



Author spending a winter night at Occupy Lexington. Photo by Danny Mayer.

Occupy: one year later

By Michael Dean Benton

September 17 will mark the first anniversary of the Occupy Movement, the first day of the Occupy Wall Street takeover of Zucotti Park in order to protest social and economic inequality, the abuses of the financial sector that led to the 2008 Global Economic Crisis, the undue influence of corporate money in the U.S. government, and the way these problems undermine democracy.

Although the Occupy Movement looks to Occupy Wall Street as its first day of action, the movement was inspired by resistance movements around the world that were challenging similar injustices by their economic and political elites. These included the Arab Spring in Egypt, the encampments of the Spanish Indignants, and the 2011 Wisconsin protests. Canadian activists working with the magazine *Adbusters* led the original call to gather at Wall Street during the summer of 2011, circulating a communiqué featuring a graceful ballerina balanced on the head of the iconic Wall Street bull and calling on protesters to gather and occupy Wall Street on 9/17.

The early days of the Wall Street protests were generally ignored by the mainstream press or demonized as the actions of lazy, dirty malcontents. To counteract this blackout, media savvy Occupy activists set up streaming video of Occupy Wall Street events so that those unable to participate directly could remain informed and experience the vitality of the movement. A series of brutal attacks, most notoriously a high ranking officer spraying quarantined young females in the face with pepper spray, by the New York City police were captured on video and immediately distributed through internet sources. Occupy went viral.

Inspired by the courage and passion of the occupiers of Wall Street as they faced the quasi-militaristic repression of the New York police, several women put a call out in Lexington for our own Occupy to begin September 29, 2011, at the J.P. Morgan Chase Plaza on Main Street. Although we never gained the huge numbers of other occupations, we were the third city to initiate a continuous occupation and for a time were the longest continuous occupation.

At the movement’s height over 1300 official Occupy Movement sites set up camp around the globe. Occupy Lexington participants took the opportunity to visit some of these sites, including in Louisville, New York City, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, Oakland, Portland, New Orleans and Amsterdam. One intrepid Occupy

Lexington member even joined a group on a walk across the United States to bring attention to the Occupy Movement. In turn, Occupy Lexington received visitors from other Occupy sites and communications from around the world.

NoC’s “Our Man in Amsterdam” was a leading force in the Occupy Amsterdam site and kept us up-to-date on events there. The broader movement began publishing their viewpoints and distributing them to the American public. These included the *Occupied Wall Street Journal*, the *Occupied Chicago Tribune*, *N+1* magazine’s *Occupy!*, and even the *Occupied Lexington Herald-Leader*. A series of books and pamphlets followed.

Here in Lexington, as at other movement sites, Occupations provided an opportunity to discuss the pressing political and economic issues of the day with people from across the political spectrum. As a member of Occupy Lexington, I had long civil discussions

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Resources go downtown while northside residents struggle

NoC News

Out of growing concern about crime and violence, Castlewood neighborhood residents have started organizing. They’ve had meetings; they’ve got plans. At the center of those plans are two things: build strong relationships among neighbors and prod the city into finishing the renovation of E. Loudon Avenue.

As it stands right now, the condition of E. Loudon from Shropshire to Bryan is deplorable, making the area look like it has been abandoned by the city. The road surface is compromised, the curbs destroyed, the median in shambles. Along this stretch have also been the most dangerous incidents of crime, including the fatal shooting of 19-year-old Christopher Thongs in May.

Putting two and two together, Castlewood residents have begun to wonder just how much the infrastructure neglect in their area has contributed to the crime. Because they know that street design and general upkeep of an area can discourage destructive activity, Castlewood residents want that last stretch of E. Loudon renovated. But if you know the history of the work already done on E. Loudon, you have to wonder just how much work they’ll have to do themselves to get a decent street. The type of street that many neighborhoods take for granted: one with curbs and without sinkholes and buckling pavement.

A people’s history

There are two ways to look at the history of the already completed work on E. Loudon. From one point of view, it’s a citizen’s victory. From another, it shows how hard residents have to work to get the government (local, state, and national) to do its own job, part

of which is to attend to infrastructure needs. From that same angle, it becomes easy to see how neighborhoods without certain resources of time and knowledge end up disadvantaged, with their streets crumbling, their homes losing value (which for those of modest income is their primary way to build wealth), and crime moving in.

So here’s the story: for 10 years, Castlewood’s neighbors to the east, the Meadows-Loudon Neighborhood Association, labored to get major renovations done on the segment of E. Loudon running from Winchester Road to Shropshire Avenue.

That project, led by Larry Hamilton (then-president of the Meadows-Loudon Neighborhood Association) and supported by many other residents, drastically changed the face of the area. As Hamilton told the *Herald-Leader* in 2008: “It’s changing the perception, changing the image of this end of town. Before this road project, water was running down each side of the street, there were worn paths on each side of the street, and ruts in people’s driveways. It’s just a complete change.... This shows that, if people band together, we can achieve what we want.”

The rehabilitation of E. Loudon from Winchester to Shropshire included replacing sewers, resurfacing the road, adding streetlights, creating a bike lane, and other improvements. The project also extended to 10 side streets in the area.

Shouldering the load

So, E. Loudon looks great—until you hit Shropshire. From there, the street looks like it could be in a third world country. Now, residents in that area are seeing the repercussions: more

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The Beatles, Jesus and Taco Bell Boomslang 2012

By Captain Comannokers

Recently overheard conversation:

Guy 1: Are you gonna go to Boomslang?

Guy 2: Don’t know what you are talking ‘bout dude.

1: The music festival thing. Jeff Mangum...ya know! He’s in it.

2: In it? Like how? Is it a play or something?

1: No, Jeff Mangum—do you know who that is? Anyway, he’s playing—a bunch of other bands, too.

2: Uhh, yeah, I don’t know who that is.

1: Whaa? His music is pretty killer. He was in a band called Neutral Milk Hotel—I’ve got some of their songs on my phone. *Plays “In the Aeroplane Over The Sea.”*

2: Kinda sounds like the Beatles to me. But, ya know, not really.

1: Sure, I guess.

2: Who else is gonna be at it?

1: I don’t know, ummm, Jesus and Mary.

2: That’s a dumb name—why do people put ‘Jesus’ in band names?

1: Probably to get your attention—and make you say “Why do people use ‘Jesus’ in band names?”

2: Fuck it, it’s still stupid. OK, so

the Beatles and Jesus are coming.

1: Yeah, that’s pretty epic.

2: OK, yeah, I don’t think I can miss out on that. My dad would love that too—he loves the Beatles.

1: What about Jesus?

2: What?

1: Does your dad love Jesus, too?

2: I guess? I don’t know...I never actually asked him if he loves him. He goes to church most weeks. So, sure!

1: Nice! He should come then!

2: Yeah, I don’t think so.

1: Oh, oh, shit—that rap group that does Taco Bell Pizza Hut—they are coming too—Das Racist.

2: Awww really? God, that song still cracks me up. They’re gonna be here? That’s weird.

1: Yeah—I wanna see them, too.

2: But is it all like Taco Bell Pizza Hut? I think that would drive me crazy.

1: No, from a couple other things I’ve heard I think they are weird, but like weird/funny/challenging.

2: Do they rap about other restaurants?

1: No, I heard that one of the dudes has referenced Paul Laurence Dunbar before.

2: What?

1: Yeah, like they actually have a bunch of songs with some deep shit—or

some messages—not just jokes.

2: Wait, so wait, they are from HERE?

1: No. What?

2: You said they one of the dudes went to Dunbar?

1: No, he drops Paul Laurence Dunbar as like, a reference or something—I just heard that all their stuff is not like Pizza Hut Taco Bell Long John Silver’s.

2: Long John Silver’s? I thought you said they don’t sing about other restaurants.

1: Yeah, shut the hell up.

2: (*sings*) I’m at the combination Long John Silver’s Raising Cane’s.

1: Yeah, come to the show and tell them you’ve got a new one for them. I’m sure they’ll love that!

2: Maybe. So what? Are they like really racists?

The fourth installment of Boomslang unfolds September 20-23 at various venues in Lexington. Presented by UK’s student-run radio station WRFL, the festival prides itself in putting out a diverse and eclectic mix of music, literary art, film, and usually whatever else they can wrangle up. The Beatles and Jesus are not confirmed performers; Das Racist is however! Turn to page 3 for more Boomslang coverage, or visit boomslangfest.com to get the full low down.

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The responsible cyclist

On ambassadorship

By **Dave Cooper**
NoC ambassador to Cycling

In July of 1989, my friend Carol and I decided to follow a dream and ride our bicycles across America. We took leaves of absence from work, packed our bikes and gear into boxes, and flew to Seattle to start our trip. Carol brought her brown 18-speed Fuji from Massachusetts. My bike was an orange 15-speed 1970’s model Schwinn LeTour III, with fully-loaded front and rear Cannondale panniers, leather grips and a handlebar pack. It weighed a freakin’ ton.

After reassembling our bikes in the baggage claim area, we rode out of the airport and wobbled towards downtown Seattle to try and find an REI camping store. Pedaling around an unfamiliar downtown, we got turned around and ended up riding the wrong way against traffic on a one-way street before cutting across the street to the store, blocking traffic in the process.

