn’t move. But we couldn’t move just anywhere” (Amanda Cooper Elliot, born 1921, living in Kinkeadtown, interviewed by Betsy Adler, 4/15/93).

Ohio Street opening up, block by block, as the powers-that-be tried to dictate people’s lives in a way that seems astonishing to us. The powers had a lot of informal help with their rules. I discovered several accounts where black businesses or homes were firebombed-when “colored” went where they weren’t welcome. Right here in very polite Lexington.

Scott and Estill Counties were less polite in their racism.

As a writer, I want to bring that past home to us. Because, as Faulkner tells us, it’s not past. The attitudes may have mellowed, the racism become less overt, but the history that formed us—all of us, white, black, “colored”—is right under the surface. And we’re in luck: unlike the Romans, we don’t have to dig up any subways to find it.

Just ask any African-American of a certain age: they’ll tell you where to dig,



“Ohio Street opened up—300 block, then the 400 block. The powers-that-be would select certain streets or certain areas where we could live.” Amanda Cooper Elliot. Photo by Danny Mayer.

Review: Mud and The Place Beyond the Pines

Coming of age in the Southern Gothic

By Colleen Glenn

Every now and then, a film comes along that feels authentic and startlingly fresh. This rarity happened twice this spring, as two such films graced the screen at the Kentucky Theatre during April/May: *Mud* (dir: Jeff Nichols) and *The Place Beyond the Pines* (dir: Derek Cianfrance).

Although the Kentucky Theatre had to cancel its special event/premiere of *Mud* when Oscar-nominated, Lexington native actor Michael Shannon’s shooting schedule on HBO’s “Boardwalk Empire” changed, you should still get down to the Kentucky to see the film. The theatre, currently in the expensive process of converting to digital projection, still needs funds to support this transition, and *Mud* will not disappoint.

Set in Arkansas, *Mud*’s emphasis on the Mississippi River and its subculture invariably conjures the spirit of Huck Finn, complete with its absentee parents, cycles of domestic abuse, and respect for the flowing body of water that defines its protagonists. Yet, screenwriter and director Jeff Nichols’ vision of the South feels more akin to Faulkner than to Twain: for Nichols, the South is a place where our memories and our personal histories work as traps, keeping us tethered to pain and to familiar places.

In the case of *Mud* (Matthew McConaughey), his all-consuming love for his first love, Juniper (Reese Witherspoon), has literally confined him to an uninhabited island on the river, where he hides after having killed a man who brutally abused her. When two young teenage boys, Ellis (Tye Sheridan) and Neckbone (Jacob Lofland), discover *Mud* living in the abandoned boat they had claimed as their own, an unlikely friendship develops between the three, but particularly between *Mud* and Ellis, who draws closer to *Mud* as he distances himself from his own father. Initially, Ellis supplies *Mud* with food, but eventually, he and Neckbone go to great lengths to provide *Mud* with the necessary supplies to refurbish the boat so that *Mud* can escape.

Mud boasts incredibly strong and compelling performances from an array of actors. Undoubtedly, *Mud* represents one of McConaughey’s strongest film performances to date; as in *Bernie* (2011) and *Killer Joe* (2011), he resists the urge to be charming and instead relies on an understated presence that creates a captivating, drifting character. Most impressive are Sheridan and Lofland, who prove their nascent acting

chops with aplomb against a solid and experienced cast. Lexington has reason to be proud of this film, as two actors we lay claim to, Sam Shepard, who lives in Midway, and Michael Shannon (who starred in Nichols’ *Take Shelter* (2011)), turn out terrific performances in important supporting roles. Like *Mud*, the mysterious recluse Tom Blankenship (Shepard) and Neckbone’s Uncle Galen (Shannon) serve as surrogate parents in a world where mothers and fathers seem scarce or inept, though the surrogates,



Ellis (Tye Sheridan), Neckbone (Jacob Lofland) strike an unlikely friendship with a wanted man, Mud (Matthew McConaughey).

too, fumble clumsily to guide their charges. Witherspoon is really the only casting choice that doesn’t pay off: her star persona is distracting and unnecessary in a supporting role that would have benefitted more from a lesser-known actor.

Mud’s languid pacing and meditative style are punctuated by moments of intense emotion and suspense, and like other movies that have contemplated the power of a river (*Apocalypse Now*, *The Mosquito Coast*), there is a magical realism at work in the relationship of man and nature. In another river film, *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*, the boat that hangs in the trees towards the film’s end, presumably the result of a flood years ago, serves as a token of previous human failure to survive the river and predicts Aguirre’s demise; in *Mud*, the boat in the trees becomes a gift from above that will ensure *Mud*’s future.

Though *The Place Beyond the Pines* is set in Schenectady, NY, it, too, arguably belongs to the realm of the Southern Gothic, where poverty, violence, and alienation seem part and parcel of a landscape that is at once both mystical and wasted. Trailer parks, scrap yards, forests, and roads become part of the

-muted visual landscape of both movies, which, as their titles indicate, ground themselves in (dark) places. Like *Mud*, *Beyond the Pines* is a coming of age story—or rather, it becomes one—as two teenage boys discover and come to grips with the actions of their fathers.

