

## Happy slugs a student & AFROTC burns Kent State at UK, part II

By Richard Becker

In Spring of 1970, the Richard Nixon Administration began to expand the war in Indochina beyond the borders of Vietnam into Laos and Cambodia. Antiwar sentiment had already been simmering for years in the United States, particularly among students. This was no less true right in the heart of the Midwest at Kent State University where, forty years ago on May 4, 1970, several dozen rifle shots changed the course of American history and galvanized opposition to the war in Vietnam.

That day, on May 4, students at Kent gathered on campus—as their compatriots at schools across America did—to demonstrate against the US incursion into Laos and Cambodia.

Around noon, nearly 2,000 students ignored university orders to disperse and began to demonstrate, lobbing rocks at a military official who attempted to read the university dispersal order. As the protest heated up and the students refused to disperse, the National Guard moved in with fixed bayonets, firing tear gas at the students. Students moved further away, up a hill and into a large grassy area where, for reasons largely unexplained to this day, approximately 29 of the 77 assembled guardsmen fired 67 rounds into the students. By the end of the brief, violent encounter, four students

lay dead, another nine wounded. Two of the slain, Jeffrey Miller and Allison Krause had participated in the demonstration, while the other two, William Schroeder and Sandra Scheuer, were merely walking from one class to the next when they were shot dead.



Kentucky National Guardsmen posted in front of the burning AFROTC building.

In response, campuses nationwide erupted in anger over the unjust killings of fellow students at Kent.

### UK Board of Trustees, May 5

At UK on the morning after the shootings, a flyer was distributed

among students announcing a meeting at 1 PM near Fountain Plaza (now site of the Patterson statue) in front of the Patterson Office Tower. The meeting's stated purpose was to petition the UK Board of Trustees for a condemnation of the shootings in Ohio.

to the eighteenth floor of the tower in an effort to gain access to the board meeting. Between 35 and 40 students were allowed into the board room; nearly 200 students were not able to fit into the room and thus gathered in the hallway outside.

Claiming that the massive influx of students violated the fire code, the Board pursued various tactics to reduce the number of students present. Foremost among these was the shutting down of all elevators leading to the 18th floor. Students either had to take the elevators up as far as they would go and take the stairs the rest of the way, or else remain on the first floor for the duration of the meeting.

It is unclear whether or not there was merit to the administration's claims that the protesters were violating code. It was not long before the students in the hallway began to aggravate an already tense situation inside the room.

Student body president Steve Bright was signed in as a non-voting student member of the board at the beginning of the meeting. Governor Louie Nunn, who would ordinarily have been present for a regular board meeting, was not present on May 5th, claiming that because he was being considered for an honorary degree, he did not want his presence to influence

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## Jerry Moody's farewell tour Shows at Green Lantern and the Hive

By Danny Mayer

In a couple of weeks, Lexington will lose a vital component of its peace and justice community when Jerry Moody relocates north to Canada.

Moody, a social activist and rabble-rouser since his high school days in Ohio during the late Sixties, has been a

tireless campaigner, organizer and contributor to a number of social justice causes since his arrival in Lexington two decades ago. He's worked for Kentuckians for the Commonwealth fighting against big business coal practices and nefarious anti-felon voting laws; he helped start the now-defunct New Morning World Coffee House on

Euclid Ave to provide a space for activists to gather to protest the *first* Iraq War, and has continued to organize protests against the most recent wars in the Middle East; he's been active in the Central Kentucky Council for Peace; he's worked to create a free university for the community; he's advocated for Hispanic outreach groups, re-introduced CentrePointe to live guerilla theatre, and campaigned for local and national politicians. And he's done all this while playing drums for peace and guitar for fun.

I first met Jerry a couple years ago at Bluegrass Community and Technical College's Cooper campus, located on the ass-end of UK's campus. Jerry was working a part-time gig through Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, getting students and staff registered to vote in the 2008 elections. For the most part, it was a thankless and, I imagine, a poorly paid job—as are most underfunded and overworked community activist jobs—but you could never tell it from Jerry. At the table day after day, his face showed the same smile and energized optimism that I've now grown accustomed to seeing from him. I'm probably not alone in noting that his was a face I quickly came to seek out, to say 'hi' to.

When we started this paper about a year ago, Jerry simply offered "to help." And help he did. He hustled some of our first ads, distributed the paper to people that I would have never thought would be interested in it, and most importantly, spent a considerable amount of time that summer on my back porch, discussing local, regional and national politics with me over smokes.

## Right to the city Liberate CentrePointe

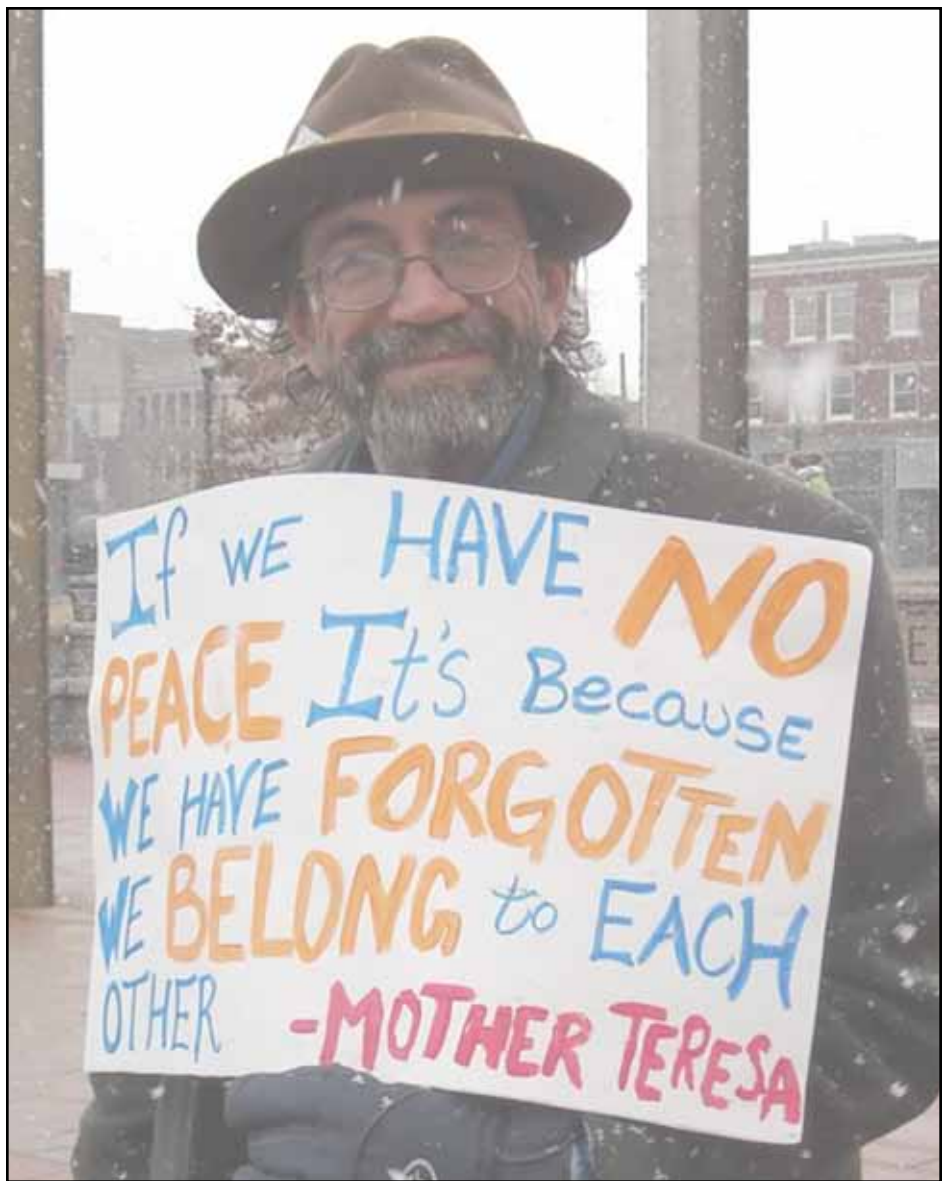
Lexington is now entering its second summer growing season without breaking ground on the CentrePointe block. With the exception of some stealthy picnics, an Irish festival and a couple minutes—total—of sports action, an entire downtown city block has been rendered off limits to an entire city for nearly one-and-a-half years, an urban dead zone with some cheap aesthetics.

We should blame ourselves for this pathetic state of affairs. We spent a good amount of time last summer imagining the CentrePointe of our dreams, but not so much time, as Tom Eblen might say, doing something about it. With that in mind, we call on residents to demand and claim your right to the block.

Draw up your plans for the block and follow the lead of those who make the city come alive through their papered announcements on wooden electric poles and abandoned magazine racks. Staple, paste and etch your ideas into the planks of the CP fences that keep you out. Paper the block alive once again with your poetry and prose for what the block was and what it can be. One idea is easily discarded, torn down, forgotten. Twenty can carefully be swept under the rug. Two-hundred, two-thousand ideas? That is something else, something else altogether.

But don't stop with symbolic action. Demand that the space be used productively, this year. Do this in public and as loud and as often as possible.

Dudley Webb has already said that he will not disturb the site until after the World Equestrian Games. The area is essentially rendered inert for the summer and part of fall. This is unacceptable. The best productive use of that site is not as an unusable and excessively large front lawn. We



Jerry Moody raises hell.

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# The Neighborhood

*North of Center* is a periodical, a place, and a perspective. Keep reading to find out what that means.