A pedestrian looked at us and said, scornfully, “It’s people like you that give bicyclists a bad name.”

Ouch! Seattle is a bike-friendly town and I was a relative novice at bike touring, so I took the comment seriously. I figured if we were making people mad on the first day of our trip, we’d better start being more responsible cyclists.

So on that trip we made a habit of cycling responsibly and, by summer’s end, arrived safely to Provincetown, Massachusetts. Now when I ride around Lexington I still generally obey traffic signals and use hand signals. I always wear a helmet and usually a bright yellow shirt for better visibility. I ride purposefully and try to maintain a straight line. I even put a “Share the Road” bumper sticker on the milk crate which sits behind my bike seat.

My reasoning is simple. When motorists see cyclists riding responsibly,

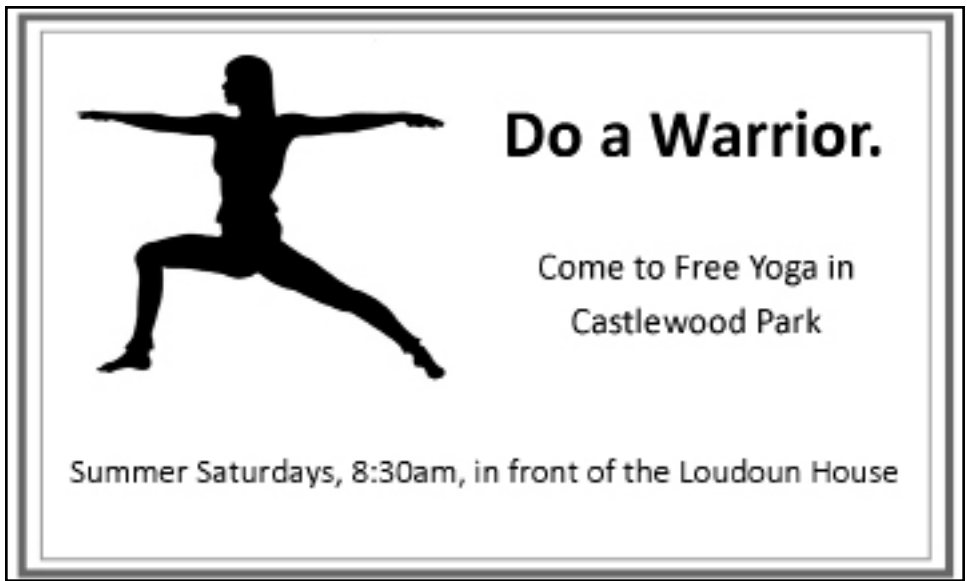
wearing helmets, stopping for traffic lights and using hand signals, it gives cyclists more credibility and improves our relationships with them. If our overall goal is to promote cycling as a safe and efficient alternative form of transportation, we all have to be responsible cyclists.

Part of my responsibilities as a responsible cyclist is being an ambassador for cycling. I smile and wave at peo-

ple, figuring if it looks like I’m having a great time out riding my bike, maybe one day they will join me.

into the windshield or side window of a stopped car and make eye contact with the driver before passing in front of it. (Making eye contact with the front seat passenger is no good—it has to be the driver.)

I usually ride pretty close to the white line on the edge of the road, so I don’t block traffic. There are times when I might claim the whole lane, if I need to make a left turn or when I don’t want



cars to pass, for example, but afterwards I usually move out of the way as quickly as possible—and I give the cars a little hand wave of “thanks” to acknowledge that I have inconvenienced them.

Sometimes in downtown or around UK, if traffic is heavy I will ride on the sidewalk, but I have a ding bell on my handlebars to alert pedestrians. I use it frequently.

In order to be in harmony with traffic, I have a rear view mirror that I watch as closely as I watch the road ahead. It’s also for my safety, after all. The things ahead of you can cause problems, but the things coming up from behind can kill you.

I stare

Zirui, 455 Ashland Terrace

Zirui had arrived at the Lexington airport from China (via Detroit) three hours before we stopped him by the orange chair. He was already enrolled in a graduate program at UK. He had walked to the Kroger store on Euclid Ave. from the Commonwealth Village Apartments on Nicholasville Rd. (where a friend of his lived and where he was going to spend his first American night) to look for a pre-paid phone card to call his parents. Zirui was asking a passerby how to find his way back to his friend’s apartment complex when we asked him to sit for a photograph.



After taking his picture, we gave him a lift. We were assisted in finding the Commonwealth Village Apartments by two graduate students from Italy. One of them, a woman on a bike, led us all the way to the apartment complex.

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

Announcements

Taoist Tai Chi Society

Are you looking for a gentle yet powerful form of exercise—one that emphasizes health, one that starts you where you are and moves you forward at your own pace? Tai Chi is an excellent way to get moving.

The Taoist Tai Chi arts include a form of moving meditation that is both a health-promoting exercise and a stress reliever. It can bring a wide range of health benefits to the muscular, skeletal and circulatory systems, with a calming effect on the mind.

The aims and objectives of the Taoist Tai Chi Society are to make this form of tai chi available to all, to promote health, to promote cultural exchange, and to help others.

Taoist Tai Chi Society is an international charitable all-volunteer organization whose aim is to bring the Taoist Tai Chi internal arts of health to all who wish to learn.

We invite you to our 2012 Fall Beginning classes: Internal Arts of Health:

*Starting September 12

*Wednesdays, 11:00am-12:30pm and 5:30-7:00pm

*Unitarian Universalist Church Fellowship Hall, 3564 Clays Mill Road

For more information, contact our website, www.taoist.org; our email address, lexington.ky@taoist.org; or our contact person, Pat Griffin at 859.230.1986.

Tommy Taylor at Institute 193

Institute 193 is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new oil paintings by the artist Tommy Taylor, titled “Shadowland.”

In this body of work, Taylor has arranged imagery gleaned from cartoons, films, and found family photographs into jarring compositions that convey the competing “drives, histories, expectations, and accepted social norms” that characterize modern identity.

Taylor’s paintings mine his own personal psychology in an attempt to illustrate how sexuality, religion, and nostalgia can exert contradictory influences on our inner lives, and how paradoxical impulses can be knit into something that feels coherent. Like a lived experience, his work depicts feuding impulses that have nevertheless been formed into carefully composed arrangements.

For nearly a decade, Taylor’s work has been abstract; the figurative subject matter of these many-layered oil paintings mark a turning point in his art practice. He has, however, retained the careful attention to color and composition that characterized his earlier paintings, weaving each piece together with a network of swirling lines and geometric patterns.

Born in Colorado in 1969, Tommy Taylor was raised in South Carolina and graduated from the University of Georgia in 1994. He has exhibited his work extensively in Atlanta and New York City, and worked as a contracted artist for the retailer Anthropologie. In 2011, he was selected as a “rising star” by the Museum of Contemporary Art Georgia. In summer 2012, he completed an artist residency in Assisi, Italy.

“Shadowland” will be on view at Institute 193, 193 N. Limestone St., Lexington, KY through October 27. Hours: Wednesday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

CROCK in Cheapside Park

Community Radicals of Central Kentucky: Let’s come together at 4:00 pm, Sunday September 9 at Cheapside Pavilion. Let’s set some short- and long-term goals for this alliance.

In the meanwhile, we will take a monthlong break from Kenwick potlucks. Our reading groups at Common Grounds are discussing David Graeber’s *Debt* and Paulo Friere’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

If you have any questions or would like to find more about any of these initiatives, contact Martin Mudd at martin.mudd@gmail.com

“Teresa had entered the arena knowing nothing about the sport, and she was leaving as Reese the Beast.”

SEPTEMBER 2012

ROCK waxes Vixens

179-53 victory impresses Reese the Beast

By Sunny Montgomery

This past Saturday I attended the Rollergirls of Central Kentucky (ROCK) home bout against the Greenbrier Roller Vixens (GRV) from West Virginia with my best friend, Teresa, who was a roller derby virgin. I love introducing my friends to the sport. Being able to answer their questions makes me feel important.

We chose front-row seats so close to the track they were practically in suicide-seating, the area around the track where, due to the very real possibility a skater could skid out of control and into the crowd, fans are permitted to sit so long as they are over the age of eighteen. As announcer Bill Widener began introductions, I surveyed ROCK’s competition. Based on stature alone, it was going to be a fair fight.

After introductions, the Pebbles–ROCK’s junior roller derby and a recent sideline fixture to ROCK’s home bouts–demonstrated the rules through a mock-jam.

“Do you understand?” I asked Teresa.

“Yes, but where’s the ball?” she asked.

“I’m writing that down,” I told her.

First half domination

The crowd erupted into cheers as Mayor Jim Gray jogged onto center track to blow the whistle, signaling the start of the bout. The skaters were off.

ROCK’s Ginger instantly took lead jammer. Then she did it again and got a grand slam, which occurs when one jammer laps the other. Ten minutes

into the bout, ROCK already had a double digit lead: 22 to 3.

Greenbrier kept a close pack. A relatively new team, GRV members appeared slightly unsteady on their skates. They were tough but not overly aggressive. No matter how vehemently they bumped and jostled their opponents, the Vixens could not seem to knock ROCK down.