Beyond the Pines is ultimately less successful as a film than *Mud*, but its opening act, which reunites director Derek Cianfrance with Ryan Gosling (*Blue Velvet* (2010)), remains the most arresting piece of film I have seen in a very long time. This section of the movie

deals with motorcycle stunt rider Luke (Gosling), his discovery of the existence of a child he did not know he had fathered, and his subsequent attempts to reinstate himself as the father of his son. Though the mother, Romina (Eva Mendes) appears to love Luke, she has chosen to raise her son with Kofi (Mahershala Ali), a far more stable partner than the adrenaline junkie Luke, who travels from small town to small town on a carnival act circuit. At the suggestion of his newfound friend Robin (Ben Mendelsohn), Luke begins robbing banks in order to financially provide for his small, estranged family and to win them back. Eventually, Luke’s bank robbing and getaway sprees on his motorcycle catch up with him, and he comes face to face with the local



Luke (Ryan Gosling) struggles to reinsert himself in a family circle he unknowingly abandoned.

law enforcement, in the form of Avery (Bradley Cooper).

The second and third acts I found far less interesting, as the second one becomes a cliché police drama, though it had the potential to be something much more unique, and the third act, which deals with the seemingly inevitable meeting between the sons of Avery and Luke, wavers between a teen drama, a morality play, and a public service announcement. Thankfully, neither AJ (Emory Cohen) nor Jason (Dane DeHaan) utter, “I learned it by watching you!” but the “sins of the father” theme is so heavy-handed that it’s a wonder they did not. They could have saved time and money by pulling stock footage from any number of commercials or movies rather than shoot the formulaic final image of the film.

Despite its shortcomings, however, the movie is compelling from start to finish, creating an ongoing tension as a sinister force seems at work in every scene. But nothing in the last two-thirds of the film compares to the first act, which is dominated by a superb performance by Gosling, who is as heartbreakingly vulnerable and short-sighted as he is genuine and resolute. His tattooed body, like *Mud*’s, reads like a map of scars: in many shots, he looks like a boy whose age caught up with him. Most of all, though, Luke radiates the kind of intense loneliness that makes one truly desperate: desperate to do right, to connect with his son, to be a meaningful part of this world. Although the film offers many strong performances, Ben Mendelsohn deserves particular notice for his highly moving and realistic rendition of Robin, a fatherly figure-friend who seeks to help Luke but ultimately leads him horribly astray. Bradley Cooper delivers a fine performance, but makes much less of an impact than Gosling, who plays the more intriguing character. Ray Liotta, as a corrupt police detective, is underused in a section of the story that badly needed original development.

Like *Mud*, *A Place Beyond the Pines* seems taken with movement and place: the cinematography in each film captures characters in motion, whether reckless or passive, against backdrops at once banal and magnificent. The frenetic shots of Luke racing through the woods, like the shots of Ellis sitting in the back of his dad’s truck watching the town drift by, remain hauntingly beautiful moments of escape within a much wider realm of stagnation—indications that change will come, one way or another.

BUILD, cont.

Continued from page 1

Ford and Steve Kay said they would vote “yes” for the fund, as they have for years; however, Councilmembers Jennifer Mossotti and Peggy Henson replied “no.” They, along with several of their colleagues, need some convincing. But they’ve been warned: BUILD will drive them crazy with persistence.

The second action item—removing the ID barrier to ex-offender reentry—brought considerably more success for the evening. After generally looking at obstacles to successful reentry, BUILD decided to focus on IDs, a most essential part of functioning in society. Without an ID, one cannot get a job, rent an apartment, open a bank account, and many other daily responsibilities that may deter one from future crime. In Fayette County, obtaining an ID once released from the Detention Center has been a great hurdle in the past. Last year, 48 of 50 people who came to the Hope Center after time in corrections did not have an ID, BUILD has been told. Slow paperwork processing, and simply lack of money, keep IDs out of the hands of men and women looking to return to society.

Through research, BUILD found that Indiana’s Department of Corrections employs best practices for reissuing IDs. Rodney Ballard, the Director of the Fayette County Detention Center, and Vince Riggs, the Circuit Court Clerk, both attended the Nehemiah Action and agreed to travel to Indianapolis in the summer with BUILD to learn more about Indiana’s processes. Actually, Ballard agreed to send a reentry coordinator whom he plans to hire within the next months. All in all, it seems the officials are on board with BUILD—they want to see more successful reentries and have committed to making ID acquisition more feasible.

In summary: no check marks yet. None of these three issues are finished to BUILD’s satisfaction. There’s been progress, but there’s more work to do—some of it that promises to be quite grueling. But what’s important is that these issues aren’t just sitting on a list. They’re at the forefront for a significant number of Lexington community members who are fiercely advocating for their completion.

Question: Do you support the Affordable Housing Trust Fund?

Chris Ford said yes...



“Councilmembers Chris Ford and Steve Kay said they would vote ‘yes’ for the [affordable housing trust] fund, as they have for years; however, Councilmembers Jennifer Mossotti and Peggy Henson replied ‘no.’” Photos by AJ Coffey.

...Mossotti did not.



“Vienna Sausages are the epitome of convenience—an unnatural, pulsing pink, interrogative light, the shortest shortcut from base need to fulfillment.”