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## Council candidates weigh in

### Discuss affordable housing and crime at La Roca Methodist

#### NoC News

On Wednesday, April 14, eight of the nine candidates running for an at-large seat on the City Council met at La Roca Methodist Church on North Limestone. Joining incumbents Chuck Ellinger and Linda Gorton at the foot of the La Roca alter were former First District Council rep George Brown (now running for an at-large seat), Christopher Hignite, Kathy Plomin, Ralph Ruschell, Steve Kay and Don Pratt. Candidate Ismael Shalash was the only candidate not in attendance.

The forum is one of several being held around Lexington before the May primaries, in which the field of nine candidates will be whittled down to six. Ultimately, Lexington voters will choose three at-large candidates to sit on the City Council.

The La Roca forum featured current District One councilperson Andrea James as moderator. After a brief introduction by each person running for office, James asked a series of eight questions for which each candidate was allowed a 90 second response. Questions ranged from topics on urban sustainability and political cooperation to capital improvement (ie, big dollar) ideas and crime-reduction strategies. As one might expect with the relatively short time allotted for each question, the forum was long on platitudes and short on distinguishable ideas.

#### Affordable housing

With the exception of real-estate expert Ralph Ruschell, who claimed

that housing had become more affordable in Lexington because we are in the midst of a depression, all of the candidates seemed to agree with Steve Kay's assessment that affordable housing is "one of the things this community has not done well." Kay's assertion, contra Ruschell, is borne out in local figures: over one-third of Lexington renters devote more than 30% of their income to rent.

While all candidates but Ruschell noted that affordable housing was an issue needing serious attention in Lexington, each gave differing assessments. Along with Kaye, incumbent Linda Gorton explicitly noted her support for designating an affordable housing trust fund, though she did not attend last month's affordable housing gathering where she could have gone on record to support the creation of a designated city trust fund for affordable housing. Incumbent Ellinger, who also noted during the candidate forum that the city needs to deal with affordable housing, did attend that March meeting, but along with Mayor Newberry and mayoral candidate Jim Gray did not voice explicit support for designating city funds. Brown, who seemed to play up his insider status as a former council-member, called for working within city regulations that the council already has in place.

Candidates Christopher Hignite and Don Pratt offered two new ideas that seemed to question the ability of city government or social entrepreneurs to catalyze affordable housing. Hignite noted that eviction courts have been overloaded with cases, which has

lead to citizens not receiving adequate counseling on their rights as renters and homeowners. (Hignite claims to have been kicked out of eviction courts as he has attempted to council people on their rights for a fair eviction trial.) He suggested that the city spend more time working to ensure that these people, the future evicted, are not taken advantage of by the court system—and, presumably, the banks and buy-low property shoppers who have made a killing on the north-side off flipping low-cost foreclosed homes and selling them back at above market prices.

Pratt, on the other hand, responded to the affordable housing question by making a simple observation. There is plenty of vacant property located downtown, he noted. The problem is that these spaces aren't being used at all. These properties should start to be re-inhabited to meet the needs of affordable housing by creating small-living spaces for the homeless and marginally housed.

#### Thoughts on crime

Much like the affordability question, candidates responded to the question of crime reduction in a fairly uniform manner: the need for more and better education.

Kay, who noted that poverty and lack of opportunity spur crime, suggested giving students more before and after school help in the form of tutoring and social activities as a crime reduction strategy. (In a different response, Kay cited the growth

*continued on the next page*

## EcoART in the community

### Grants use art to teach about environmental issues

By Amber Scott

The tangled mass of construction netting, batteries, reflectors, Ken dolls, twisty straws and worthless motherboards sits, somewhat appropriately, atop overturned garbage cans. All this debris is spackled onto life-size dolls and re-imagined rocking horses thanks to epoxy, spray paint, nails and good luck.

It's quite literally a hunk of junk, but ultimately the work in Bob Morgan's *All that Glitters* evolves into a stunning army of environment-saving soldiers on a mission.

Morgan's artwork, which is on display at Institute 193 (193 N. Limestone) through May 16, is just one of several projects funded by an EcoART grant from the Department of Environmental Quality.

Cheryl Taylor, commissioner of environmental quality, and her colleagues conceptualized EcoART grants during the spring of 2009. Taylor, who has six children, had seen the engaging and revolutionizing effect of art when her two youngest sons took classes at the Lexington Children's Theater years ago and school concerts and plays overtook T-ball and soccer games on her calendar.

"As I became more involved in the arts community in Lexington, it just opened my eyes to the opportunity it has to teach people," said Taylor. "That's why [my assistant] Jaclyn [Phelps] and I made this grant up. We know that art reaches out to people in a very visual way, a very kinesthetic way. People learn and remember things much better than when they read it in a book."

The Department of Environmental Quality managed to set aside \$75,000 in its budget to fund the grants, and in December 2009, 21 grants were awarded to visual artists, musicians, environmentalists, educators and community activists to create projects that engage people with environmental issues like storm water, energy conservation, and recycling, among others.

"You can tell people thousands and thousands of times that the environment is important but until they really see the effects personally, whether it's through art or another means, they aren't going to really internalize it," said Phelps. "You can't always do things about global warming, but you can do things like anti-litter, you can do things like cleaning up your local watershed. You can do all kinds of things here in the city and really improve this local environment and make a huge difference."

"The whole point of the grants is to get people to internalize and educate them in a different way, in an unusual way."

The EcoART grants weren't the Department of Environmental Quality's first foray into using art to raise environmental awareness. Taylor said the department, which is charged with managing landfills and providing trash service among other things, incorporated \$15,000 for artwork into a grant for the installation of wetlands at McConnell Springs, which will officially open on Earth Day.

"The Friends of McConnell Springs added a mobile that Erika Strecker did, and it moves when the wind blows," she said. "So many people have come out to the park to see that and then they see

the place and they enjoy it so much, we thought that's a pretty striking way to get people's attention."

#### EcoART events in the summer

EcoART-funded events and exhibits like *All that Glitters* are ongoing into the summer. Jan Durham has created an educational display of Kentucky wool that will be at Central Library through April. Students from Sts. Peter & Paul will give a dramatic performance at Gratz Park on Arbor Day, April 30, in celebration of a LexTree Walking Brochure. Statues and furniture made of recycled plastic will be exhibited at the 5th Annual Peace & Global Citizenship Fair on May 15, and an exhibit of environmentally-themed work by artists Murray Dwertman and Hui Chi Lee will open at the Downtown Arts Center at the end of May.

Other projects, including a film screening, a rain garden, and stepping stones in the Distillery District, will be rolling out soon, but details are still in development.

Many of the projects, be they gallery exhibits or school performances, have supplemental educational components. In the case of *All that Glitters*, Bob Morgan has led discussions with school and community groups and encouraged classes to take in and experience the art created from the grants.

Taylor said the Department of Environmental Quality hopes to not only continue the EcoART grant program next year, but also expand it by \$25,000. Budget approval is pending.

"We should have done this a long time ago," said Taylor. "To me it's obvious what people can learn when you take a look at some of the things we've created with this program. People are using all different types of media to help people understand that you are the environment, the environment is you. It's wonderful."

*For more information about the EcoART grant program or projects, visit: <http://lexingtonky.gov>.*



COURTESY INSTITUTE 193.

*A piece from Bob Morgan's All That Glitters at Institute 193.*



Kent State (cont.)

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the board’s vote on that matter. Based on the events to come in the meeting, one must wonder whether Nunn simply wished to avoid the conflict brewing on campus.

The minutes from the meeting record the frustration of board members at the behavior of the students assembled outside. During President Singletary’s customary presentation to the board, he complained of the difficulty of not being able to be heard over the commotion coming from the hallway. At this point, UK director of safety and security Joseph Burch quietly conferred with Steve Bright, presumably urging him to go speak with the students outside, as Bright then left the room to talk with the students.

Heckling Bright and the student code

Bright was met with heckling and cursing and a list of student demands. According to the Lexington Herald, their demands were as follows:

- Board condemnation of the Ohio incident.
- A day-long campus moratorium today—even though it was final exam week—to protest the Kent shootings.
- Board condemnation of the U.S. invasion of Cambodia.
- Removal of all firearms from campus, including those worn by UK police officers
- Revamp of the Student Code of Conduct.

This final demand was perhaps the most pressing. Bright was in the hallway with the students during the Board’s discussion of the student code revision, so a vote on the resolution was tabled until Bright was able to return. Upon his return, Bright, according to the minutes of the meeting, called the code revision “oppressive,” saying that it placed “the rights of the community...above those of the individual.” But perhaps most auspicious was Bright’s prediction that the “oppressive” student code revision could lead to a “Kent-type confrontation at the University of Kentucky.” In spite of this warning, the Board of Trustees voted to pass the motion, and thus threw down the gauntlet. Neither Bright nor anyone else on the board could have known how prescient Bright’s comments would come to be.

It is unclear what the students specifically found “oppressive” in the code. However, the code dictated specific areas of campus as “free speech” zones, specifically the student center patio area, which became a focal point of the demonstrations in 1970. (This “free speech” area remains in effect today, flying in the face of constitutional rights to freedom of expression). Free speech was furthermore guaranteed in the code only to “registered” student organizations that must follow all university rules and regulations. In the midst of the tense atmosphere at UK following Kent State, the code revisions felt like a slap in the face of the students and further ratcheted up the students.

UK English professor Pat White, who was later arrested for his involvement in the events of that week, called the scene on the 18th floor on May 5th a “mob scene,” with “lots of police” and lots of students compressed into a small space under stressful conditions.