ROCK used this to its advantage by controlling the speed of the pack and by keeping keenly aware of the opposing jammer. During the first half, this allowed ROCK’s alternating jammers, Ginger and Sugar Shock, to dominate so efficiently I stopped keeping track of grand-slams.

Second half ferocity

GRV was not going to give up easily. The West Virginia rollergirls returned for the second half with the kind of brute determination that makes the bout more exciting for the fans but more perilous for the players. The crashes became more frequent and more ferocious.

Twice, a referee lost his footing and tumbled into the fans sitting cross-legged in suicide seating. At another point, ROCK jammer Bitty Bast’rd crashed headlong into the bleachers and somersaulted over the bottom steps. Before audience members had time to uncover their mouths, she was back up, back on the track and back on her way to a grand slam, pushing ROCK’s lead to 104 to 39.

The audience was so boisterous and the players so resolute that it took several seconds for the arena to notice when—just minutes later—a GRV



ROCK’s Ginger keeps ahead of the pack as lead jammer. Photo by Jack King.

skater went down and did not get back up. Skaters from both squads dropped to their knees in solidarity while a medical team carried bags onto the track. After several tense minutes, the skater was on her feet but did not return to the bout.

Ultimately, despite their efforts, Greenbrier could not best ROCK. The hometown girls won the bout 179 to 53.

“I want to play roller derby,” Teresa declared when it was over. We left the

arena debating her rollergirl name.

This is exactly why I love introducing my friends to the derby. Teresa had entered the arena knowing nothing about the sport, and she was leaving as Reese the Beast. The enthusiasm is contagious.

So stay tuned. Next month, I’m bringing my grandmother.

ROCK’s next home bout is September 8 at Heritage Hall. Doors open at 6pm. Bout begins at 7pm.

Boomslang 2012

Boomslang runs September 20-23. For a complete listing of bands and schedule of shows, visit boomslangfest.com.

William Tyler

William Tyler is a native of Nashville, TN, a town where guitarists are as common as television sets or pigeons. At an early age, he began playing and recording with artists who resided at the fringes of the country and folk vernacular, such as the Silver Jews, Lambchop, and Cortney Tidwell. He also found himself doing session work with artists as diverse as country legend Charlie Louvin and soul singer Candi Staton. All the while, Tyler was at home working on fragmentary guitar pieces and tape collages under the moniker the Paper Hats, calling on the spirit of Sandy Bull and the early Siltbreeze catalog. In 2008, his longtime friend and sometime collaborator Volker Zander released a Paper Hats LP, “Deseret Canyon,” on his Apparent Extent imprint, and the two toured in Europe.

Now Tyler has released his first album under his own name, “Behold the Spirit” (Tompkins Square), a collection of acoustic and electric guitar works intertwined with open form audio landscapes and delicately arranged instrumentation. Equal parts Appalachian drone and ambient noise, “Behold the Spirit” is a series of homages to ancient melodies, dead languages, and ghosts. Live, Tyler has collaborated or shared bills with Eric Carbonara, David Daniell, Wooden Wand, Paul Metzger, Datashock, Mountains, and Steve Gunn.

Saint Vitus

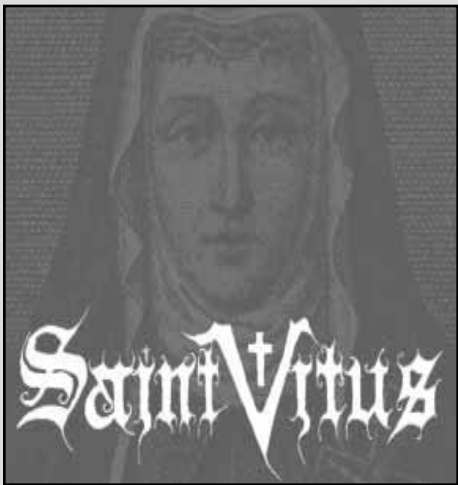
The much-anticipated return of the godfathers of American doom metal is finally here. Saint Vitus are back with a new album and nationwide U.S. tour. We are super psyched to have these legends grace the Boomslang stage in an event whose name pays homage to their crushing 30-year legacy: Doomslang! Featuring founding members Dave Chandler (guitar) and Mark Adams

(bass) and the return of classic Saint Vitus vocalist Scott “Wino” Weinrich, the band sounds as if they never took a hiatus at all. Their new album, Lillie: F-65 (Season of Mist Records), shows no signs that the band is aging or mellowing out. You can bet that Vitus are back in prime form and ready to slay!

The Younger Lovers

Fast paced and vibrant, Oakland-based band The Younger Lovers is on the cutting edge of the area’s garage pop revival, which includes associated acts such as Nobunny and Hunx and his Punx. Members Brontez Purnell, Adal Castillon, and Mateo Corona are an unforgettable trio who embody the carefree, lighthearted aspects of modern garage pop and punk. With smooth lyrics about kissing boys and talking on the phone, as well as pounding drums and lively, vaguely lo-fi bass riffs, this band will surely get you on your feet and make you swoon for more when it’s all over.

Even in the face of adversity, the band has no trouble dropping some serious bubblegum beats. In August 2011, a group shouting anti-gay slurs attacked Purnell and Castillon as they left a show. While this incident gave the band considerable attention and highlighted the little-known issue of homophobia in the indie music scene, The Younger Lovers refuses to be defined by either the attack or their queer associations. We are delighted and honored to have them headline Queerslang 2012.



Deerhoof will play Boomslang, oh yeah.

Deerhoof

Bringing it to you all the way from San Francisco, Deerhoof has been a continuous project for the last 18 years. Started in 1994 by Rob Fisk and Greg Saunier, the band is known for being “beautifully bizarre” in every facet of the production of their art/math-rock music. Their albums are often impossible for music critics to categorize, as they travel through sounds from around the world—funk, flamenco, and angular rock & roll are all fair game.

One thing that remains constant is the intricacy of their music: few of their songs are in straightforward metric patterns, and if the guitars weren’t so perfectly in sync with the swirling drums, you might even get the feeling that the songs were being made up on the spot. Led by Satomi Matsuzaki on vocals and bass, the rest of the band is made up of Greg Saunier on drums, with John Dieterich and Ed Rodriguez on guitars. If you’re looking for the kind of show that isn’t quite like anything you’ve heard before at this year’s Boomslang, this just might be the one to see.

Girl in a Coma

San Antonio, Texas’s Girl in a Coma is an all-girl trio made up of sisters Nina and Phanie Diaz on vocals/guitar and drums, respectively, and Jenn Alva on bass. The band gets its name from the Smiths’ song “Girlfriend in a Coma,” and their sound shows the influence of the legendary band. That being said, they’re a tough and talented group of independent gals who

know how to put together a tight rock song, and their brand of power rock is the kind of stuff you’ll wish you were hearing more of from around the music scene. Their set is one that you’re going to want to make sure to stop in for, because these girls will be sure to impress you.

Heatsick

Heatsick is the moniker of Steven Warwick, a solo electronic musician who hails from Berlin, Germany. Known for his use of looping sounds, Warwick employs everything from his voice to keyboards and percussion to produce his abstract sounds. His aesthetic has evolved from his early days of very ethereal tracks that were often recorded in one take to his more recent work that is more defined and metrically explicit. You can expect to hear him construct all sorts of different types of sounds over the course of his set, and his performance at Boomslang should be nothing less than mind-altering and hypnotic.

Gary War

Gary War (a.k.a Greg Dalton) began his solo career in 2008, fresh off a tour of duty with Ariel Pink’s Haunted Graffiti. His debut LP, Newrayontheport, with its intriguing blend of proggy lo-fi psychedelia and fevered electronics, firmly established Mr. War as one to watch. Over the last four years, a slew of EPs and singles have followed, as well as two more full lengths. His latest, Jared’s Lot, is now available from the Spectrum Spools label.

Synthetic weed and manufactured prohibition

The imperfect enjoyment

By Marcus Flores

Newly engineered chemical compounds offer a study of Isaac Newton’s Third Law: for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. For example, the government’s misplaced mania for prohibiting a certain plant provokes an equal and opposite response from citizens looking to get legally high. Meant to mimic marijuana, herbal smoking products “K2” and “Spice” have caused deadly side effects among Kentucky teens—among them heart attacks and seizures.

Synthetic drugs officially became an issue following Rudy Eugene’s gruesome attack on a vagrant. Thought to have been high on bath salts, he consumed the fellow Floridian’s face and was shot dead. Post-mortem analysis revealed only the presence of marijuana in Eugene’s system, potentially injuring the herb’s innocuous reputation. Florida toxicology expert Dr. Bruce Goldberger noted that the menu of synthetic drugs is ever expanding, forcing associated laws and detection methods to play catch up. In short, Eugene might still have been high on bath salts; absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

Add synthetic drugs to overcrowded prisons, and you’ve got motivation for Kentucky legislators to reconsider, in minor ways at least, drug laws. When the Florida attack occurred, Kentucky had already taken preemptive Whack-a-Mole legislative measures in its banning of those once-legal synthetics which are actually more dangerous

than cannabis, their illegal counterpart. Smokers of the famous herb owe a debt to overcrowded prisons and Governor Steve Beshear—the unlikely parties behind HB 463. This politically acceptable dose of common sense nuanced possession penalties by reducing them to a Class B misdemeanor.