MAY 2013

The Upper Duck

By Wesley Houp

Editor’s note: What follows is an account of Wesley Houp and Danny Mayer, intrepid paddlers of the Kentucky River watershed, as they branch into Tennessee waters.

By the time we’ve trimmed the gear and bungied loose odds and ends, the sky has turned to pitch, not quite the “bible-black” of Tweedy’s pre-dawn, but close enough. The waning crescent, locked out, fails to backlight the low cloud-cover. It’s only 5:30pm but it might as well be midnight. The magnetic sibilance of shoalwater dilates my pupils as I turn in the current to face the dark downstream. This is Danny’s first Duck River paddle, a stretch we’ve planned for months, and we’ve already had to trim eight miles off the front, concession to wives and children waiting patiently at journey’s end. We’ll miss the Little Hurricane and Fall Creeks, but we’ll still camp tonight at the mouth of Sinking Creek above the nameless island and mussel-bound braids of Shearin Bend. We find our line, hit the chute and shoot down the middle in quick succession, boats for tongues in a manner of articulation, the river, the ultimate grammar, its nominals of stone and deadfall submerging and emerging, modifications lisping and lapping, auxiliary perfect and progressive with modal: “Even when you’re gone, I will have been traveling over the stones for an eternity.”

Danny lets out a joyous little “whoop”, but I’m momentarily distracted; some water finds its way over my gunnels and into my shoes, reminding me of what I’ve forgotten: waterproof boots. My worn out Sperrys sponge up the slosh. At least the night is mild, and with only a thirty percent chance of rain perhaps my feet alone will suffer the indignities of damp. As if to lighten the mood, the bottle of Jim Beam #7 clears its throat: “Shoes come and go, but a river lasts forever. Bottoms up. Downstream and seaward!” Danny drifts up beside me, and we heed the call.

Though Sinking Creek rises ten or so miles due south of the Duck, it debouches from the north, snaking around the outbow of Shearin Bend and doubling back just as the river swings to the southeast and then due south. It’s been two months since my last camp here, and the water has dropped six inches or so. We bottom out no more than fifty yards in and nudge our way through the darkness to a leading ledge of limestone on the south side. The bank is high, twenty-five feet or so, and steep; fortunately, though, the exposed roots of a large sycamore provide a sturdy ladder up to a small relief, and from there, a deer trail angles up to flat ground in the woods. We pack up the gear, four dry bags filled with sleeping bags, inflatable mats, a small tent, and bare essentials for cooking (a single-burner stove, a mess kit, hunting knife, coffee mugs), a soiled, wet cloth bag filled with easy food (two cans of beans, a box of Clif Bars, three tins of sardines, two bottles of water, a Ziploc filled with herbal tea, and a handle of bourbon), another small bag with bunge cords and rope, and a small tarp. We manage the carry in two trips. We stow it all around the base of a scraggily boxelder and start collecting kindling from the deadfall litter. The area is as flat as can be hoped for with a generous layer of surprisingly dry boxelder, hickory and red oak duff. In a matter of minutes, we’ve amassed a small pyre,

but it burns niggardly, barely bathing the wooded swale with yellow light that only implies the dark fringe of cedar glade up the hill, south.

Sinking Creek, Tributary Diversions, and Vienna Sausages

Sinking Creek diminishes to a modest trickle this time of year, and seems to disappear altogether just before its confluence with the Duck, leaving its bed of large boulders and intricately etched bedrock shelves mostly dry. From its mouth it bends sharply south then sharply east in a softened “Z” before bending south again. We’re camped in the first of these acute turns, not 200 yards from the confluence. Sinking rises many miles due south of here on Elk Ridge, the high ground that divvies up the rest of south central Tennessee’s waters among the Duck to the north and the Elk River to the south. The Elk then transports its water and material into Alabama and eventually finds the Tennessee somewhere where stars have fallen. The Duck flows in a more or less straight line to the northwest and the western valley of the Tennessee, exhib-

of at least three ancient rivers and two master watersheds. The scenario they support has the antecedent Tennessee debouching its waters into the Gulf Embayment in northern portions of present-day Mississippi and Alabama during the Tertiary. As the Eastern Continental Shelf continued to experience uplift and sea levels receded to the southwest, one of the Tennessee’s northern tributaries captured the northwest-flowing ancestral Duck River. The Duck’s present-day confluence with the Tennessee, they contend, suggests such a capture. At its mouth the northwest-flowing Duck bends radically back to the south before entering the Tennessee, a feature suggestive of radical drainage modification. Normally, tributaries enter at acute angles complementary of the master stream’s course-direction. The Duck, then, for some span of geologic time, was diverted through this unnamed ancestral tributary south to the Tennessee, creating its unorthodox lower configuration. As a result of this capture, the Ohio River lost a major player in its evolving watershed, but only for a time.



Floating on the Upper Duck. Photo by Wesley Houp.

iting what geologists call *persistence of course*, with northwest the *direction of first intent*. In its former life, though, as several theories hold, the Duck flowed northwest all the way to the Ohio River.

A quick-take paddler’s translation of geomorphology: if a river follows an overall steady course-direction over a long enough distance, like the 270-mile Duck, it is less likely that it has followed another course contrary to the original, stratigraphy’s and gravity’s “first intent.” The river goes the path of least resistance, the path of minimum variance over time and space.