Happy slugs a student

Upon the meeting’s adjournment, the tenseness only escalated. Former governor and board member A.B. “Happy” Chandler emerged from the room and, seeing the angry students gathered in the hallway, promptly made for a stairway. Chandler must not have moved quickly enough, because before he could get away, UK sophomore Judy Schroeder approached Chandler, stood in his path, and demanded that he and the board condemn the expansion of the Vietnam War into neighboring Cambodia.

Chandler, as unflappably and inappropriately gregarious as ever, patted the female student on the cheek, saying “Honey, I’d stop the war in Vietnam tomorrow if I could.” Mike Greenwell, a student standing nearby, mimicked Chandler’s gesture, touching the former governor on his cheek.

Never an exemplar of prudence, Chandler grabbed Greenwell by the hair and leveled the young student with a punch. Chandler later apologized for the incident, saying, however, that “some of those students shouldn’t

scene as “a memorial to the dead... quiet and subdued.” Some students briefly participated in a sit-in in the middle of Euclid Avenue before rejoining their peers for the completion of the march. They sang patriotic songs, lit memorial candles, and some shed tears in the memory of the fallen Kent students. The students peacefully made their way back to central campus near Buell Armory and prepared for a continuation of their vigil.

The AFROTC burns

That night, as students milled about in the area near the armory, the crisis at UK reached a dangerous new level. The scene grew steadily tenser as students, agitated by the presence of state and city police and administration disinterest in their concerns, became further frustrated by their apparently increasing inability to peacefully assemble on their campus. Witnesses describe students singing and quietly talking with one another while the police ominously stood guard on the steps at Buell Armory. At



ALEX DESHA

be at this school—they’re filthy and dirty and have long hair.” Greenwell was later charged with and exonerated on charges of battery for his interaction with Chandler, while no punitive actions whatsoever were taken against the irascible former governor.

Chandler’s actions only served to further aggravate students already angry about the board not admitting all students into the meeting. Add to this that the board passed the student code revisions and did not even consider condemning the invasion of Cambodia and the shootings at Kent, and the stage was set for a volatile situation.

To Singletary’s credit, he agreed to meet with a small group of appointed student leaders following the board meeting. In the meeting, Singletary rebuffed demands both for a moratorium on classes for the final week of the semester and for a removal of firearms on campus, citing the disinterest of board members in any such actions. The UK president did however earn applause when he called the invasion of Cambodia “a great mistake,” about which he planned to personally write President Nixon.

Later that day, student leaders regrouped and conferred with one another to plot their next step. That night, shortly after 8:00, about five hundred students met for a memorial march around campus. They carried four coffins symbolizing the slain at Kent State. Pat White described the

one point, a rock shattered a window in the Armory.

Then, just a short time later, across Euclid Avenue, a fireball shot into the dark spring sky.

Fire quickly engulfed a rickety wooden structure that was used in a limited capacity by the Air Force ROTC for additional office space. The building had long been decried as an eyesore by many in the campus community, but its torching was nonetheless a shock to those present that night. Students immediately either dispersed from the scene or pitched in to help firefighters extinguish the blaze.

The violence that emerged that night presented a problem to those demonstrators insistent that their intent was nonviolence. The rock throwing and the burning of the

Council candidates (cont.)

continued from the previous page

of school and community gardening initiatives as one potential outlet for school educational and social opportunities that could be offered—an idea echoed in the proposal by Pratt for re-focusing schools as neighborhood community centers.) Gorton called for re-emphasizing vocational options within high school as a way to re-skill students from underserved communities—presumably as a less-costly alternative to receiving an increasingly expensive college degree.

Pratt took a different position on reducing crime. Implicitly recognizing Kay’s observation that crime is produced through poverty and lack of opportunity, Pratt suggested following the model of New Haven, Connecticut, in training police officers as social workers. One of the problems with high crime rates, Pratt noted, was that a large segment of the community views the police through the lens of crime enforcement. But police work should be as much about empowering communities and working to make them better places as it should be about law enforcement. In

building appeared to lend credence to the suspicions of officials like Governor Nunn that outside agitators were present at UK, seeking to incite violence against the state.

A quick arrest

The police fingered Sue Anne Salmon, a quiet and demure student from Madisonville, KY, for the arson almost immediately. Salmon’s crimes were two-fold: she wrote for the radical independent campus newspaper blue tail fly, and she was spotted near campus the night of the burning carrying a bottle of ginger ale. Possession of ginger ale is, of course, not a crime. However, police were apparently so high-strung over recent unrest on college campuses nationwide that they were convinced Miss Salmon was carrying gasoline in the bottle. Rather than simply examine the bottle to see if its advertised contents were inside, the police opted instead to arrest Salmon and charge her with arson.

Later, in an article in the *blue-tail fly* entitled “Confessions of an Alleged Arsonist,” Salmon told her side of the story. She recounted how everyone she encountered, from the arresting officers to the booking officer at the police station, were all aware of *blue-tail fly*. They all read it, they claimed, to keep themselves in the loop on campus activities. After being held for several days, Salmon was released on bail and was later exonerated of all charges. A forthcoming article in this series may discuss her disciplinary hearings with the university.

In a speech delivered the week of May 4, 1970 to a group of students, Steve Bright said that “the dangerous people here are not the students,” but rather the armed officials, whose presence on campus inflamed an already volatile situation. Save President Singletary’s token listening sessions, no apparent attempt was made by university or state officials to ameliorate the situation; instead, officials opted to send men with guns and clubs to the campus to use, in the words of Gov. Nunn, “such force as is necessary to put down [the protestors and]... stop disruption.” Much to the dismay of officials, the demonstrations would not end with the burning of the building on Tuesday, but would continue for the duration of the week.

*The next article in this series will complete the narrative of the events of the week of May 4th as well as further explore the strange saga of Sue Anne Salmon and her exoneration on charges of arson. A final article will look to the disciplining of participant actors: it will tell the story of English professor Pat White and look to the disciplinary hearings held at UK for those involved in the protests, including Steve Bright, Sue Anne Salmon, and others.*

other words, Pratt called for less focus on the police as enforcers of crimes, and more focus on the other valuable work that they do informally as prime responders and creators of social cohesion within neighborhoods.

Pratt’s different focus on crime (and the police’s role in punishing crime) dovetailed with another of his campaign platforms: legalizing medical marijuana in Lexington, with the goal of decriminalizing it in the city. Pratt notes that much crime stems from the unequal criminalization and enforcement of low-level drugs that find more blacks and Hispanics locked up for marijuana violations. Freeing police from the burden of pursuing marijuana crimes has the potential to create less crime and allow cops to re-focus on their roles as community builders in concert with a neighborhood community that does not find the future of its sons and daughters locked away for non-violent crimes.

The at-large forum followed an hour-long question and answer session for first district candidates Chris Ford and Marty Clifford. We will cover more of the First District and at-large races in future issues.

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James Baker Hall: Elbow of Light opens

New film comes to Lexington April 30

NoC Staff

*James Baker Hall: Elbow of Light*, premiering in Lexington on Friday, April 30, is not quite documentary and not quite biography—it may best be described as a meditation on art, spirit, and tenacity in the life of one of Kentucky’s most celebrated teachers and creators. Shot in the year before Hall’s death, the film offers intimate interviews with him and his wife, writer Mary Ann Taylor-Hall. Hall discusses the tragedy of his childhood, his life-long recovery from that tragedy, his life as an artist and teacher, and his method of working.

Hall taught creative writing at the University of Kentucky for thirty years, and throughout that time he produced many books of his own writing and photography; presented numerous lectures, readings and exhibits; pursued his work as a mentor to the next generation of Kentucky writers and artists; and for a short time made 8mm experimental film. Those films, which have not seen wide release, appear excerpted in *Elbow of Light*.

Production credits for the forty-five minute film include two of Hall’s former students, which required them to take a personal angle of approach to its creation. Writer and director, Whitney Baker, studied writing with Hall for over a decade, and cinematographer, Sarah Wylie Ammerman VanMeter, worked as Hall’s photographic studio assistant for many years after taking one of the last autobiography courses he taught before he retired from UK in 2003.

“I wanted to make a film that would provide some glimpse of Jim’s energy as a teacher, as an artist and as a man,” says Baker in his statement

of intent for the film. He goes on to express the type of education he received from Hall: “Without giving ourselves the right to be surprised by creation and re-creation, we spin our wheels, and our resentments entrench rather than pass away. Jim helped me understand that, and he helped many others come to the same understanding.”