Fiscal and common sense almost never accord with politics, though it might just be the case here. Citing reduced incarceration costs, HB 463 may save the state well over \$400 million in the next decade. Yet Kentucky legis-

cannot bring itself to consider cannabis.

To defeat this stigma attached to cannabis is to contend with the inertia of many repeated falsehoods that have adopted a convincing mantle of truth. Since grade school American children have mindlessly parroted back to their educators that marijuana impairs memory, causes psychiatric illness, and acts as a “gateway drug” (nevermind that it’s a user, not a drug, that lays its hand on the gate). This instruction is fitting (even necessary?) for a country so averse to moderation that several citizens set

harmlessness is probably as much a remarkable coincidence as it is a product of nature’s blind but brilliant toiling. (Consumption guarantees the dispersal of seeds, and the plant rewards the favor with its celebrated effects.) It lulls one into a mellow mood, arouses the gut, may prevent Alzheimer’s Disease, alleviates glaucoma, and palliates various cancers. These studies are well known and a simple Google search will turn up several others. Although prohibition precludes much research, figures exist to confirm that of all the cannabis available to Americans (perhaps 24,000,000 pounds), none of it has produced a death from overdose. Alcohol and aspirin, on the other hand...

As anyone knows, stigma begets either abhorrence or curiosity, the latter famous for having killed the cat. Motivated by those curious but not bold enough to try actual cannabis, various companies began to market the barely legal herbs that led to the present epidemic. Melanie Haiken of Forbes notes that “Unlike weed, which in general causes relaxation and positive feelings, Spice causes hallucinations, seizures, heart palpitations, and psychotic episodes.” The stuff has caused murders in Indiana, suicides in Iowa, and tremors in Kentucky. Think of them as the collateral damage of a drug policy whose wastefulness is matched only by its futility.

Yet, on marches Kentucky’s imperious desire to protect citizens from themselves. Legislators toil to prevent a natural form of relaxation in a world where chronic stress kills thousands every year.



“Collage Study 27: Weed on Mitt.” Artist unknown.

lators only sway so much. Their roots firmly fastened to the dark red ground, they will probably kill the Gatewood Galbraith Medical Marijuana Act, a hefty bill shouldered by the State Senator Perry Clark. Presently teeming with prescription opioid abuse, Kentucky simply

out to sue fast food companies on the grounds that McDonald’s, not poor decision making, was responsible for their obesity.

As far as other drugs, cannabis compares to alcohol about like side salads to Big Macs. The drug’s relative

Move to Amend report

David Cobb informs, inspires crowd at UK

By Joy Arnold

If money can buy a political system, should it be called a “democracy”? That was one question a crowd of nearly 100 people wrestled with last Thursday night at the University of Kentucky’s Center Theater. The crowd was there to hear attorney-activist David Cobb explain the role of corporations in American history. Cobb, spokesperson for the national organization, Move to Amend (MTA), was invited to Lexington to speak by the Central Kentucky chapter of Move to Amend (CKYMTA).

Born in San Leon, Texas, Cobb worked in construction and as a commercial shrimper before going to college. Despite growing up in what he calls “rural poverty” in a home that didn’t have a flush toilet, he graduated from the University of Houston Law School in 1993, maintained a successful private law practice in Houston for several years and ran for president on the Green Party ticket. These days, Cobb works on the law and research committee of Move to Amend. He likes it best when people refer to him as an “engaged citizen.”

The lessons we have been taught about America as a land of equal opportunity and freedom for all, Cobb’s talk emphasized, are better understood as “creation myths.” To our founding fathers, “We the people” meant white adult males who owned property—not women, not native Americans, not blacks. In 1888 the 14th amendment required due process and equal protection under the law for all people (later the courts applied it to corporations); in 1870 the 15th amendment expanded the right to vote to non-white males; in 1920 the 19th amendment gave women the right to vote; In 1971 the 26th amendment allowed 18 year-olds to vote. Each accomplishment required a movement, a struggle. We must recognize the national myths of opportunity as our dreams, Cobb asserted, and organize to bring them into being.

Sara Hicks, CKYMTA committee

member, said she appreciated the way the talk “showed us that our history has been an on-going struggle to obtain freedom, justice and equal opportunity for all Americans, but that the battle is far from over. We must stand up to the injustices resulting from the influence of corporate wealth and return our government to ‘the people’ named in the first sentence of the Constitution.”

Herbert Reid, retired UK professor, author and CKYMTA committee member, echoed similar sentiments. Reid was glad to hear talk of our “historical struggle for a democratic republic... Cobb’s call for a ‘democracy movement’ is what we need.”

Move to Amend

As expected, the gathering focused on Move to Amend’s proposed 28th Amendment to the Constitution, which would declare three things: (1) a corporation is not a person and can be regulated; (2) money is not speech and can be regulated; (3) nothing contained in the amendment shall be construed to abridge the freedom of the press. The MTA proposal is one of at least seven similar proposals, most of which have appeared in response to the *Citizen’s United* Supreme Court decision granting corporations (and unions) the ability to spend unlimited amounts of money from their general funds on political action, no longer limiting them to money in their political action committees (PACs).

Cobb, who spoke to Cincinnati’s MTA affiliate the night before coming to Lexington, told those gathered that the movement to amend the Constitution is gaining momentum around the country, and welcomed President Obama’s recent acknowledgment that an amendment may be necessary. If so, count state Senator Kathy Stein, in attendance at the talk, as a political supporter. “It is crucial,” Stein says, “that the public learn that the *Citizens United* decision has put democracy in jeopardy of becoming like a stockyard auction.”

Ultimately, Cobb stated, if the movement continues to build, we should



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 for more info and to download a volunteer application, or call 859-253-2615.

BRCC Volunteer Training

Fri, Sep 7, 5:30– 8:30pm

Sat, Sep 8, 15 and 17

8:30am– 4:30pm

see an amendment within the next ten years, though what that amendment will look like is still to be determined. So far, Cobb pointed out, only the Move to Amend proposal attacks both prongs of the problem—the notion of corporations as people with numerous Constitutional rights and the concept of money as speech. These are conditions granted not by Congress, but by the courts; not by elected representatives, but by activist justices who are accountable to no one. Attacking only one piece will not get the job done.

He cautioned, however, that the *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision of 2010 was hardly the beginning of the loss of the American people’s hold on their government. As his talk demonstrated throughout, things go much further back, to faulty precedents starting in the 1800s. “Just reversing *Citizens United* would only take us back to 2009 politics, and things were far from democratic then.”

One participant said it was encouraging to hear it recognized that this is no short term project, but a realistic one.

No short term project

CKYMTA organized as an affiliate of MTA last November and has conducted several events to bring the issue to the attention of the public. Cobb’s appearance served as a kick off for increased activity by the group. One of these activities will be to put

the Amendment issue to Lexington residents, with the goal of having the Urban-County Council vote on a resolution of support.

Geoff Young, CKYMTA member and Green Party Candidate for Fayette County’s 45th District House seat, sums up the group’s bottom-up organizing principals. “Until the Constitutional amendment proposed by MTA passes we’ll have a democracy (or republic) that money can and does buy. Let’s get the city council to pass it, then the state legislature, then ‘We the People!’”

People who want to be involved in the specific grassroots organizing work to build support for the MTA amendment proposal are urged to become involved. The group will hold a goal setting/planning session facilitated by Jim Embry, a local organizer, on September 22. Anyone interested in that level of involvement should RSVP to ckymta@gmail.com by Wednesday, September 19. There will be a \$6 registration fee for materials and a light lunch. Details will be posted on the CKYMTA Facebook page and the Kentucky page of the MovetoAmend.org website.

Those just wishing to learn more about the issue should go to MovetoAmend.org; Citizens United Reporter Magazine, <http://goo.gl/5kDov>, compiled by Gary Yarus of CKYMTA; and amendmentgazette.com

Iron production stopped abruptly in the decades after the Civil War. The land just gave out; no more commercial ore in the mines.

SEPTEMBER 2012

Where the Red River empties

Tributary dilutions

By Northrupp Center

“Gortimer.” It is dark. I am perched high upon a brick shelf on the steep banks of the lower Red River, Estill County, watching my fire-blown shadow-selves dance upon a cascading series of nineteenth century iron furnaces in decay, their heavy brick hulls now off-level stages for my flickered shadows’ to strut upon as they fall to the river lying black one hundred feet below. “I feel ghosts.”

My day has not gone according to plan. The plan was to have NoC editor Danny Mayer and staff river writer Wes Houpp pick me up at Bluegrass Airport and depart for a relaxing two-nights on the Red and Kentucky Rivers. The plan was to justify all expenses incurred on my summer trip by writing an NoC article on the Kentuckians for the Commonwealth-led effort to stop a coal-fired power plant from being built at the community of Ford, located on the Clark County banks of the Kentucky River and nearly within skipping distance of the peopled public beach just below Lock 9, Fort Boonesborough State Park.