Danny lies on his side, nestled into the now-warm and radiant duff, nursing a cold beer. The clouds break low; a few stars breach the canopy. “So what you’re saying is that rivers don’t go out of their way but hurry downstream toward the sea?”

“More or less, excepting cataclysmic upheaval and, in the case of the Duck, major deflection of the Tennessee River due to recession of the sea itself.” I poke a punky log in the heart of the embers.

The prevailing theories of drainage modification for the Tennessee River show it following a Cretaceous course out of present-day Chattanooga, and instead of turning radically north toward the Ohio Valley in present-day Alabama, it continued southwest and joined the Coosa River system, working its way to the Old Gulf Embayment. Etnier and Starnes hypothesize that the enigmatic lower Tennessee probably represents restless and gullible thrums

During the Pleistocene, sea levels continued to fall as more and more water was locked up by glaciation. As the glaciers fluctuated between freeze and thaw, increased volumes of melt-water allowed the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers to gouge deeper and deeper channels, much deeper than those they exhibit today. In its lower portion the ancestral Duck, as if to have the last word in a passing argument, regained a “gradient advantage” over the Tennessee and recaptured the unnamed north-south connecting tributary, and ultimately unified the Tennessee into its historical and strange configuration, its lower section now shunning the south and running unabated north toward a neck and neck finish with the Cumberland River at the Ohio.

Luther, in *Our Restless Earth*: The Geologic Regions of Tennessee, outlines a similar evolution, only his account leaves out the medial stage when the lower Duck was wholly captured and diverted south. His hypothesis has the Duck maintaining its first intent—a northwesterly flow—and gaining gradient advantage as the Ohio cut below the valley of the Tennessee and eventually redirected the Tennessee’s flow from south to north.

Danny has nodded off in the warmth of the fire despite the steady condensation of my river-blather. I lean back against a boxelder stump, light my pipe, and peruse my topographic charts. Around Branchville and Richmond, three rills form Sinking Creek in the southwest-most corner of Bedford

County, followed soon to the north by another small branch slipping down from the heights above Cortner Hollow. On the north end of Cortner Hollow, Cortner Branch rises and flows north in a more or less parallel course and meets Sinking as its primary influence in the upper stretch several miles later. The emboldened Sinking continues north (through three noteworthy braids) and bends course to the northeast and takes on Little Sinking, its primary tributary overall. Little Sinking rise some three miles due south and flows north in a more or less parallel course, a mile east of the mainstream. The creek then, all its principle contributors in order, flows northerly to its Duck River destination, and all told, the Sinking watershed covers a north-south-oriented rectangle of earth, two miles in width, about ten miles in length.

With this important detail out of the way, I can now get down to brass tacks: Vienna Sausages. We decided at an earlier, more critical juncture (when we were already running terribly late) not to worry about hot food. We packed the single-burner for making hot tea in the morning and this seemed extravagance enough. For hunger, I brought tins of processed and, quite frankly, frighteningly finger-like meat-stuff packed in clear jelly. I break the seal on a tin, tear back the top with an unapologetic metallic scrape, and inspect the contents by firelight: a cylinder, a drum, a clip of pale meat bullets. The first one’s always the hardest to extract unmo- lested, but once it’s removed its absence provides finger- room for niggling a purchase on the others. I proceed in this fashion until all six meat fingers are vanquished. My hunger is sated, but I somehow feel lessened by what was hardly complementary to culinary experience.

I turn over the irony a few times and relight my pipe. Vienna Sausages are antithetical to the reason I seek out river-time at every opportunity. Rivers aren’t packed, inert, covered in gelatin; rivers are never the same way twice. Each experience offers a different taste, a different smell, a different feel. Rivers have always been inconvenient, and to make them convenient we have ruined them, dammed them, leveed them, redirected their flow, regulated them, despoiled them with our effluent, and sucked them dry at times.

But inconvenience is a margin where one can disappear. Vienna Sausages are the epitome of convenience—an unnatural, pulsing pink, interrogative light, the shortest shortcut from base need to fulfillment. Vienna Sausages do not advance us as a species (like, say, a butane lighter does) but hold us hostage to our own complacencies, position us squarely in the center of our own crowded, static predicament. The sound of someone opening a tin of Vienna Sausages is the sound of a hammer drawing back. We’ll never even hear the report. We’ll just wake up dead again, still packed upright in gelatin while rivers, bound and gagged, continue to flow to the seas until they throw off the imposition of humanity once and for all and again go about nourishing the world.



Ensuring terrorists succeed

By Marcus Flores

I spent my honeymoon in Curacao, an island in the southern Caribbean quite near Venezuela. Flying by commercial airline in the post-9/11 era entails security procedures that, while mildly inconvenient to some (my wife, for example), constitute civil rights infringements to others. As a libertarian, I think I needn't bother saying to which camp I belong.

Perhaps it comes with the ideology, but I am also not scared shitless of the .00000004% chance of dying in a terrorist attack. No, what unnerves me is the chance that some drunken airline mechanic fails to notice a leaky hose, or that a recently divorced pilot brings his distractful personal baggage with him into the cockpit. (I am not at all reassured by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) report on the Comair Flight 5191 disaster, which listed small talk among the factors that led the pilot down the wrong runway at Bluegrass Airport in 2006.) In short, I hope that more attention is directed at preventable dangers rather than the guy with the beard.