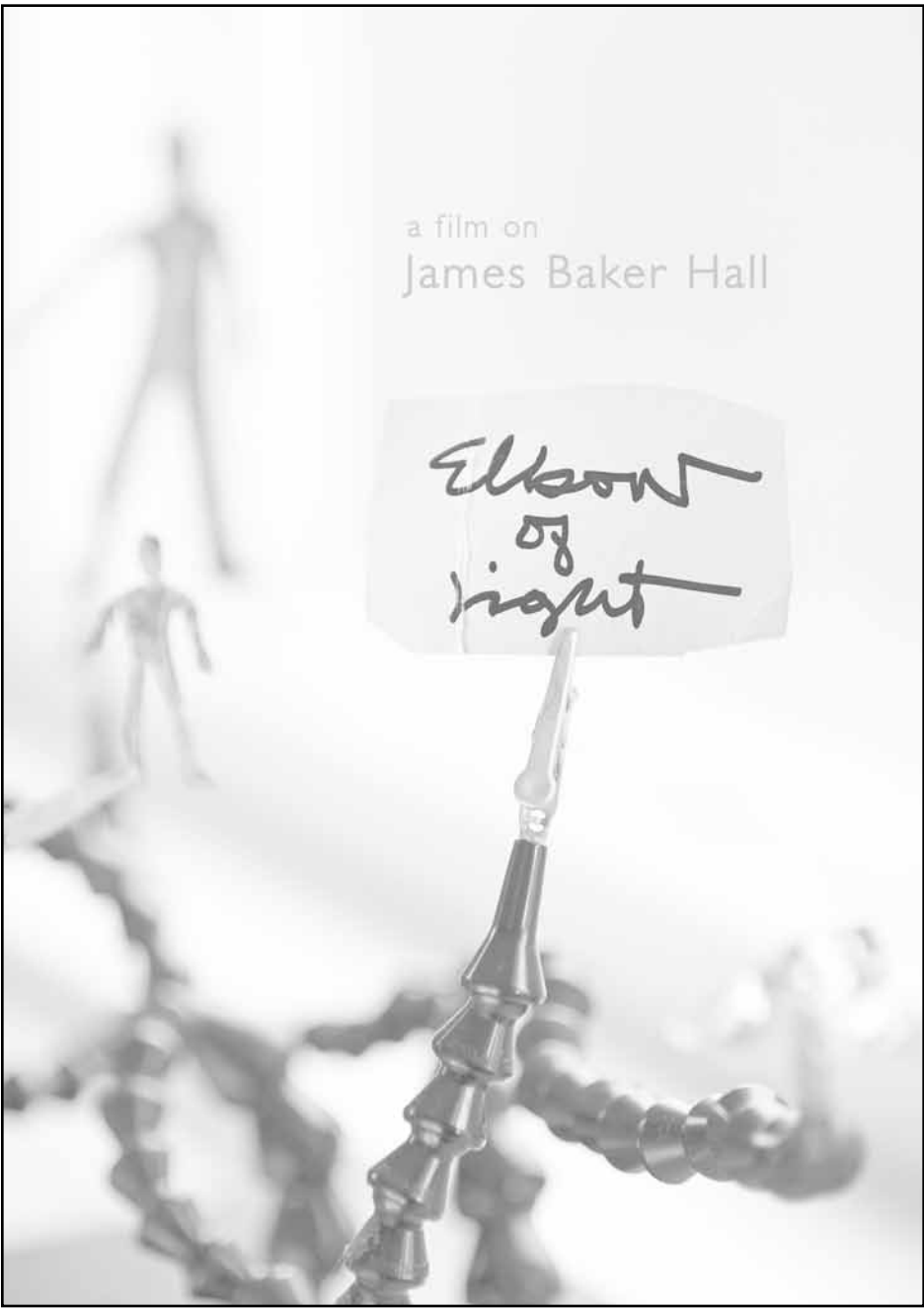
VanMeter explains that Hall’s “films and photographs were my road maps for this piece. Its pace, its style... everything is per Jim’s example.”

Even the title, *Elbow of Light*, is taken from one of Hall’s in-film quotes. He says, in a voice-over, while stills of his photographs dissolve into each other on screen, “Oh! This little elbow of light on this broken stem of grass is about ready to go unnoticed, but I’m here to notice it.”

The film’s producer, Griffin VanMeter, talks about Hall’s influence from his perspective as a friend of Hall’s and a collector of his work. He states, “It is an impressive feat to be an artist who consistently produced art in multiple media at such a high level—work admired by peers, critics, collectors, students and academics. And it is perhaps an even greater feat to inspire and motivate these people, pushing them to the next level in their own art-making and their lives.”

The filmmakers hope *Elbow of Light* will preserve Hall’s legacy as a writer and artist and continue his work as a mentor to young, or blocked, artists.

*Elbow of Light will screen April 30, 2010 at 5 P.M. and 7:30 P.M. in the Downtown Arts Center Black Box Theater, 141 East Main Street, Lexington, KY. A discussion with the filmmakers, facilitated by Ann*



*Tower, will follow each screening, where questions from the audience are encouraged. A reception, catered by Stella’s Kentucky Deli, will take place in the DAC lobby between the screenings. Tickets are \$6 and available by calling (859) 225-0370 or by going to <http://www.lexarts.tix.com/>*

*The filmmakers would like to express their thanks to LexArts for providing funding for this film screening to provide exposure to emerging talent in the film industry through its Fund for the Arts. Also, there is a pay-what-you-can ticket option, made possible by PNC.*

Review: That Evening Sun

Southern Gothic meets the geriatric genre

By Colleen Glenn

In *That Evening Sun*, currently playing at The Kentucky Theatre downtown, director and screenwriter Scott Teems delivers a poignant tale about aging, independence, familial relations and the importance of place. Like *Gran Torino* before it, *That Evening Sun* portrays an elderly curmudgeon struggling to live his last years on his own terms. And, like the crusty Clint Eastwood, Hal Holbrook’s character is treated by those around him as a burden to his family who should, well, cooperate and die already.

The 84-year-old Holbrook turns in a fantastic performance, one that will surely be remembered as one of the best of his prolific film and

home and sets out on foot for home. The home sends a taxicab after him to bring him back, but Meecham offers to pay the cabbie more to take him home, after he helps him find his lost pocket watch that has fallen out beside the stream. When the young driver complains they’ll never find the timepiece, Meecham scolds, “There’s no follow through in your generation,” as he discovers the beloved object—a gift from his now-deceased wife—in the grass.

Thus begins a story rife with tensions—between the young and the old, between the middle class and working class, and between the sentimental and the practical.

Meecham’s delight in returning to his hometown of Ackerman’s Field, Tennessee, is apparent, and the cinema-

three months. Having only left three months before, Meecham is shocked to find that his son, the legal executor of his estate, did not consult his father on this decision, nor did he waste time in seizing control of his father’s property.

“There’s a difference between leaving home and forgetting a place all together,” explains the grizzled 80 year-old Abner Meecham to his son, a busy trial attorney, who seems to have no attachment to the house and land where he was raised.

The Choats are leasing the Meecham farm with an option to buy, and are fully determined to obtain the property. Having never owned land before, Lonzo and Ludie Choat (Ray McKinnon and Carrie Preston) see this as their big chance to make something of their lives.

Tension builds as each of the men refuse to back down: both Meecham and Choat declare the property as rightfully his, and thus the two begin a reluctant relationship as neighbors when old man Meecham moves into the old slave cabin on the property.

Meecham may be grumpy and stubborn as the dickens, but audience sympathy is surely with him, as Choat seems to be every bit the low-class loser Meecham declares him to be. When the drunkard Choat savagely beats his wife and daughter with a garden house, Meecham defends the women by firing his gun, interrupting the struggle, and by later going to the sheriff to have Choat arrested for the assault.

Disturbingly, everyone from his trusty old neighbor (the fabulous Barry Corbin) to his son Paul (Walton Goggins) admonishes Meecham for getting Choat in trouble with the law, chiding him for putting undue financial pressure (i.e. bail money) on an already struggling family. Granted, Meecham may have alternative and additional motives for having Choat arrested, but there is no doubt that he is

truly appalled by Choat’s cruelty, who appears to be always teetering precariously on the edge of a violent explosion.

Confrontations ensue between the two men, predicting a violent, deadly climax. But the story, instead, peters out into a lukewarm ending in which Meecham makes peace with the fact that he’s too old to live independently on the isolated farm. Having set fire to the old cabin in an attempt to frame Choat for arson, Meecham slips and falls as the flames rage around him, only to be saved by his enemy, who pulls him from the flames. His son, who has until this moment come across as condescending, explains at the hospital that he has found a retirement community where his dad can grow tomatoes, and Meecham concedes he’ll go, but, ever the plucky individual, insists he’ll grow corn instead.

In what is a sort of epilogue, the final scene portrays Meecham walking through his old home which has been vacated by the Choats, who, though it is never explained, can be believed to have not been able to make the necessary payments to secure the property.

So, the moral of the story appears to be, “Do not go gently into that good night.” In other words, raise hell before you surrender.

Or, the moral may more likely be, be careful when adapting a literary work to the screen, as adaptations of short stories can be tricky. In the case of *That Evening Sun*, I have no doubt that the original short story, “I Hate to See That Evening Sun Go Down” by William Gay, is fantastic. Where the film falls short, in my opinion, is the film’s insistence on persisting in its slow pacing just when it needs to pick it up and deliver what it has promised since the opening credits: a story of suspense and palpable tension. Then again, perhaps the strength of this film



Hal Holbrook and Barry Corbin as seniors struggling to retain their independence.

stage career. Playing Abner Meecham, an elderly man reluctant to leave his life-long home for a nursing home, Holbrook turns in a complex and developed character study that makes human what might otherwise have been a flat caricature.

As the film opens, Meecham packs his belongings from the old folks’

tography captures the pastoral beauty of the country in its green and simple splendor. Arriving to the family farm, however, Meecham is surprised to find a young teenager, Pamela Choat (Mia Wasikowska), sunbathing in front of his home. When he gruffly asks what she’s doing there, she explains that they live there, and have been there

*continued on page 8*



# Music

## Baby Dee at Niles Gallery

**Thursday, May 6**  
Baby Dee w/ Everyone Lives, Everyone Wins (acoustic performance) and Silverware  
*Niles Gallery (in UK's Little Fine Arts Library), 9 P.M., \$5, all ages. Limited seating.*

At the surface, Cleveland songwriter Baby Dee's sound is somewhat reminiscent of fellow Drag City solo recording artist Joanna Newsom: a relatively stripped-down song structure, relying primarily on the instrumentation of either harpsichord or piano, and, at the forefront, raw, trilling vocals that are at once immediate and otherworldly – vocals that, love them or hate them, produce a decidedly visceral effect on listeners.