Reality, as it is turning out for me, will be much different. Reality will be a late-arriving flight from Rio and impatient hosts who, at first rumor of delay, skip town and leave me with a hastily constructed, not to mention poorly conceived and sloppily written, road map for how to catch up "by the time the river rat stew begins to bubble at camp tonight." Reality will be Gortimer T. Spotts and me at the Red River put-in below Clay City, waving goodbye to our gracious driver, an oyster scientist/mystic known to me only as the Great Witashi, a tarp, two paddles, a bottle of X, a bottle of Y, a 12-pack, 2 gallons of High Bridge water, several frayed ropes and twine of indeterminate length and girth, four baked brownies, a small sack of oranges and Gortimer's pale blue suitcase overfilled with necessities all stowed equitably betwixt our craft. Ours will be a fevered paddle across Indian trails and white man camps; a polished bottle of X; a swim; a hasty late-dusk decision to drop anchor for the night at a crumbling iron forge, four miles before our confluence with the Kentucky and who knows how far from the river rat stew bubbling away at the Houpp-Mayer camp; an orange dinner; a fire too hot for the weather; and, most immediately, several sniffs of Isbell 822, a snuff varietal of bufo venom mined from the paratoid glands of a Colorado River toad.

“Could be ghosts,” my Garrard County friend sniffs at the air like some climatologist. “This, too, was once a center of civilization. Eskippakithiki, Lulbegrud, Log Lick. That’s just across the banks. No telling what ghosts worked over our present encampment upon this no-name furnace below Sloan Station at the bottom of Iron Mound.” Behind Gortimer, the campfire heat bends the darkness. “Then there are the stories in the cliffs, the cycads and the gastropods, last fall’s leaves, the water and the mud...”

“Are they happy spirits?”
 “Depends who’s asking, and who they’re asking. Salt seeping, Indians leaving, the animals poached, the kidney ore ripped, the trees scalped—“

Perhaps noticing the contortions becoming visible on my face, my companion suddenly breaks his train of thought. "Be careful with that Isbell stuff. Half is hippy-trippy, but the other half's poison."

Salt and iron

As early as 1785, commercial trade in salt and iron prospered along the banks of the Red River.

A necessity of frontier life, salt was produced in small quantities at licks

throughout the state and, in cash-starved backwoods settlements, used as a principal form of bartered currency. Writing from his Lexington offices in 1786, for example, General James Wilkinson, one of the scoundrel-est of all Revolutionary War figures, implored his agent stationed at the Falls of the Ohio to float 200 bushels of Kentucky Proud salt down the Ohio and up the Cumberland to Nashville, with instructions to “sell for cash or furs but take no deer skins.”

Spurred on by Wilkinson and other agents endeavoring to live the good life upon the Lexington penepplain, enterprising early colonists scaled up salt production. At salt licks, wells drilled deep into the land produced brine, a fluid here saltier than sea water, which when collected and reduced in large copper kettles imported from Pennsylvania generated bushels upon bushels of salt. With an abundance of salt licks and the region's largest navigable river nearby for transport to outside markets, the Red River basin, along with the three forks area of the Kentucky River, became a center of salt production for the near-western frontier.

A frontier luxury, iron came later,

Delmar von Lexington

though when it came, it “was hailed near and far,” claims geologic historian Willard Rouse Jillson, “as the earmark of a new era in the west.” The region’s first production site, half-owned by a Lexington tavern keeper dabbling in mineral extraction, was located on a great north-bend of the Red River at present-day Clay City. Here, ore mined from area deposits was collected, smelted onsite into pig iron, nails and strap hinges, and stored until winter, when high tides allowed flatboats to float bushels of it to Cleveland’s Landing on the Kentucky River, later known as Clay’s Ferry, where it was off-loaded on a mule pack train and, by 1787, sold at Teagarden’s General Store to area residents hard at work building a world class frontier city.

At the dawn of the nineteenth century, Kentucky was among the leaders in

iron production, Lexington was larger than Pittsburgh, and the iron site on the north bend of the Red was sold to Robert Clark and William Smith, businessmen who instilled such a godly spirit that, writing 50 years later, historian Lewis Collins would observe of the organization, "The proprietors and all the operatives in this establishment are temperance men, ardent spirits having been altogether banished from its precincts." The two owners built a dam to better manage the spirited tides, and constructed a new and more efficient furnace that withstood the hotter temperatures necessary to produce bar iron, more pure and durable than pig iron.

The early importance of salt and iron is best reflected in the attention given to their transport to market. In one of the state's first acts of road maintenance, the 1805 Act for Keeping Open the Navigation of the Red River, state leaders prioritized the clearance of deadfall from the Clark and Smith forge at Clay City to the river's confluence with the Kentucky. The act was clear: a clear channel was vital to transport iron and salt to market. Thirty years later when the state first seriously began to assemble reasons for impounding the Kentucky

Dylan Blount

million barrels of “high grade petroleum [were] pumped from [the] area,” little to none of it traveling down the Red and into the Kentucky. Brine, meanwhile, became less than worthless. Not only had it become cheaper to import salt from far away than to produce it locally, the prized brine is considered today “a major enemy of the environment,” Five Lives of the Kentucky River author William Grier notes, “when it is encountered in drilling for oil and gas in eastern Kentucky.”

Padding Red

After our ghostly night, Gortimer and I had intended to leave camp before the rising sun cleared the tree line behind us, hopeful to reunite with Houpp and Mayer by late morning. Instead I wake up with a heavy piercing fever to a hunk of pig iron leering at me, the sun nearly established in the sky, and Gortimer, his blue suitcase lying open, hunched over two crappie filets stuffed into the tiniest cast iron pan I've ever seen. "I hope you like tempura," he says, I think with a straight face.

Few though they may be, one of the benefits of traveling light is quick decampment. Despite my late awakening, we are on the water by late-morning with re-jiggered high hopes for overtaking our companions by Upper Howard Creek, four miles beyond our confluence with the Kentucky River. I take a last look at one of the more strange camp spots I've ever experienced, and wonder about the world this iron forge inhabited.

The river must have been much different in appearance and usage. Leaving no-name forge today on my 3-ply poly boat, I enjoy overhanging trees and the mostly content sounds of non-human river life. On the mid-nineteenth century river, the high point of Red River Iron District production, I imagine three words: busy, barren, populated. Communities and heavy industry intermixed along the banks. On the water, flat boats destined for Clay's Ferry and Frankfort haul 40 tons of salt, 80 tons of nails. The banks denuded, their trees long since sacrificed to stoke the early forges, the air particle-rich.

Eventually, of course, it all left, and left behind a few decently-preserved fossil skeletons. There were early hints. Clark and Powell's iron furnace sitting on the lower Red's great north bend, its valley bottom scraped free of trees, gets removed to the forested uplands of Estill County, where it remains until getting decommissioned. Furnaces that burn coal gain popularity when, within decades, the first cut of accessible trees surrounding the forges are burned. Minnesota and Birmingham, Alabama, producers blessed with better and more pure ores beneath their earth, overtake Lexington on the iron market.

Two bends later, I am pulled back into my time by the sight of the Irvine/Winchester Road bridge. The bridge marks the bottom turn of what Gortimer and I have begun calling “the great south bend of the lower Red,” a four mile southern loop detour the river takes as it prepares to enter the Kentucky.

Just out of sight of the bridge, between two dry creeks we spy a small disturbed landing with footprints leading up the bank. Paddling into action, Gortimer pulls his boat close, disembarks and scrambles to a flat ledge fifteen feet up the bank. By the time I make my way up, I arrive to Gortimer hunched over the dainty remains of a small fish. It is clear to me that someone, most likely Wes and Danny, has stayed here. Several footprint patterns at the river-line leading away from the

Continued on page 8

Ann Romney’s Republican address

Myths, moms, and power

By Joseph Anthony

With so many Republican targets to aim at, it might seem churlish to attack Ann Romney. She is probably a nice woman. And I’m sure she’s a great mom. But her speech at the Republican convention, while primarily intended to re-introduce Mitt to the country as loving husband and all-around nice guy, is also a broadside in the cultural wars. It needs to be answered. I don’t mean the parts where she assumes we’re idiots—the early struggles she reports of she and the boy she loved making the ironing board in their basement apartment do double duty as dining room table. That’s just old-fashioned political myth-making: Abe the rail splitter. Or worse, William Henry Harrison the plantation slave-owner turned poor boy in a cabin. Nobody believes those stories except the terminally smug. No, it’s her comments about women, power and love that need to be answered.

Tonight I want to talk to you about love.

Ann Romney is an expert on love. She knows more about love than I do. Why? Well, the answer is simple. She’s a woman. She’s not just a woman; she’s a mother.

I want to talk to you about that love so deep only a mother can fathom it...

Mrs. Romney is making an ancient claim here—that women, mothers, know more about certain profound feelings than men do. This praise of motherhood, as American as Apple-pie, is praise that separates. She devotes the center of her speech to this mother-praise.

It’s the moms who always have to work a little harder, to make everything right.

It’s the moms of this nation — single, married, widowed — who really hold this country together. We’re the mothers, we’re the wives, we’re the grandmothers, we’re

the big sisters, we’re the little sisters, we’re the daughters.