Until my Curacao trip, I had been lucky enough to avoid those airports that fully utilize the wretched body scanners—never needing to submit my non-confrontational disposition to the awkward but necessary task of trying to defend my rights. At least to maintain the semblance of respect, a sign at Louisville International Airport notifies you that the scanning procedure is “optional,” meaning you can forego the nude photo op for...what, exactly? I asked, only to learn that a pat down would substitute. Being on my honeymoon, I decided I did not want the first

foreign hands on me to be those of some imp of the government. So, my battle lost, into the scanner I went.

The procedure was harmless, I think. Or maybe thousands of frequent flyers will someday develop brain tumors only explainable by the time spent discounting them as terrorists. Not that the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has been particularly effective in that endeavor, having ensnared a slew of grannies, disabled children, and a U.S. Senator while missing the shoe and underwear bombers. I was later struck by the idea that maybe the most dangerous area in the airport is right there awaiting security screening. Exactly nothing stops a smartly dressed mad man from strolling into the “secure area” and detonating himself before reaching a single TSA agent. Such attacks, remember, are not without precedent (see the bombing of Domodedovo Airport in Moscow, in January 2011).

Since 9/11, popular attitudes now also serve as a deterrent to airline hijackings. Richard Reid, the shoe bomber, could barely light a match before he was swarmed and hogtied by flight attendants and passengers. Similarly, a Dutch passenger hurdled rows of seats to subdue Umar Farouk Abdul Mutallab, whose pathetic attempt at terrorism likely ended with his scorched groin as the only casualty. Airliners no longer seem that conducive to terrorism simply because passengers refuse to go quietly; it is an attitude every American ought to carry with him wherever he goes.

In the events that transpired following the Boston Bombings, I began to wonder why that same rage against victimization was conspicuously absent.

Continued on page 7

127 years of personhood

How a clerk turned corporations into humans

By Joy Arnold

It is claimed by some that 127 years ago, on May 10, 1886, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) decided that corporations are people. The claim is not true, though it is hard to imagine a more disastrous impact even if it were: it has been taken for true, with disastrous consequences for the American public.

In the 1880s, Santa Clara County, California, under the state constitution, could tax railroads on their franchise, roadway, railway, rails, and rolling stock. As was its right, the county levied taxes on fences appearing on the Southern Pacific Railroad's property; at the same time, it did not deduct the amount of the mortgage from the value taxed. When Southern Pacific refused to pay these taxes, the county brought suit in state court.

In response, the railroad had the matter removed to the federal system, where the Federal Court for the Northern District of California agreed with the railroad that the state (or its counties) could not tax fences and must deduct the amount of the mortgage from the taxable value of property. Santa Clara appealed to SCOTUS, where the lower court ruling was affirmed.

A clerk creates corporate personhood

Cases decided by SCOTUS are recorded in *United States Reports*, a many-volumes long archive used by attorneys to search for precedent when preparing arguments for their cases. Above the actual decision, the Clerk of the Court constructs headnotes intended to summarize the holdings of the particular case and outline its arguments. In the case of *Santa Clara v. Southern Pacific*

Railroad, the clerk was one Bancroft Davis, former president of the Newburg and New York Railway Company.

Before arguments were heard in the *Santa Clara* case, Chief Justice Morrison Waite commented to Clerk Davis, “The court does not wish to hear argument on the question whether the provision of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to these corporations. We are all of the opinion that it does.”

Though no argument was heard on the issue of what has come to be called “corporate personhood,” the legal basis for the idea originates from Davis's headnote. In other words, *Santa Clara* was not, as Wikipedia states, a Fourteenth Amendment case; it was a tax case, based on the taxing authority of California and Santa Clara County's implementation of that authority. Its decision makes no reference to arguments made in the railroad's brief on the matter of corporate personhood. The headnote was merely a report by the clerk of a personal opinion held by Chief Justice Waite about what he asserted was the opinion of the rest of the court.

Nevertheless, the Davis headnote has been cited as precedent for establishing corporations as people and entitled to the protections set out in the Fourteenth Amendment, which was passed in 1868 to assure equal protection under the law to freed slaves. Though that was the intent in the amendment's passage, for the first 30 years after its passage, until the decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896, big businesses seized on the amendment for self-benefit. Of the 150 cases

Continued on page 7

Transcript of secret NRA tape recording hints at future initiatives

The Leek: a satirical take

By Horace Heller Hedley, IV

A confidential source has provided *The Leek* with a surreptitious tape of a strategy session held by senior officials of the National Rifle Association (NRA). The recording was made on April 18, 2013, the day after measures banning assault weapons and extending gun buyer background checks were defeated in the Senate.

The confidential source told *The Leek* that he entered the meeting with a recording device concealed in an oversized ammunition clip attached to an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle. The weapon did not arouse suspicion and was not searched.

The Leek took no direct part in making the recording. Therefore, whatever the legality of the recording, *The Leek* is exercising its First Amendment right to publish the manuscript, and is held harmless from legal liability under Supreme Court precedent set in the case of *Bartnicki v. Vopper*.