Like Newsom, Baby Dee was introduced to Drag City Records and generally championed by Louisville native Will Oldham (he, along with Matt Sweeney, co-produced Dee's critically-acclaimed Drag City debut, 2008's *Safe Inside the Day*). However, where Newsom's fairy-tale sound and aura are largely rooted in the Celtic harp, Appalachian tradition, and formal training in modern composition, Baby Dee draws from a different palate, taking perhaps as much from her 15-year history as music director for a South Bronx Catholic church as from her experience as a transsexual Coney Island circus-sideshow artist; as much from her proclivity to perform in Central Park wearing animal costumes as from her overarching interest in Gregorian-style vocals. If you can imagine a performance that's equal parts vaudeville and chamber music, you might be getting warm.

I should interrupt myself to point out that the impetus behind mentioning Baby Dee's colorful and unique history is not to dwell on her background as a novelty or gimmick. While her work – delicate and heavy, dark and uplifting all at once – is undoubtedly informed by these experiences, Baby Dee's music is not overtly sexual, political or religious. If just the mention of her fascinating background piques the interest of anyone reading this – inspiring them, as it admittedly did for me, to further explore her work –then it will have served its purpose. If challenging at first, exploring Baby Dee's catalogue is rewarding, particularly with her two most recent efforts, *Safe Inside the Day*, and the upcoming *A*

*Book of Songs for Anne Marie*, released on April 20. The album was partially arranged and produced by Maxim Moston of Antony and the Johnsons. (Other notable artists whom Baby Dee has either worked with, inspired, or both include Amanda Palmer of the Dresden Dolls and Andrew WK.)

Baby Dee's May 6 performance at UK's Niles Gallery will be a fine opportunity to learn more. And if you're not intrigued enough to commit to the show, I can throw out three other reasons offhand why you should be:

1) The Niles Gallery itself. It's an intimate space located in the Little Fine Arts Library on UK's campus, named for composer and folk-music collector John Jacob Niles, encompassed by the Niles Center for American Music. How many shows have you seen there? I personally am going on zero and counting.

2) Local opener Silverware, a baroque pop duo consisting of Lexington sisters Ainsley and Colleen Wagoner. They haven't played many shows, but I stumbled unknowingly upon their performance on WRFL-Live a couple months back. In fact, I was so taken with the angelic Carley-Simon-esque vocals that I stayed in my parked car for a few extra moments, waiting for the DJ to tell the audience who we had been listening to. (I was assuming it was some obscure 60s folk singer on vinyl, not a live performance by a friend and her sister.) This will be one of the first public performances for the duo, which utilizes percussion and a dulcimer-like instrument called the strumstick.

3) Local opener Everyone Lives, Everyone Wins. You might know ELEW as the "loud as God" (as coined by Trevor Tremain for the publication) drone trio, who tend to channel electric aural energy into a wall of sound so heavy you can literally feel it shaking your bones and brain. They have used enough electricity to shut down the power in at least two venues to date. This show, completely acoustic, will be an exercise in minimalism to show that "the drone is not dependent upon anything in particular." Expect many of the traditional ELEW instruments—i.e., singing bowl, gong, various rattles—as well as some new additions, including the stand-up bass from an affirmed fourth ghost member.

—Saraya Brewer

## No Age at Gumbo Ya Ya

**Friday, April 23rd**  
No Age w/ Lushlife, The Butchers, Tiny Fights, Loose Change, & Latin Heat  
*Gumbo Ya Ya/ Bar Lexington (367 East Main Street). Doors @ 6pm. Free show. 18+.*

No Age is drummer/vocalist Dean Spunt and guitarist Randy Randall. The duo, from different LA suburbs, moved into downtown LA and formed hardcore/punk/noise band Wives with friend Jeremy Villabos back in 2002. Wives lasted three years, and then Villabos left for Brooklyn while Spunt and Randall stuck in LA. The two kept making music together in the same vein as Wives, sans bass, fomenting tunes at downtown venue The Smell.

The Smell is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit all-ages drug/alcohol free music venue and gallery space where most shows are 5 bucks. Since 1998, it's been a springboard venue for bands like Mika Miko, Abe Vigoda, The Mae Shi, and HEALTH. Housed in a former Mexican grocery store, The Smell serves vegan snacks and operates as a de facto public library. Musicians who play there, including No Age, frequently volunteer to work the door, run sound, serve food, and clean up the place at the end of the night. (Randall even dug a trench to install a second bathroom there, a project that took over four years to complete.)

By the time Spunt and Randall christened themselves No Age, in late 2005, the downtown LA underground punk scene was thriving and new venues were popping up a la The Smell. A climate of DIY empowerment spread, inspiring new bands, more shows, and

a savvy network of self-promoting artists to join forces to churn out everything from t-shirts to screen-printed fliers to shoestring record labels to put out one another's records. The Smell even started its own record label, Olfactory Records.

In 2007 No Age decided it was time to spread their sound beyond the hometown. They chose an ambitious way to maximize their audience through record distribution: release five EPs on five different labels, all on the same day. Why this approach?

"We did 5 EPs because it's a concept we thought was interesting and wanted to see it through to the end," Randall said. "We were able to make more material that way and just get as much out as we could. That was the idea."

The releases got the attention of a couple influential blogs, including Brooklyvegan.com and thefader.com, soon meriting the attention of UK-based FatCat Records. In June of '07, FatCat released Weirido Rippers, No Age's debut LP. The album features highlights from the five EPs—many tracks combine contrasting ambient and punk songs—distilled into one 30-minute salvo. It's a unique take on fragmented noise pop, its terrain dense and fascinating, visceral and stark. It's not the most accessible album, and yet it garnered the band a spot touring with Liars and a heap of critical praise. As homage, Weirido Rippers' album cover is a picture of The Smell's façade with "No Age" and "Weirido Rippers" painted onto it. (This isn't a graphic design trick—it was actually painted onto the venue.)

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## WRFL tower upgrade concert

WRFL is throwing a tower upgrade celebration concert at Gumbo Ya-Ya. The station's tower will soon (sometime between May 3 and 9) beam at 7,900 watts of power on the 88.1 FM frequency, a big upgrade from the current 250 watts. It took the station 7 years to get approval for the upgrade and it cost them almost \$200,000 to build a new tower, money raised through UK student fees and donations from the public. As a "thank you" to the Lexington community, this tower-upgrade celebration will be free to attend. It features a handful of bands featured on this very

Music page in past issues: Latin Heat, Lushlife, The Butchers, Tiny Fights, and Loose Change. Headlining the concert will be No Age.

*Main Stage:*  
9:00 - 9:35: Latin Heat  
10:00 - 10:35: The Butchers  
11:00 - 12:1ish: No Age

*Downstairs @ Gumbo Ya Ya:*  
7:00: WRFL DJs  
9:30 - 10:00: Tiny Fights  
10-11: RFL DJs  
11:00 - 11:45: Loose Change  
Midnight - 2: Lushlife/Cass



## Jerry Moody (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

At the time, he'd been living homeless for a couple of months, working as little as possible. His Volvo station wagon stayed parked in our back yard, and he stayed in it on some nights, not on others. Jerry claimed that he was going back to his yippie roots, trying to see if he could support himself by writing songs and playing open mics and other low-paying "donation" gigs. I bought it, hook line and sinker—I can say with full admiration that Jerry is above all a dirty yippie—but as with most things there was more to it than that. At some point during his time in Lexington, Jerry devoted his life to two things his yippie background viewed as intertwined: art (particularly music) and political activism. Having no home left him freer to do both and, in

a way, also more connected to the dis-invested people he worked to empower.

It may have been a chosen homelessness, but it was homelessness nonetheless. Last December, Jerry suffered a stroke while taking a nap in his Volvo. He managed to make it to Third Street Coffee, his home away from Volvo, where our film editor Colleen Glenn bumped into him and took him to the hospital. (Yet another example of the social benefits of low-cost gathering places like Third Street.)

Jerry's mostly fine now; his drumming has come back and the guitar playing is getting there, too, and I've seen him out more, doing things like emceeing documentary viewings of coal country at Al's Bar. Though I haven't asked directly, it has not gone unnoticed that he is leaving for a job—a political organizing gig—in Canada, a

country that has a system of true universal health care coverage.

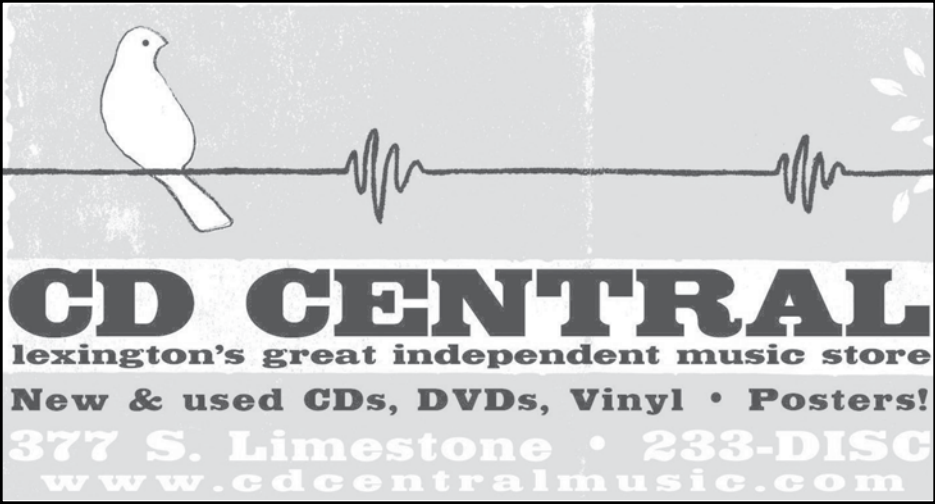
But ever the yippie, Jerry's planned two going away bashes that all of Lexington is invited to attend. The first show, May 4 at the Green Lantern, will be a benefit to help pay the enormous medical bills that were generated through his week stay at UK hospital. In addition to Jerry playing some of his songs that he recently recorded for his self-titled debut album, you can expect some special guests to contribute to the night's festivities as well. Already Ford Theater Reunion and Contra-Punctus have confirmed their attendance; Michael Johnathon of Woodsongs fame will also make a rare bar-scene appearance. Cover for the fundraiser/farewell show is \$10.