*You know it’s true, don’t you?
You’re the ones who always have to do a little more.*

I’m not sure if men really understand this, but I don’t think there’s a woman in America who really expects her life to be easy. In our own ways, we all know better!

Well, who could argue with a lot of this? I might agree that women’s lives are generally harder than men’s. I might argue that our political, economic, and social structure make it so, but the conclusion would still be there. And leaving room for huge numbers of exceptions, I’d even agree that women work harder to keep a family emotionally together than do many men. Think indifferent fathers, and until a few years ago, almost nobody would be too shocked. They might disapprove, but they saved their true opprobrium for that monster, the indifferent mother.

But Ann Romney’s motives in this speech aren’t meant to get us into a dinner-time debate over which parent cares more, which parent learns better the minutiae of raising children from knowing which cereal each child will tolerate to where the nearest emergency room is.

Ann Romney says she is praising women. But don’t be fooled. There’s an ancient history of misogyny hiding under praise of women—from Chaucer’s clerk to Popes slobbering over the Virgin Mary. Ann Romney has been accused of pandering to women in her speech, but she was really doing the old job of separating them from men. And while segregating women from men might seem like chivalry at times, common courtesy or even common sense at other times, it always works against women in the end.

She starts simply.
We’re the mothers, we’re the wives, we’re the grandmothers, we’re the big

sisters, we’re the little sisters, we’re the daughters.

Yes, women are that. But as Emerson, not a great feminist but a great man, said: You are yourself, too. You are yourself first. It is the core feminist message. A woman does not define herself by her relationship to others, especially not to a man. Central to all, we are ourselves.

But that’s not Ann Romney’s main message. Her main message has to do with women and power, specifically power in the public arena.

It’s the moms of this nation — single, married, widowed — who really hold this country together.

A mom has this power, Ann Romney implies, inside the home. This is where her true woman holds power. Romney tries to be realistic. She knows that sometimes a woman has to leave the home: not everyone has millionaire husbands. But she insists that they always leave with regret: they are *the working moms who love their jobs but would like to work just a little less to spend more time with the kids.*

With all this power inside the home, why would a true woman leave it if she could possibly avoid doing so? The corporate power and the political arena’s rewards are nothing compared to the power of love.

A true woman understands this. She does not try to be a priest: 19-year old Mormon boys in good-standing are automatically priests—elders almost before their beards are fully in. But not women who might have raised five of this future hierarchy. And of course, that’s not just a Mormon phenonemon. Nuns with doctorates and 50 years in the field are not suitable for the priesthood.

The true woman doesn’t question this. She knows her place. It’s a wonderful place really. It’s all about love.

And love makes the world go round. (Or is that Bain Capital?)

Hillary Clinton got such a bashing 20 years ago when she let out that she wasn’t one to stay home and bake cookies. Perhaps she should have worded that better. If the proof is in the pudding, she was a pretty good mom, cookies or not. But a large part of the nation felt scorned. Hillary had to backtrack.

But I doubt if Ann Romney will be compelled to backtrack though she scorns, in her sweet tones, most American women. She reduces them to their roles to men and to family; she tells them their true vocation is not in the world but in the home. It’s an old message. It’s a damning, damaging message trotted out by every misogynistic politician and clergyman since time began.

I do not like joining another tradition—that of taking shots at the wives of political candidates, whether it be Kitty Dukakis, Hillary Clinton, or even Nancy Reagan. Most of the time, the shots are cheap and meant for their husbands. But it would also be insulting to Ann Romney not to answer her speech, as if as a nice woman she shouldn’t be taken that seriously. I take her very seriously.

Ann Romney’s hymn of praise of women, of mothers especially, is not what it seems. It seeks to limit women’s identity to their roles in family, it seeks to segregate them from the public world feminism has opened for them. Her speech was a shot in the cultural war: we need to shoot back.

Occupy, cont.

Continued from page 1

with people of all ages, ethnicities, faiths, politics, and economic backgrounds. The process deepened my empathy for the difficulties different people face.

And this is Occupy Lexington’s legacy, and the legacy of most of last year’s 1300 occupations, our putting ourselves outside to meet each other and talk. We initiated an ongoing discussion about the need for participatory, community-based, economics. We revived an understanding of democratic principles as involving the voices of all people—no matter how much money they make or what families they belong to—and opened our eyes to politics beyond the pulling of a lever. We extended our notion of the possibilities of a political system beyond the entrenched, janus-faced, hierarchy of Democrats and Republicans. We made Americans aware of the broader global resistance movement challenging predatory economic policies that prey upon the weakest in order to benefit a small minority.

Although the physical site for Occupy Lexington eventually ended in February, it expanded into community projects. Like at other disbanded sites across the USA, we formed reading/discussion groups, established community gardens, attended community gatherings at public parks, and continued discussions about community politics. Ian Epperson’s People’s Budget started at Occupy. Central Kentucky Move to Amend has roots at JP Morgan Plaza. So does CROCK (Community Radicals of Central Kentucky), the one I’m most involved in, which does community gardening, holds reading and discussion groups, helps outreach/organizing, and any other miscellany fun things that build community.

On this anniversary of public occupation, my message is to jump on in. Join that discussion. Be part of that action. You’ve got outlets.

CROCK will meet at 4 pm, Cheapside Pavilion on Sunday, September 9. For information on Central Kentucky Move to Amend, see the article in this issue. Occupy Lexington is rumored to be holding a one-year reunion on September 29 at JP Morgan Chase Plaza. Check their facebook page for updates.

Unemployment rate hits 106%

The leek: a satirical take

By Horace Heller Hedley, IV
Washington D.C.

In a stunning development expected to have far-reaching economic and political fallout, the Bureau of Labor Statistics revealed that the unemployment rate has reached an unprecedented 106 percent. The revelation has overturned conventional wisdom in economic and political circles, and left experts scrambling to make sense of its causes and probable impact.

“What the ***** happened down there?” gasped Mark Ridgefield of Gotham Capitol Investment, in a typical response to the astounding report. “Those stats guys must have smoked something extra strong in a small office with the windows shut.”

In fact, the new 106 percent unemployment rate stems from a little publicized change in the statistical method used to calculate the overall figure. The novel unemployment index aims for a more nuanced picture of quality of life than is possible with a raw percentage figure. The new adjusted jobless figure, known as Unemployment: National Indexed Metric of Productive Endeavor (UNIMOPE) estimates the true social value of each job in the economy using several qualitative variables. Jobs deemed detrimental to the overall well-being of the community are assigned a negative weight. For example, Technical Support Specialist for Dell Computer receives a weighted value of negative 12 (-12), signifying that this job creates economic disruption and poor health outcomes equivalent to approximately 12 unemployed persons.

“Well, I’m not all that surprised,” said Janet Tucker, Policy Rescindment Specialist with Aetna Health Insurance, upon learning that her own job counts as 37 unemployed people on the

UNIMOPE index. “Mine is not exactly what you’d call a feel-good job. Plus, the whole department shuts down in 2014 unless Obama loses. Of course we’re all frantically applying for transfers to other departments. But I doubt that Customer Premium Expansion or Federal Legislation Enhancement can absorb all of us.”

Some economists have suggested a novel approach to managing the extreme UNIMOPE figure. “If the one-tenth of U.S. employees with the most toxic jobs just up and quit, this adjusted unemployment figure would improve to about 3 percent--basically full employment,” said Rebecca Collier of Global Prognostications.

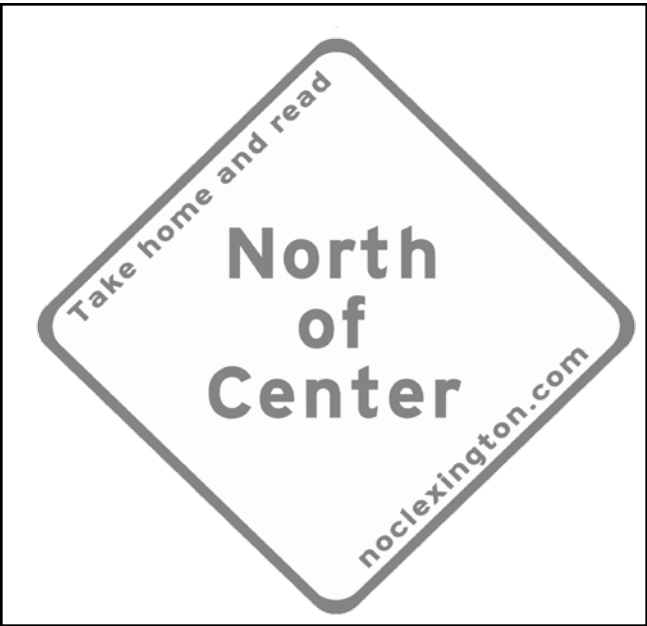
This suggestion does not sit well with those jobholders. “Obviously some half-wit Economics professor is up for tenure,” fumed Ron Whitman, Sales Manager for Pre-Owned Vehicles at a KIA dealership in Benton Harbor, Michigan. “Give me his address--I’ll send him my electric bill.”