The participants in the NRA meeting appear to have been senior policymakers and legal specialists within the organization, but could not be identified.

[Sounds of general merriment and celebration]

Voice 1: OK, everybody. So we're all pretty amped up after yesterday's legislative massacre. [woops and applause] But this is no time to kick back and rest on our laurels. So I called together you all in the Public Issues Branch—Legal, Media Outreach, and Lawmaker Monetary Influence—to run some ideas by you about how we might press our advantage. We don't know how long this window of opportunity will stay open before the next unfortunate public shooting incident makes us play defense again.

Voice 2: Right, so, it wasn't cheap, but we cleaned up in the Senate. [more woops and applause] But man, it was worth our whole \$3 million lobbying budget just to see Manchin and Toomey sweatin' right through their silk shirts. They'll need new wardrobes for their final years of public life—and not on our dime. [laughter] Of course teachers will be handing out some big, shiny F's on our legislator ratings next time. That will spell *sayonara* for Manchin and Toomey. We might even pick off Reid and some of the purple state Dems. Then we'll really own the place.

Voice 3: At that point we go big. We all know that the Second Amendment establishes a fundamental constitutional right to bear arms. [woops and applause] But the Constitution does not establish a right to *not* bear arms. [excited whispers] You all with me?

Voice 1: So we've been thinking—with a veto-proof majority in the Senate, we could begin to push a whole new kind of gun legislation, challenging the right to be unarmed. We could push it as a public safety issue. We are each our brother's keeper, am I correct? So what right do I have to shirk my responsibility to contribute to public safety by walking around unarmed?

Voice 4: Oh, sweet. So we shoot for the whole tamale—federal mandatory-carry legislation.

Voice 1: Absolutely, national mandatory-carry for every citizen 18 and



Illustration by Christopher Epling.

older is the Promised Land. But we don't want to get greedy. So I would propose a preliminary step just to get people used to the idea—*mandatory background checks for all citizens not owning firearms*. [more excited whispers]

Voice 3: Right. We think this will make sense to people. If you are determined to shirk your fundamental responsibility as a citizen and dump it onto your neighbor, the public deserves an explanation. So we check backgrounds and post them on a public database.

Voice 1: But we wouldn't want the requirement to be too rigid. There could be exemptions for the elderly, people with bad finger tremors, blind

people, that sort of thing. The background check could turn up those sort of problems.

Voice 5: Hey, you think Jeff Flake will sponsor the mandatory background check bill? Or maybe Mitch?

Voice 6: Flake will have his hands full—he'll take some lumps next election for standing against Gabby Giffords. Not Mitch either. His buddy Rand Paul will give him fits on the civil liberties angle.

Voice 3: It's no sweat guys, someone will sponsor it. Senators be lining up at the confessional to do their penance.

Voice 1: Mandatory-carry may be within reach, gentlemen. Buy your Smith & Wesson stock early!

Sex exclusions

Open letter to the UK community

March 31, 2013

Dear UK Faculty, Students, and Staff:

I am writing this letter to make you aware of a discriminatory policy that is in place at the University of Kentucky, a policy that I have been personally affected by and which the University continues to stand behind. According to the UK-HMO Description of Benefits and Services, the following health care coverage is listed as an exclusion: “Sex Transformation/Sexual Dysfunction—Services, supplies, drugs or other care related to sex transformation, gender identity, sexual or erectile dysfunction or inadequacies.” Setting aside the problematic conflation of sex transformation and sexual dysfunction, this policy directly discriminates against transgender members of the UK community.

I learned of this exclusion because I have been denied coverage for routine and required medical care that I received in 2011. The background for this situation is as follows: in 2011, I had two appointments with an endocrinologist at the Kentucky Clinic which were necessary for monitoring my continued (and lifelong) hormone therapy. These visits were not related to “sex transformation” since I had legally changed my sex prior to my employment at UK. Coverage of these visits was denied on the basis that any services related to gender identity are not covered. I immediately began to challenge this decision through the appeals process of Kentucky Medical Services. After a back-and-forth exchange that lasted for more than a year, Kentucky Medical Services stated that their decision was final.

At that point, in August 2012, I followed the guidelines for reporting a complaint of discrimination, and I took

Terrorists, cont.

Continued from page 6

A little chaos following the explosions can be attributed to basic human physiology—loud sounds trigger the startle reflex in most mammalian species. The security response to the attack, however, seemed fashioned to induce more panic than the bombs themselves. Taxi services were suspended, subways stalled. Workplaces ground to a halt. A no-fly zone was established. A Black Hawk helicopter circled the city. It makes one wonder if Gov. Deval Patrick hadn’t borrowed his disaster script from Don DeLillo and inserted Rambo as a villain.

Except it was not Sylvester Stallone or anyone nearly as fearsome. The surviving suspect is a curly headed loser who happened to rig a pressure cooker to explode—not a feat beyond anyone with a high school education and a local hardware store. Then, after the suspect had been apprehended, President Obama said the bombers failed because the city of Boston had “refused to be intimidated.” What is intimidation, if not two days of martial law? Boston’s paralysis proved that even when terrorists fail, we ensure they succeed by cowering in fear; instead of respectfully morning the victims, we disgrace them by surrendering more rights. Even when the casualty count is zero—as was the case with Richard Reid and Umar Farouk Abdul Mutallab—new policies force us to remove our shoes and submit to digital strip searches.