Four days later on May 8, Jerry will be playing his farewell show at the

Hive, a salon and art space located on Deweese Street. Contra-Punctus will also be joining Jerry at the hive. The Hive show will be free of charge and begin around 7:00 PM.

So come on out next week and send your fond non-Facebook farewells to that dirty yippie and loveable rabble-rouser, Jerry Moody. It's Lexington's loss and Canada's gain, but hell, that shouldn't stop us all from having a good party.

*Jerry's new CD, Moody, is available for purchase at Third Street Coffee. The CD comes with a booklet of poems and thoughts also titled Moody: Words. For less discerning readers, here are the dates, times and cost of his two farewell shows: The Green Lantern Moody Fundraiser: May 4, 8:00 PM, \$10, 21+. The Hive Moody Farewell: May 8, 7:00 PM, free, all-ages.*





# ROCK routs Brawlin’ Dolls

By Troy Lyle

The Rollergirls of Central Kentucky (ROCK) did everything but toy with the Lafayette Brawlin’ Dolls (LBD), handily dismantling the young derby team and moving their overall record to 2 and 1. The April 10 bout was LBD’s first home game and season opener, a fact a battle tested ROCK took full advantage of on their way to a final score of 136 to 65.

In an unrelenting onslaught of wicked jams and grand slams, ROCK’s Ellie Slay, Ryder Die, Sugar Shock and Ragdoll Ruby weaved their way through Lafayette, using their smooth skating and the team’s trademark impenetrable wall to score point after

resistance as she glided to a 10 point lead for ROCK. That combination of tightly packed blocks, bone pulverizing hits and ultra-smart skating allowed ROCK to work its strategy to perfection.

“We planned to play almost completely defensively at the start to try to get a wide point spread to work from,” said ROCK assistant captain Rainbow Smite. “We put our skaters in their ‘go-to’ positions rather than mixing it up as we would otherwise do in a scrimmage.”

Smite continued, adding that ROCK’s main focus was to keep Lafayette’s jammers down and allow time for their blockers to gain the front immediately and often.

and Bitty Bast’rd, reeled off point after point, only to be replaced by Sugar and Slay who seemed to face little in the way of opposition.

The only thing that seemed to derail the ROCK express was ROCK themselves. A couple of penalties by several ROCK players allowed Lafayette to slightly close the gap with two jams resulting in five and four points. But those points were to be LBD’s last of the half as ROCK jammers skated freely to the front, while the ROCK wall smothered all of the Dolls attempts to obtain lead jammer.

At the half ROCK’s damage was done with a nearly insurmountable lead of 94 to 30 in place. That large of a gap left the Indiana crowd at a loss for words and Lafayette in bad need of a new game plan.

## Round 2

Most teams with a 64-point lead would slow their roll and play conservatively to ensure a victory was in hand, but not ROCK. They kept the hammer to the nail starting off the second round right where they left off.

ROCK bench coach Junk Drawer was quick to remind the entire team just how fragile a lead can be in roller derby. She iterated in her halftime speech ‘to keep up the good work, but don’t get cocky.’

“Remember what happened at Knoxville,” she said, referring to ROCK’s previous bout two weeks earlier with the Hard Knox. “They almost caught up in the last few jams because we got sloppy with penalties.”

Maims echoed the same point.

“I think we did very well to stay out of the penalty box,” she said. “Playing cleanly is very important to winning, since sitting in the penalty box is equal to giving the other teams jammer a free point for every lap. Look at it this way, a jammer in the penalty box is a huge liability for that team. That’s how Ryder Die was able to score

Rollergirls of Cent. KY (ROCK) - 136  
Lafayette Brawlin’ Dolls (LBD) - 65  
Saturday, April 10 at the Family Sports Center in West Lafayette, IN

ROCK best jammer: Ellie Slay  
LBD best jammer: Jen Van Jam

ROCK best blocker: Sissy Bug  
LBD best blocker: Dreaded Thunder

ROCK MVP: Ragdoll Ruby  
LBD MVP: Jen Van Jam

ROCK’s next bout is Saturday, May 8, against the Rollergirls of Southern Indiana - Battle Betties Team (ROSI). Bout starts at 7pm. Tickets \$6 in advance, \$8 at the door. For ticket or other information visit [www.rocknrollergirls.com](http://www.rocknrollergirls.com) (ROCK) or [www.rollergirlsofsin.com](http://www.rollergirlsofsin.com) (ROSI).

a 19-0 jam and Ragdoll Ruby managed a 20-0 jam. Both jams occurred right after LBD penalties.”

With massive jams of 19 and 20 in place, ROCK breezed through the second half. Other than solid play on defense and offense, the most exciting play of round two occurred when Moonshine detonated a ground shaking blow on B-otch, sending her flailing into the crowd some ten feet off the track.

## The after party

In an act of supreme sportsmanship, LBD invited the entire ROCK crew to party with them after the bout concluded. A bluegrass band provided the perfect backdrop for some laughs, a few beers and team awards.

“The after party was a lot of fun, and the food was good and the beer abundant, which makes hungry roller-girls really happy,” said Drawer. “The LBD girls were super friendly ... truly good sports and great opponents. They gave awards: a jar of Smuckers jam with a ribbon around it for best jammer, a block of wood that was painted and bedazzled for best blocker, and an MVP award that consisted of a beaded

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Ellie Slay and Sissy Bug barricade Fierce B-otch to the inside.

point and bury the Brawlin’ Dolls in a mound of bruises, back aches and botched blocks.

## Round 1

The bout opened a bit shaky for ROCK as Die slipped entering the second turn, allowing Fierce B-otch to take lead jammer and draw first blood for the dolls. But LBD’s success would be short lived as ROCK’s wall made up of Sissy Bug, Sharon Moonshine and Kitty O’Doom pancaked Lafayette in a series of subsequent jams.

That wall allowed Slay to start a merciless rash of grand slams for ROCK, as she used her tall frame and graceful style to crisscross her way through Lafayette’s Dreaded Thunder, Say Sum’n and Kitty Crossbones.

Sugar joined in the fun after Sissy Bug and O’Doom crushed LBD jammer Jen Van Jam, leaving little

“The LBD skaters tried very hard to break us up, but we had such solid walls that their blockers couldn’t break through,” said Smite. “Also, the LBD blockers would wall up behind our wall to try to break us up, and often inadvertently blocked their own jammers in ... it’s very hard for an opposing jammer to gain advantage when she gets knocked down by one of our blockers, and recovers, only to be met by our next blocker in line.”

O’Doom, Sissy Bug and Moonshine weren’t the only ROCK blockers to impose their will upon Lafayette. Paraethal, Two Key Terror, Black Eye’d P and Jessie Maims also joined in as they floored LBD’s Biscuits n Crazy and Valentine Massacre.

With the Dolls’ jammers struggling for position, ROCK was left with little to stop their scoring spree. Die, with the help of jammers Ragdoll Ruby

# Let the worms do the work

## Shootin’ n Snaggin’ with the Frugal Fisherman

No matter how hard I try, I can’t for the life of me fully embrace artificial bait fishing. Don’t get me wrong, I use my fair share of spinnerbaits, jigs, rooster tails and plastics. But every time I’m unable to figure out the fishing pattern or entice a strike, I get antsy.

It’s about that time I wish I had a bobber and an earthworm. Or better yet a half ounce lead weight, a circle hook and a night crawler. Those are two tried and tested methods that always seem to land me a fish or two.

Armed with the above predisposition, I decided instead of ending another outing with the frustration of ‘wishing I had a worm,’ I’d build my own worm bed. Though worms aren’t expensive, living in Lexington provides a challenge for someone who wants 10 worms and fast. Besides, for an avid gardener like myself, a worm bed provides an awesome opportunity to compost my table scraps and yard waste, all while cultivating a happy and prosperous community of earthworms.

The real kicker in all this is building your own worm bed is cheap and fairly easy. As you will see below.

## List of materials

You can find all the materials below you don’t already have at your

local hardware store at a total cost of around \$40.

- 12 concrete blocks (\$2 each)
- Plastic lining (\$8)
- Shredded newspaper or cardboard (free)
- Organic fertilizer (horse, cow, poultry or rabbit manure / 3 cubic feet (2 large bags) » \$12; free if you know a farmer)
- A couple of old boards (free)
- Earthworms (\$3)

## Step 1

Choose the location for your worm bed. Consider the size of the worm bed you plan to build when choosing the location. It is also a good idea to choose a location that is not in direct sunlight all day long. This will make it easier to keep moisture in the worm bed.

## Step 2

Form the walls of your fishing worm bed by creating a rectangle with your blocks - 4 blocks on each side with two across each end (the final rectangle should measure 5’4” long by 4’ wide). Butt the ends of the blocks together, making sure the edges match up well. Note - A smaller bed can be built using less blocks and less space. Calculate the blocks needed accordingly.

## Step 3

Line the inside of the rectangle block enclosure with thick landscaping plastic. This can be cut or folded to size. The plastic should cover the bottom and all of the sides of your rectangle.