Surprisingly, however, the new index does not appear to have been the work of a professional economist. An unpublished essay from 2011 outlining identical statistical procedures has recently come to light. Its author, Jillian McKenzie, 22, expressed astonishment at the impact of her work. “It’s mine alright—my final paper for Econ 318. I mean, it was OK—I got an A-. But damn...I was a Communications major. And if they’re so crazy about my paper, where’s my job offer?”

All await the impact of this new unemployment figure on the hotly contested presidential race. In the hours since UNIMOPE was introduced, conservative-leaning media outlets have been reporting a 98 percent spike in the unemployment rate during the Obama administration. Rush Limbaugh attributes the sudden downturn to the Supreme Court’s recent decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act. “Obamacare has arrived. The U.S. economy is dead on that arrival. Employment in this country has met its death panel.”

Such comments drew a heated response from White House Press Secretary Jay Carney. “They are comparing apples, to...hell...it’s not even oranges. It’s not even edible. It’s like transmission parts or something!”

But Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) held firm. “The Republican Party refuses to allow the Democrats to use antiquated measurement tools and statistical trickery to conceal its jobs disaster from the American people.”



The truth is, downtown doesn't need more people. They are there—but evidently, the type of downtown patrons we currently have (young urban professionals, the artistic crowd, culture hounds, families, foodies, Thursday Night Live imbibers, general city folk) don't count.

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Modest traffic proposals

Holistic medicine, not radical surgery

By David Shattuck

In the 13 years since Third and Fourth Streets were made two-way, we've heard developers and city leaders claim that one-way streets inhibit business development. We've also heard that two-way streets magically sprout commercial activity.

Evidence in Lexington, however, shows just the opposite. A dining scene has sprouted organically on Short and Limestone Streets. Crowd sizes at Thursday Night Live continue to grow. The Lexington Farmer's Market remains a well-attended Saturday event. The highly anticipated Hotel 21C at Main and Upper Streets is coming. CentrePointe is coming, and so, too, might a Town Branch Trail. Both businesses and area residents, it seems, will flock downtown and inhabit one-way streets. People simply do not allow issues such as "wayfinding" or parking to stand in the way of something they really want to do or someplace they really want to go.

That's why making downtown a destination is the goal—and not some specific set of street patterns that, as we have seen in our own city and elsewhere, are only remotely related to this goal.

This is a position I share with both newly installed Director of the Downtown Development Authority Jeff Fugate and Rupp Arena Arts and Entertainment District Master Planner Gary Bates. Writing to me recently, Fugate declared that "we need to be clear that the question . . . is not 'one or two-way streets', but instead 'what's going to help support the downtown we have envisioned?'" Writing to me last November, Bates was more blunt about the non-issue of two-way streets. "To be clear," he wrote. "I have no two-way agenda. The traffic issues . . . have to be seen in a more holistic way than the current discussion."

In keeping with the spirit of both Fugate and Bates, allow me to propose an alternative to the radical and costly surgery that two-way street conversion would represent.

Don't touch: Leave Limestone and Main Street alone. These streets are pedestrian friendly, particularly after the recent streetscape improvements, and traffic doesn't speed down them (and where it does, can be slowed with signaling). Main Street needs sufficient capacity to accommodate traffic to downtown, Rupp Arena and other events, and the two new proposed hotels. Limestone, meanwhile, has developed quite nicely on its own.

Close Short: Close Short Street between the Explorium and Opera House and Martin Luther King Street all day every day (while ensuring easy access,

of course, to those venues by keeping Short one-way to the west). Doing this will create a business-friendly pedestrian area that could be extended north and south if the city were to close Mill Street between Main and Transy (Third Street) weekdays from 6:00 pm to 4:00 am and all day on weekends and holidays.

Help Vine: Leave Vine Street one-way to accompany Main Street. Two-way proponents' central goal is to slow traffic on Vine Street and to make Vine and High Street more pedestrian and business friendly. The question is, does two-way conversion contribute to these goals?

In the case of Vine Street, no, it doesn't. Currently, Vine is not particularly pedestrian friendly because it houses few places a pedestrian might frequent. Most of the street is devoted to the multi-story bank/office complexes that house the Bankruptcy Court, the U.S. Attorneys Offices, and other downtown businesses whose employees spend time and money downtown. Only one location—where the city parking garage was recently demolished—offers any expansion area for pedestrian friendly retail or restaurant activity. Additionally, studies suggest Vine Street works as a 2-way street only if the Transit Center is moved, a project with cost estimates of \$20 million. Traffic on Vine may be too fast, and the pedestrian experience can be improved, but that can be solved more cheaply and efficiently with signal timing.

...
Lexington is very fortunate in that, unlike Louisville, Cincinnati, Knoxville and numerous other cities, its downtown is not severed by interstate traffic. Yet nobody would deny that access to downtown is also essential. Our one-way streets, particularly Main and Vine, allow access through, but also to downtown. Without convenient access to downtown, it will not be the destination planners hope to make it. It is precisely for this reason that Tucson, home to the University of Arizona and comparable in size to Lexington, rejected conversion of the major east-west street running one-way through its downtown.

As Bates noted last fall, the revitalization of downtown is "well under way." And this is happening without any monkeying with our streets. In view of all that's happened and all that's about to happen, it seems clear that radical surgery is not what our downtown needs at this time. A little tweaking, sure. And if we discover down the road that we need more, and it seems likely that conversion could produce those results (importantly, it is not likely at this time for reasons I've detailed in previous *NoC* articles), then and only then should Lexington re-visit street conversion proposals.

Have you ever been downtown?

Letter to Mr. Fallon

By Mary Grace Barry

There were several startling things in the *Herald-Leader* article that splashed across the front page on August 27. "Victorian Square returns to ownership of The Webb Companies" ran the title, as if it were an old timey "Extra! Extra! Read all about it!" moment.

One of those startling things was the quiet refusal to probe deeper as to why Victorian Square was listed for sale in mid-January at \$7.25 million, assessed at \$1.4 million, and sold at \$1.7 million.

That aside, the strangest thing was the sense of time warp. So we're back in the 80s with the Webbs redeveloping a space based on a popular model? (The boutique plan that Victorian Square uses also popped up in bigger cities in the 80s, often in re-purposed buildings like downtown train stations. While popular, it failed in places like Indianapolis and clearly has failed here.)

And now the Webbs, with Jeffrey R. Anderson Real Estate Inc. of Cincinnati, want to do the currently popular thing: turn downtown life more toward a generic commercial district with big chain restaurants that pull suburbanites downtown.

Enter Mark Fallon, vice president of real estate leasing for Anderson. The *Herald-Leader* article reports that Fallon "gets" Lexington because he has worked on the recasting of Lexington Green as a fashion destination. During that project, evidently he felt he also became

Castlewood, cont.

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drugs, more prostitution, more property crime.

And residents fear that it will take 10 more years of heavy lifting to get more than cursory, patchwork improvements on the street. While resurfacing of E. Loudon is a short-term fix (and something the shocks on residents' cars would appreciate), what the street really needs is a complete streets design.

The question is, how much will residents have to do themselves? And, will the neighborhood be able to shoulder the load? If recent history tells us anything, Castlewood residents will probably have to do a lot—and, realistically, the project may ask for more energy and time than many ordinary citizens have in this grinding recession.

On the other hand, there doesn't seem to be a shortage of enthusiasm directed toward overhauling downtown. The city is forking over plenty of dough for studies about re-doing Rupp and converting downtown streets to two-ways while near northside residents are having to fend for themselves when it comes to basic infrastructure needs. Makes you wonder where the priorities are.

familiar with downtown LexVegas. His assessment: it was lacking.

His negative assessment led to this urban development blather, reported by the *Herald-Leader*: "Downtown has fantastic downtown hotels, Rupp Arena is in walking distance from the University of Kentucky, most of the business infrastructure is based in downtown, but what it needs is a traffic generator like The Banks [in Cincinnati] to bring more people downtown."

Look Mr. Fallon (and others blathering the same sentiments), downtown Lexington is incredibly vibrant right now. I travel through downtown almost every day of the week by car or on foot. There is not one day when the streets are deserted, as they are in bigger cities like Indianapolis, Cleveland, or Columbus. The truth is, downtown doesn't need more people. They are there—but evidently, the type of downtown patrons we currently have (young urban professionals, the artistic crowd, culture hounds, families, foodies, Thursday Night Live imbibers, general city folk) don't count in your book. For you, the people who count are the ones who will drive downtown (and find limited parking) in order to eat at...(drum-roll)... Johnny Rockets.

Mr. Fallon, that type of shit is off Nicholasville Road (near, um, Lexington Green). Let it be there, that's fine. When we want Olive Garden, we'll pay the price by driving down Nicholasville. Don't pretend to know our city, cuz you don't. Right now, you can't beat downtown Lexington for flurry and activity. Oh, and all you councilmembers who are convinced that we need to bring more people downtown, look away from the \$300k consultants' studies for a moment and use your own two eyes: downtown LexVegas is hip-happenin'.

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and a perspective. Read on to find out

what that means.

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Captain Commanokers

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Marcus Flores

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Wes Houp

Michael Marchman

Cannon-Marie Green Milby

Kenn Minter

Sunny Montgomery

Kremena Todorova

Address correspondence, including

advertising inquiries and letters to the

editor, to noceditors@yahoo.com.