Now, there are already calls for more public surveillance following the events in Boston. I specifically mention GOP Representative Peter King who said cameras, which aided in identifying the suspects, enable us “to stay ahead of the terrorists.” Imagine those same TSA agents who overlook explosives and weapons set before a slew of screens, monitoring millions for misplaced backpacks in NYC.

At the end of the day, I prefer the occasional terrorist to the surveillance state.

my case to the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity. I was assured that my case would be considered by the Kentucky Employee Benefits Committee. According to an email, the Kentucky Employee Benefits Committee discussed changing the coverage policy in their meeting on September 18, 2012, but ultimately voted to maintain the current policy. I was not informed of this decision until March 26, 2013, after I had initiated further investigation into this issue when my outstanding medical bills were sent to a collections agency. After more than two years of fighting this policy, I have resigned to pay the outstanding medical bills and share my story.

In writing this letter, I want to encourage those of you who are invested in an equitable environment at UK to consider addressing three issues that my situation has highlighted:

First, I would encourage you to advocate for a change in the health care benefits provided. The exclusion of “sex transformation” and “gender identity” does not only prohibit coverage for major medical procedures and surgeries, but also everyday and routine care that is medically necessary for a transgender individual to be healthy. At the very least, striking “gender identity” from this policy would enable transgender people to have access to the same health care benefits that are extended to non-transgender people.

Second, I would encourage you to advocate for the addition of “gender identity and expression” to the

Nondiscrimination Policy. The current policy provides no protections for transgender faculty, students, or staff. During my official correspondence with UK, this policy was presented to me seemingly to imply that UK has no obligation to consider how their policies discriminate against transgender people. While those of you who remain tied to UK may have a clearer sense, I would suggest beginning this advocacy by contacting the Office for Institutional Diversity and the LGBT Task Force. There is a long and growing list of colleges and universities that protect transgender individuals under their nondiscrimination policy (see, for example, the University of Louisville), and I would hope that UK would want to join their ranks.

Third, I would encourage you to advocate for an improved process for reporting and appealing a case of discrimination. I made contact with the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity in August 2012. While the Kentucky Employee Benefits Committee discussed and voted down a policy change in their meeting on September 18, 2012, I was not notified of this vote. Instead, on March 9, 2013, I had to initiate another inquiry regarding my case. It was not until more than two weeks later, March 26, 2013, that I was made aware of the decision that had been made in September, six months earlier. In the meantime, my outstanding medical bills were being handled by a collections agency. This is a disappointing response, to say the least. But

reference materials, etc., for those who are interested.

Quite a few people don’t know of its existence--what a shame. The real Lexington is buried there, why don’t you check it out?

By the way, I just got a copy of your paper from my daughter: I score it 8 out of 10.

Sincerely,
Jack Ross
Eagle Scout
Homeless advocate
Business owner without income
Teamster son
Creator

and small local businesses. The crowning piece of this legislation, The Tea Act, passed in May of 1773. By December, patriots arose and conducted that most honorably recognized example of civil disobedience, the Boston tea party.

Today, we must echo those bold actions, not by dressing as Indians and throwing tea overboard ships docked in a harbor, but by amending the Constitution to clearly establish that artificial entities created by the people—corporations, but also non-profits and unions—are not people and that money is not speech.

This will require a massive public re-education: we were taught little or nothing of the development of corporations in our history classes, and of their growing role in our national governance. If you are interested in learning more, please join Central Kentucky Move to Amend (CKYMTA), an affiliate of the national coalition Move to Amend, at the downtown library’s Farish Theater on Saturday, May 11, at 2:00 pm for a viewing of *The Corporation*. The documentary outlines the growth of corporations from their historical emergence in colonial America to their current “human” status.

For more information about the viewing, or for information on joining the movement to amend the Constitution to disallow corporate personhood, contact CKYMTA at ckymta@gmail.com and check out the MTA website at moveto-amend.org. CKYMTA has a page there.

perhaps even more concerning than this prolonged and inefficient process of investigating a matter of discrimination is that I have now exhausted the official channels for appealing my case. To my knowledge, the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity is the only path for complaint, and now that I have heard an official decision I am left without recourse.

As many of you may know, in 2011 The Princeton Review ranked UK as the 19th most LGBT unfriendly campus. The University’s refusal to support basic health care coverage for transgender people that would equal the health care coverage provided to non-transgender employees is a form of targeted discrimination that further supports the public perception of UK as a place where LGBT people are not welcome. While my experiences at UK were generally positive, this issue has tainted the support that I received.

I hope those of you who are invested in the fair treatment of transgender people at UK will seriously consider this appeal. While my case is now closed, the 2+ years that I have been fighting this issue will be worthwhile if some positive change can result.

Thank you for your support!
Best regards,

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North of Center is a periodical, a place, and a perspective.

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I'm not from here

Kenn Minter

I'M NOT FROM HERE

I VISITED MY FRIEND, CINDY, RECENTLY... WE SLEPT IN THE SAME BEDROOM BUT IN SEPARATE BEDS. THE THIRD MORNING OF MY VISIT...