## Step 4

Soak shredded newspaper or cardboard in water (by all means use your old copies of North of Center). Shake off the excess water and place the paper inside the bed, taking care to cover the entire area. Fill the worm bed halfway with paper—roughly 4 inches deep.

## Step 5

Pour the two bags of manure over the shredded paper. Make sure to spread the manure over the entire area. Fill the rest of the bed to the top with rich soil, table scraps and yard waste. Make sure if you buy topsoil that the soil doesn’t contain fertilizers or boosters that could kill your earthworms. An organic topsoil works best. Add a little water to the bed, but avoid making it soggy.

## Step 6

Add earthworms to the bed and let nature take its course. Sunlight will drive the earthworms into the bed.

## Step 7

Once the worms submerge cover the top of the bed with several old boards. You also might want to cover some of the bed with pieces of left over plastic. The boards and plastic will serve as deterrents for birds looking for a good meal. Do not seal the bed up completely. Worms need air.

## Step 8

Check your bed weekly to make sure the soil is moist. Water if needed. Place all your table scraps, such as coffee grounds, rinds, cores, egg shells, cut-aways and leftovers, as well as grass clippings, leaves and any organic yard waste, in the bed each week. The worms will devour the scraps and make some of the richest soil you’ve ever seen in the process.

## Step 9

Turn your bed once a month to aerate and promote growth.

It won’t take long to have more worms than you know what to do with. And if you’re anything like me, those worms will come in handy and those table scraps and yard waste will finally go towards something good.

Hope to see you on the water.

# Opinion

## Massey devastates Montcoal, WV

By Becca Barhorst

I write this opinion not as an environmental activist, a renewable energy advocate, or a progressive. I write this as a humanist, as we should all be, with a genuine concern for the dangers in which we entrench our people. The explosion of the Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia that occurred on April 5 has disturbed me since I read the headline. A mining community that trusts companies like Massey Energy to maintain the safety of their workers was devastated after losing 29 miners, the worst mine explosion to occur since 1970.

Massey Energy Company, the owner of the Upper Big Branch mine, has been repeatedly violating safety standards for nearly two years, exposing live wires, accumulating flammable coal dust, and housing fatal levels of methane. The company, who knew of the problems and failed to fix them, has shown a pattern of infringements on safety regulations. In March of this year alone, Massey Energy was cited for 53 safety violations, according to *The New York Times*. With the cause of the explosion still unknown,

rescue workers described the explosion site as overwhelming, with “railroad lines twisted like pretzels” and “mining machines blown to pieces.” Along with the miners actually killed in the explosion, the rest suffocated from toxic fumes.

Explosions are not the only devastation that Massey Energy is notorious for. In October of 2000, a coal sludge impoundment owned by the company broke in Martin County, Kentucky, spilling the toxic waste into an abandoned coal mine below. The slurry came out of the mine openings, sending 306 million gallons of sludge into the Big Sandy River and several other Ohio River tributaries. The spill was over 5-feet-deep, contaminating nearly 27,000 citizens’ drinking water and killing all aquatic life found in its path. According to the EPA, the Martin County sludge spill is the worst of its kind in American history. However, Massey Energy was still able to proceed with its operations.

It is large companies like this that are using our workers, and not ensuring safety in return. From horribly harmful conditions such as high levels of carbon monoxide, to failure of

fixing dangerous problems, the apathy of the coal industry towards the miners and mining communities is unacceptable. With the Mine Safety and Health Administration having an extremely limited power, its industry-friendly appeals process makes even repeat offenders like Massey Energy nearly impossible to shut down. This gives the coal industry liberty to put profits above people, without any real accountability or oversight.

But it is not even just the safety of the workers that the coal industry is taking advantage of; it is the economic draining of mining communities that companies abuse as well. In Appalachian counties, the presence of coal mining is the number one predictor of poverty, as large coal companies exploit our workers and then send the profits elsewhere. One would think that after nearly 150 years of coal mining, there would be some sort of prosperity in the region. It is no wonder then that West Virginia and Eastern Kentucky are home to the poorest, most illiterate counties in the country.

The companies instill fear into the minds of workers, insisting that coal mining is the only industry that

will ever be available for a decent salary in the area. However in the last generation, 60% of mining jobs have been lost, as the coal industry replaces the need for a miner with heavy equipment. While in the 1950s the coal industry employed between 125,000 and 145,000 workers, it now employs just over 16,000, or about 1% of Kentucky’s workforce. The industry promises work and prosperity, while at the same time abusing workers’ trust and destroying our environment.

We need to let the coal industry know that they do not dictate our lives. Treating our citizens like marionettes has gone on for far too long, and some harsh regulation and punishment needs to be put into play. The Upper Big Branch mine blast was avoidable, yet was still able to occur because of the laziness of the industry and the lenient policies of the Mine Safety and Health Administration. If we are to allow the coal industry to conduct business in our state, we need to be the ones calling the shots, and demanding some accountability. The abuse we have suffered as a people has gone on for too long, and it is time we take a stand.

## Tea Party & losing white male privilege

By Joe Anthony

Like many people, I’ve been surprised and dismayed by the depth of the rage exhibited by the tea party group. It has confused me, too. What is it all about? Today’s *Lexington Herald-Leader* had a *Washington Post* column by Norman Ornstein, a resident scholar from the very conservative American Enterprise Institute summing up Obama as left of center, certainly not a radical president by any means. The column talks about the dismay many of Obama’s base, me included, have felt at many of his very moderate initiatives. So even conservatives, in moments of clarity, see that this president is about as far from being a socialist as Gerald Ford was, maybe not as near to it as Richard Nixon. So again the question: why all the rage?

I’ve thought about it and come up with a few tentative answers.

The first thought is a rather hopeful one, especially for those of us on the left. It is the idea that more change is happening than has met the eye, or at least progressive eyes. The health bill’s imperfections catch our attention, but the opponents may not be all deluded. It’s a sea change in how we think about health care, about how it is now a right, not a privilege. The opponents, big hospitals, insurance companies, and their tea party minions, have all encouraged me to think better of the bill than I have.

This idea of real change certainly carries over to the financial regulations bill. A month or so ago there was real bi-partisan support for the weak bill passing through the Senate. But the health bill’s passage has strengthened real reformers and now the Banks’ and big monies’ water carriers are worried. As *The New York Times* editorialized about McConnell and other Republicans: “Did they belatedly discover some problem? No. They suddenly realized that their bet that reform would be watered down as it moved along might not pan out.”

So real change might be the reason for all this anger, a real threat to the status quo. That would be nice.

But it’s not all threat to big money that’s behind the rage. Something else is going on.

The tea party demographics give us more than a hint about what’s happening. They are prosperous folks for the most part, conservative, Republican and overwhelmingly white. Here is the fear behind the rage. Why did we ever think, in even the heady, hopeful days around the inauguration, that we’d ever have a gentle landing to our great demographic change? Our American

history tells us otherwise. Think of the anti-Irish riots in our eastern seaboard cities, think of the deep anti-Semitism engendered by our large Jewish migrations. The know-nothings of the 1850’s only slightly evolved and became the John Birchers of the 1950’s. Can the tea partiers of 2010 be far away? And of course there is our long, cherished, and infamous tradition, our culture actually, of racism, the many re-births of the Ku Klux Klan into Nazi-biker-militia and always white-hate groups.

I say these groups have evolved, because while whiteness and its mythic characteristics have always been at their center, that whiteness has, like some invasive fungus or the kudzu of eastern Kentucky, branched out into poor depleted soils and claimed dominion. In my childhood, the Klan was known to hate Catholics almost as much as blacks (with the major caveat that very few Catholics were lynched, shot, or castrated—and tens of thousands of blacks were).

The Catholics, Irish, Italian, for the most part, were not really considered white when they first arrived, much like even the whitest of Mexicans and Cubans are suspect. The Irish were even labeled niggers, which in its original application didn’t necessary mean Negro. But gradually the Irish, and later the Italians, were assimilated into whiteness—with all its privileges and all its prejudices. This helps explain to me the fierce racism in my childhood of some of my Irish and Italian relations. They had barely escaped blackness, an American-cultural purgatory. Who knows what might push them back into it?

With all this in our history, how foolish we were to talk about a post-racial America. For we are facing real change: not the moderate change that will improve but not transform our health care system; not the progressive tinkering to our financial system that might help to govern and temper the rogue-radicals of Wall Street as Obama, like FDR, saves Wall Street from itself. No, the real change is the one that is changing our white, protestant, male, Christian country into a true melting-pot.

Not the melting-pot of our myths that took even the ski’s from our Lithuanian names, not the one that cartooned Indians and ignored blacks, not the one that hid even white women under the cloaking, choking word of men. In our new melting pot, we have a near-black, Italian female House Speaker, an aggressive and articulate female Secretary of State, and, of course, an articulate, cool, intellectual Kansas-Kenyon president. White

males, our traditional power base, are threatened. Even the poor, powerless whites in my family tree are threatened with loss of white status. Even if the Mexicans, Columbians and Cubans are successfully metamorphosed into American whites, our basic national DNA has been altered, is being altered. We are different.

That is the core reason for Glen Beck’s crocodile tears as he weeps over his lost country; that is the impetus for Rush Limbaugh’s inchoate rages and the anger of his followers. The lock on power of America’s white, male, protestant hegemony is being threatened. Our job, as good progressives who wish to integrate into the new America those who can be integrated, is to gentle that

rage. To gentle it just as the racism of my family has been eased so that our children finally understand that the concept of whiteness was always, as in the Catholic prayer of the dying, based more on fear and exclusion, the dread of hell or blackness, more than on any promise of heaven.