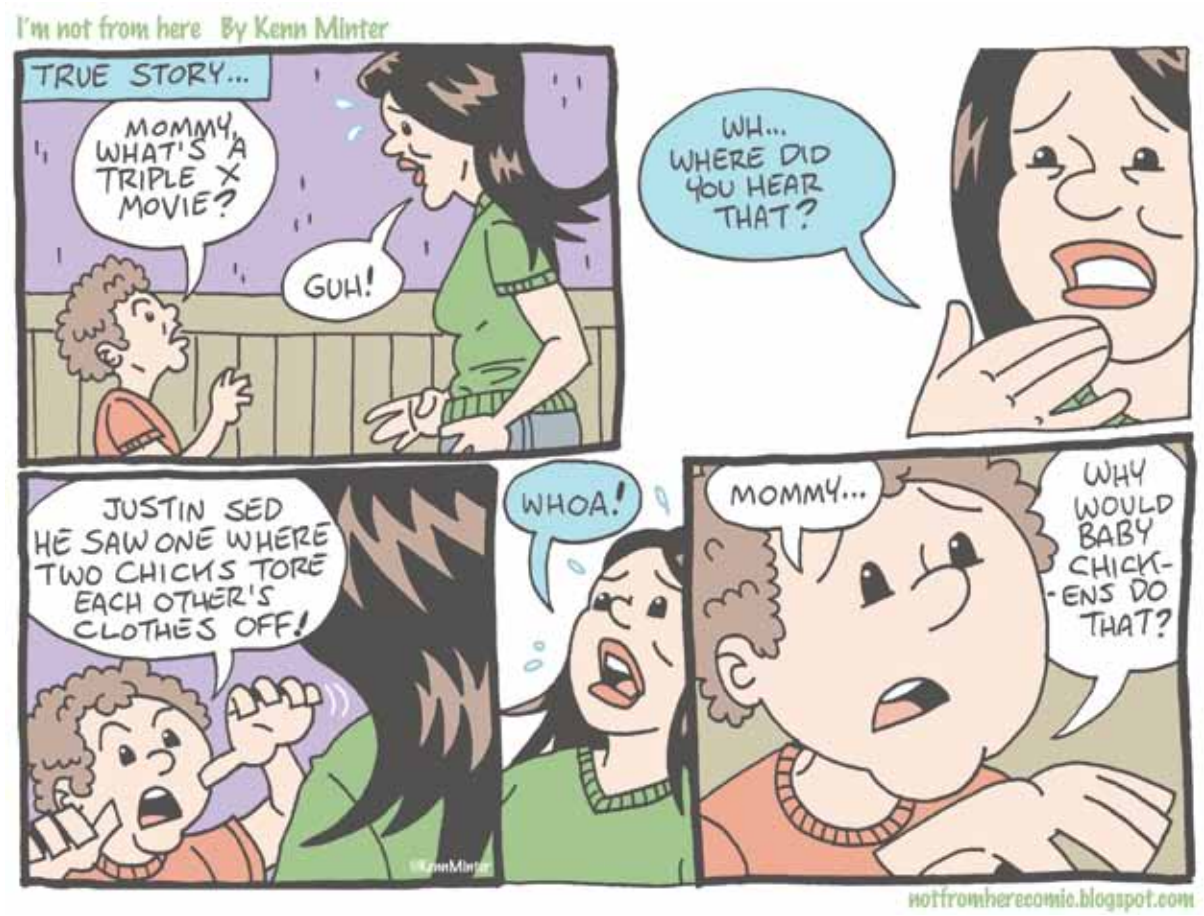
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Red River, cont.

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bank, the tent-sized tamped down area, a white dusty pile of ashes, wet charred wood scattered about, these are all good clues, but Gortimer seems most convinced by the fish.

“Largemouth. Just barely keeper-sized. That’s Wes no doubt about it.”

“So we were, what?, three miles away all night? Any closer, we might have heard Mayer snoring.”

“Judging by the state of this gill-bearing aquatic craniate carcass,” Gortimer says, breaking out bottle Y, “they can’t be but three, maybe five miles ahead. I’d say that’s cause for celebration.”

Back on the river, fifteen minutes of paddling takes us to a slight northward bend. Here, a 200 foot tall archipelago of tough-as-nails limestone is all that separates us from the Kentucky River. For our last half mile on the Red, our course will parallel the Kentucky and push up against the thin rock wall. When we at last clear the barrier, the river making a 90 degree left turn, we catch our first glimpse of the mainstem, my excited feeling surely not altogether different than the flatboatmen of yore.

We float judiciously and with good spirit into a slow-moving long pool on the mainstem, but make no sight of our lead pack. In between alternating pulls of High Bridge water and bottle Y, Gortimer offers me a gesture-filled tour of the area’s deep history.

“Here—” gesturing to the Clark County banks downriver from our present position, “and here—” gesturing upriver toward the Red, “are the result of glacial outflow. When the most southern-reaching glaciers melted nearby, they flooded the valleys that, previously, they had been scouring. Lulbebrud up the Red and Upper Howard downriver here were the outfall routes for glacial waters to flow from the receding Pleistocene ice sheet. Most everything follows from that.”

The hour passes quickly, and before you can say Eskippakithiki, we arrive at the mouth of Upper Howard. Within the next 45 minutes, I will be sleeping off 8 slugs of bottle Y on an Upper

Howard bottom, Mayer and Houp still nowhere in sight, and Gortimer off foraging for goodies.

A river rat day intrudes

When I come to, Gortimer is handing me two armfuls of greens and instructing me, “Don’t touch the stinging nettles. We’ll eat those tonight after a rolling boil. I also got ramps, dandelions, lamb’s quarter, some blackberries. In the meantime, these should help the hunger.”

Gortimer hands me one of two loose handfuls of large orange mushrooms.

“Gymnopolis Juniounious. Here wait—” Gortimer starts rummaging through his suitcase, produces a box of kosher salt. “It’s not finished without the salt. Now down the trap. We’ve got about 30 minutes.”

In 30 minutes I am in the middle of the mainstem, floating, Gortimer floating nearby, just past the mouth of Upper Howard Creek, two small sparkles in a river of sparkles, laughing our heads off.

In 60 minutes I am 100 yards further, no Gortimer, looking furtively downstream from the waterline of my bow, and I think I see them, paddling upstream to save us. Only it’s not them, and as they approach my boat, they grow in size to Brobdignaggian proportions. Two fair-seeming gents in canoes, the Charming Molly and the Charming Polly, get close and throw off wakes that threaten to swamp my unmanned boat. These barge canoes no sooner pass than a great bellowing rushes down the river bed and rings my eardrums. “Jemima! Jemima!” Silence. “Jemima! Jemima!” Soon, gigantic flatboats taking up nearly the entire river pass me from upriver, dropping thirty foot bars of iron and salt crystals six feet in diameter willy nilly into the river.

In 90 minutes I am 50 yards further, floating on my back, my body submerged, my neck submerge, my ears submerged, sound white save for a little reverb, watching wind vectors clash and redirect in the sky above me. I am the OHM, a transparent eye-ball looking

up into the world. I am nothing. I feel all. The currents of the Kentucky circulate through me. I am part and particle of the river.

In 120 minutes I am near a rock bar, over me stands Gortimer, an embodied pincer looking for cycads and other shoreline riprap. His second poke I try but cannot scream, Ow. Fucking shit. That hurts! At the third curious prod I start to panic. I need my hands. Why don’t I have hands?! I need my hands. Shit. Wait—do I have eyelids? I have eyelids! Ouch, that still hurts. I need my fucking hands! We’ve gone 20 more yards.

At 8:00pm that night, Gortimer and I lie finishing the last of the Isbell and the nettles underneath some honeysuckle underbrush near Doylesville, a former river town located across the banks and 2 miles downriver from Upper Howard. No sign of Mayer or Houp.

Sober ride on the hot rapids

By day three, we are steel, our canoes trimmed of inessentials. I carry one beer and a handle of High Bridge water. We no longer scan the horizon in search of a pair of canoes.

The paddle out is steady. We talk of our lives on water, the rivers we have paddled, and people met. I don’t realize until we hit what the Great Witashi referred to as the “hot rapids” that we have passed Ford and the proposed coal power plant.

So this is the hot rapids, I think. Earlier, on the ride to the put-in with the Great Witashi, I had difficulty picturing his description of the rapids, which as I see it now seems to be the discharged, burning hot water used to cool the plant. I was prying for information about coal, and the Witashi was talking area fish and oyster histories. It

wasn’t until I rode upon the rapids and felt the scald set on the 3-ply hull, a grotesque, unnatural experience that left me the worse for having done it, that I realized the Witashi was talking coal, and that I was talking fish and oysters.

As things have turned out, 2 years later as I write this now, the plant was defeated. Maybe my missing Ford was a symbol. Or a metaphor. Coal, too, like the iron and the salt before it, will pass, is already passing, surely to be replaced by a new water-borne Eastern Kentucky resource theft.

Myself, I’d guess it’ll be the water itself.

Northrupp 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.

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