OH GOD! OW! OW OW! FUCK! OW! OOOOW!!

...HUH?

SHE CAME HOBBLING TO MY BED...

AWW! I PULLED IT! OW! FUCK! MY LEG!

HELP ME! OW! CHRIST!

OW! RUB IT! PLEASE! GOD! IT'S KILLING ME!

RUB IT!

...UH... OKAY.

BY KENN MINTER

Community Supported Journalism Order Form

Individual Shares (good for 1 year)

\$40: 3"x5" ad for whatever you want to promote.

\$50+: Add + invite to NoC potluck at Danny's abode.

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For more info, write to the address above, or visite noclexington.com and search for Community Sustained Journalism.

Salubrious Soup

Christopher Epling

Salubrious Soup

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'AN EASTER STORY'

EVERYTHING ALRIGHT?

I'M LOST ON WHAT TO DRAW THE NEW 'SOUP' ABOUT

EASTER! DUH! SURELY YOU DO HAVE SOME FUNNY MEMORIES FROM CHILDHOOD?

UMMM... THE EASTER BUNNY SCARES ME...

ONCE UPON A TIME

ONE EASTER, MY DAD BROUGHT ME TO A STORE CALLED "WATSONS", IN DOWNTOWN PIKEVILLE, KY. WE WERE SUPPOSE TO GET MY PICTURE TAKEN WITH THE EASTER BUNNY, BUT THINGS GOT BAD...

LIKE... HUNTING EGGS... EASTER BASKETS, THE EASTER BUNNY!!

IT WAS MY TURN IN LINE, WHEN A LITTLE GIRL STARTED TO CRY.

A CHAIN REACTION WAS STARTED.

SERIOUSLY... I HID FOR AN HOUR IN THE STORE.

HA HA HA

DO YOU REALLY THINK IT'S FUNNY?

THAT... AND THE TERRIFYING GIFT I GOT YOU FOR EASTER

I TURNED AND RAN AS FAST AS I COULD.

END

Your name here!!!

Can you fill this space?

North of Center is looking for area comics or regional doodlers for monthly feature on our comics page. If interested, please contact Danny Mayer at noceditors@yahoo.com

Mayer's Town Branch Commons design challenge

May 24 submission deadline looming



Can you design better than this, and more economically? The Scape/Landscape Architect design for the area included in Mayer's Challenge. Image courtesy townbranchcommons.com/

There is still time to enter into *NoC* editor Danny Mayer's Town Branch Commons design challenge. The contest calls for area commoners to develop and submit an affordable and functional design to remaking a portion of 151 East Vine Street, a .62 acre publicly owned surface parking lot that runs downtown between Vine and Water Street in Lexington, Kentucky. Mayer will present the winning idea at a meeting of the city council, at which time he will formally request public funding for the project.

The idea for Mayer's challenge began after the NoC editor read about the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government's recent admission that closing down surface parking lots on Vine Street is "clearly implementable" and "within the realm of do-ability."

"I think it's great," Mayer said, "that city leaders are finally acknowledging the benefits of transforming under-used government property into human-scaled places of interaction and mobility. I

want to do my part to encourage more of that thinking."

Location

The 151 East Vine Street challenge location is a uniquely positioned surface parking lot sitting along the proposed Town Branch Commons, an urban park running atop downtown Fayette Urban County's Town Branch Creek. The area is located within a block from city hall, the Kentucky Theater and the Downtown Lexington Central Public Library.

In addition to these downtown attractions, the challenge site sits at the confluence of a number of transportation nodules. Upwards of 15,000 automobiles daily pass by along Vine Street. Across Vine, more arrive by bus at the Lexington Transit Center (the hub of the city's bus system). At the park's rear, a newly renovated city parking structure facing Main Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard will soon provide parking access. Above it, the location is

bisected by the Martin Luther King viaduct, a popular north/south bike route connecting UK to the northside.

Submissions

Successful submissions should include a design plan that covers one-fourth of the parking lot area. The design must incorporate the area covered by the Martin Luther King viaduct.

Submissions should also include a cost proposal for the project that does not exceed \$70,000. We expect attention to be given to how the design integrates and enhances the local environment, the potential for any non-monetary capital (donated skills, time, etc.), programming, and anything else we missed.

Mayer's award-winning panel of judges

Submissions will be judged by Mayer's five-person design team. The team specializes in generating low-cost, high-value re-developments of public space. This Mayer is an urban walker, a

mover and a shimmie-shaker. And so is his team.

Deadlines, etc.

Mayer will present the winning submission at a meeting of the City Council. He will request that money for the project comes out of the \$250,000 publicly-funded salary paid out to twice-retired UK administrator Frank Butler for overseeing the Rupp Arena Opportunity Zone plans. Project work can expect to commence January 2014. Sketch renderings may be hand-drawn, CAD-certified, or of any other medium, but all written text should be printed. Deadline: May 24. Submit submissions to 430 N. MLK, Lexington, KY 40508, or electronically to noceditors@yahoo.com.

If you would like to drop off submissions personally, discuss an idea, or otherwise meet with the authentic Mayer, he will be holding open office hours through May at Al's Bar (Limestone and Sixth) on Wednesday nights from 5:30-6:30 pm.