Here’s the good news: the change upon which the rage is based may give us the country we’ve always dreamed of. Let’s channel the rage so that it finally acts as a lance to pierce the carbuncle of white male privilege, so that it pricks to the core and helps to drain the puss of our racism. Let’s take back the country, from the no-nothings, the Klans, the Becks and the Limbaughs.

Let us rage back with the truth.

### CentrePointe (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

demand more. The rights of private property are not inviolable. They must be questioned, tested and even trampled at times. We can no longer remain inactive persons on the false premise that unused Webb property is sacred.

We demand a public garden whose main purpose will be to help feed the poor, hungry and homeless whom many locals discovered exist last week when Bill Strickland spoke about Pittsburgh during the Creative Cities Summit. Such an idea for the block is surely something that we can support—at least those who have been talking in public and in print, on the campaign trail and in conference meetings, of the need to merge “creative” acts with issues of social justice. Having our community leaders support and lay the groundwork for such a venture—to

demand and not just ask for it to happen—could be quite a thing to see.

The public input of our civic, creative, agricultural and community leaders will be important as the rest of us—either with or without the support of those leaders (though hopefully with it)—begin to till the earth and plant our seeds for the summer. We must do the most creative (and simple) of acts: action. Who will be the first to paper the fencing? Who will take the first soil sample? What farm groups will offer their time to utilize a 1-season garden in a place that is ground zero for public visibility? Who will transgress that most sacred of laws, private property, and demand that the city be run according to its inhabitants needs—and not the failed desires of its owners?

What support networks will we demand and work towards in this city, in this summer?

### Letters and corrections

#### Creative Class

A sharp critique of Florida (“Richard Florida’s creative bullshit,” April 7 2010). Greg Brown’s “Boom Town” ran through my mind as I read. He points to Sonoma and Santa Fe, two distinctly “Creative Cities,” and asks where the original residents live now? In trailers on the outskirts of town.”

Gordimer T. Spotts  
Murfreesboro, TN

#### Nostalgia and freedom

Thanks for the words on guerilla gardening (“Confessions of a guerrilla gardener,” April 7, 2010). I remember the flow of nice smoking component during those days of the early 70’s (some of it anyway).

Too bad all you young whipper snappers couldn’t experience some of

the relative freedom to live the Green Life that those of us then young adults did. Although there were some true believers in the war on drugs back then, most folks were more prone to live and let live.

Maybe this is why I live in such a state of nostalgia. Freedom began its death spiral somewhere around 40 years ago in this country.

William Munson

#### Correction

While the article “Confessions of a guerrilla gardener” (April 7, 2010) was an unknown submission, it did have a named illustrator. We sent the manuscript to J.T. Dockery, a sometimes-contributor of illustrations for *NoC* articles, whose piece accompanied the article.





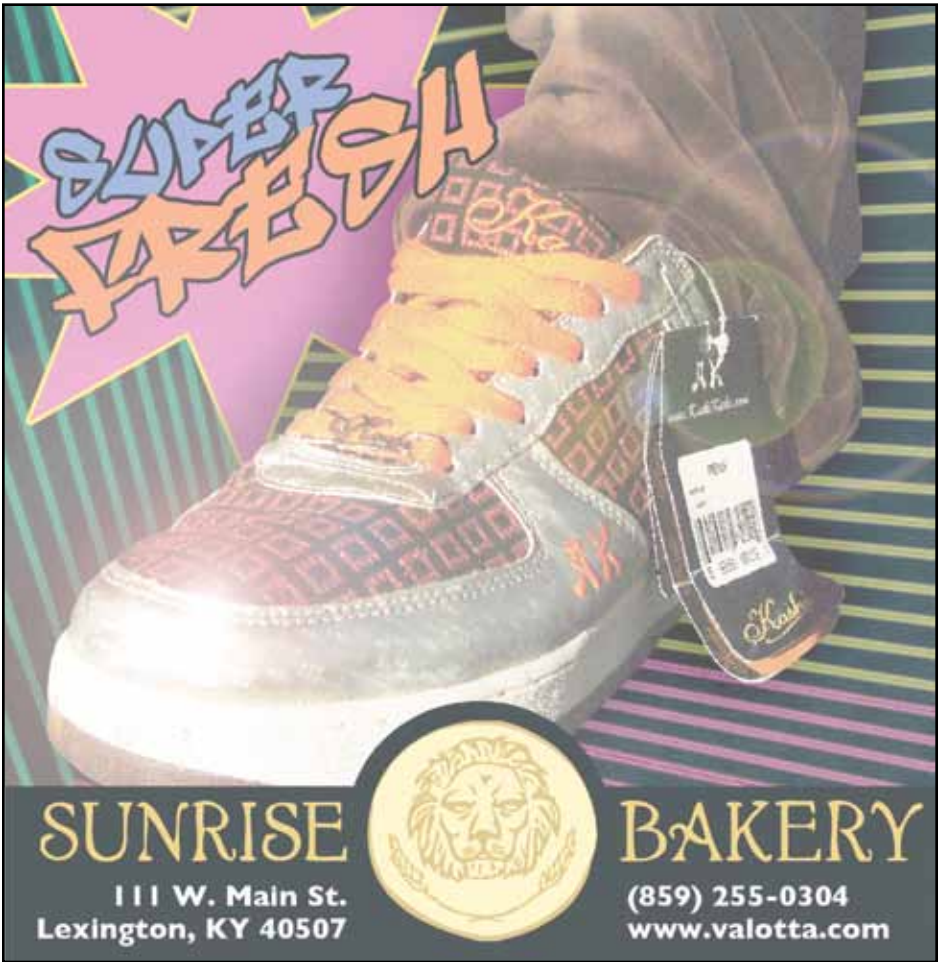
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Creekwater, Chapter Three: Steelheart



Brine Manley & J.T. Dockery



ROCK in Indiana (cont.)

continued from page 6

necklace and a tiara with veil to wear around the bar.”

Up next

For the first time in ROCK’s three year history in the league, it has a winning record going into its fourth bout of the season. And the girls will need all the lessons and confidence for their next opponent, the Rollergirls of

Southern Indiana - Battle Betties Team (ROSI). ROCK has never beat ROSI.

Team Captain Ellie Slay said the team needs to keep communicating, working hard in practice, skating clean and sticking to its game strategy.

“Right now we’re working together and just taking the game jam by jam,” she said. “We’ve talked about how much fun it is just to play, but I think now everyone realizes that its even more fun playing when you win.”

No Age (cont.)

continued from page 5

Later in ’07 the band signed a deal with Sub Pop Records and, in 2008, released follow-up LP Nouns. Nouns is a more orderly, clearer-sounding record than Weirdo Rippers. It features brighter ambiance and more poppy punk songs, still peppered with lots of noise. But even Nouns’ most accessible moments are short-lived: like Weirdo Rippers, it’s done in 30 minutes. Almost comically, Nouns was nominated for a Grammy...for best album packaging. Metallica won.

The band has stayed busy since critical acclaim found Nouns, appearing on MTV, touring the UK, and finding themselves at the center of a minor dust-up surrounding Craig Ferguson’s late-night talk show. The latter incident involved Randall wearing an Obama t-shirt for an on-air performance before the ’08 election. CBS, who broadcasts the program, wouldn’t film Randall wearing the shirt because of the “equal time rule,” which states that for every minute of airtime given to “Candidate A,” candidates B, C, D, etc must be given equal airtime. Randall compromised by flipping his shirt inside out, writing “Free Health Care” on it with a marker, and then playing. It’s a telling parable of how punks with ideas

and corporate America make strange bedfellows.

No Age’s ideas aren’t relegated to just music and politics. They’ve dabbled in video production, film scoring, art show curation, clothing and tennis shoe design, as well as running Post Present Medium Records, a label Spunt created back in 2001. They’ve even toured creatively, playing in venues as varied as a vegan grocery store, on a bridge, at a library, at an Ethiopian restaurant, on the Los Angeles river, and on a special mini-tour last summer that brought them to Newport, KY. That Southgate House gig was part of the “No Deachunter” tour, which saw a trio of acts—No Age, Dan Deacon, and Deerhunter—sharing a stage and alternating songs in one lengthy setlist, sometimes joining forces like Voltron to play simultaneously.

Having released another EP in October of last year, the subdued Losing Feeling, and with a new LP coming soon, No Age find themselves indie rock royalty du jour. Yet they’ve not forgotten The Smell scene that helped get them there. Recently, just before heading to Austin for SXSW, they worked the door at a Smell gig, later jumping onstage for an unannounced performance...as openers.

That Evening Sun (cont.)

continued from page 4

is that it resists what Eastwood cannot in *Torino*: a Hollywood ending complete with a Western showdown and melodramatic death.

McKinnon, an actor who you may recognize from *Deadwood* and *The Blind Side*, turns in a terrific performance as the redneck struggling tooth and nail to climb the social ladder but who is too flawed to make it. But the movie is tainted by poor performances by Carrie Preston and Mia Wasikowska, who pounce on their lines as if they might forget them if they don’t spew them immediately after the other actors speak.

Music by the Drive-By Truckers and a score by Michael Penn that swims in remorse and memory complement the

plot and its commitment to portraying the South in an authentic fashion.

The film’s most interesting sections are the places in which Meecham’s dreams and memories of his wife are illustrated onscreen: here, the camera recreates his unconscious state by breaking loose and wandering throughout the Meecham house, where his wife will always reside in his state of memory. Teems’ cinematography, in these moments, perfectly and gracefully articulates Meecham’s fear of leaving home.

Director Teems and actor and producer McKinnon, both natives of Georgia, possess a keen sensibility for crafting a story of (and from) the South, a region where place and history seem always at odds with progress and memory.